GUIDE TO THE FX14 LOVEDU FILE

[This file consists of sources, four of which are written by E.J. Krige and J.D. Krige, the outstanding authorities in the field. The basic source is 2: Krige and Krige, The Realm of a Rain Queen. Together, these sources cover a wide range of topics, from material culture to religious concepts and social values, and from historical reconstruction to analysis of native response to the impact of Christianity and western domination. The familiarity of the authors with various aspects of the native society enables them to record sympathetically and objectively the attitudes and outlooks of its individual members. This quality is manifested in their perceptive interpretation of the functioning of the Lovedu social organizations and inter-personal relationships. Maps and pictorial illustrations of the region are available in the file. However, none of the sources include a bibliography. Since the political and judicial structures of most primitive societies are often indeterminate in organizational form and sphere of authority, the reader is advised to consult various political and judicial categories when seeking information pertaining to these institutions. The file was processed between 1958 and 1967.]

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

By FERDINAND KRUGER

101 128 The Lovedu are a Bantu-tribe residing in the East of the Northern Transvaal. The history of the tribe which is published here is the work of a Lovedu. With assistance of a number of old Lovedu-men and some teachers I tested the facts and rewrote the whole paper in correct Lovedu-dialect. The translation given by me is as literal as possible.

104 Vowels: *a, e, i, o, ɔ, u.*

Semivowels: *y, w.*

Consonants:

Nasals: *m, n, ɲ* (dental) *ṅ* (velar).

Fricatives: *v, f,* (both bilabial); *z, s,*; *ž š*; *hh,*[1] *h*; *l, ḷ* (dental); *ʃ*; *r.*

Plosives: *b, p*; *g, k*; *d, ḍ* (dental) *t, ṭ* (dental).

Affricates: *tsh, tšh.*

Diacritical letters:

h after a symbol=aspiration.

w after a symbol="back labialization."

y after a symbol="front labialization."

y after a nasal=palatalization.

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[1] *hh* voiced aspirate *h.*

[2] *l* see A. N. Tucker, M.A.—*The Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana Group of Bantu Languages*, p. 48, 143. London 1929.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

1. The Lovedu-tribe took its origin in Mashonaland. Therefore, when a Lovedu salutes, they say :" In truth, Lovedu, in truth Khalaga,[1] person of Ledaža,[2] person who comes from Mashonaland ! " Furthermore they are " the Pigs of Mohale."[3]—They say there is the home of the Lovedu.[4] 173 576

2. They say the king there had two sons. Now one of them[5] was given the rain.[6] Afterwards the elder brother desired the thing of the younger one. He went to ask his younger brother for the rain. But the younger brother refused to give him the rain. The elder brother rose against him with spears.[7] The younger brother escaped southward,[8] he crossed the Limpopo-river of Mashonaland. On the way they separated into two groups. One tended towards the South and settled at Vyaḑadi[9] namely the Mamabolo-tribe. They are also " Pigs[10] of Maḑaži."[11] 173

3. Now the Lovedu were looking for a nice country with fertile soil and with ant-hills.[12] They sent the young men in advance to look out for such a country. And indeed—when these passed Vendaland they found the right country having merula-trees and ant-hills in the east of the mountain where there is established " Medingen "[13] to-day—namely at Khumelo.[14] [797]

4. They found that there was living another tribe called that of Kheoga.[15] Those people did not know the fire. They ate all their food unboiled. They ate it just like the wild animals.

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[1] Name for the inhabitants of Mashonaland.

[2] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[3] Name of chief.

[4] I was given the following explanation of the word " Lovedu " : *Volovelu hhe hho khe fhedolwa ge hhore : mo hho lovahho zwilô, e lêhho vathu le ḑikhomu le riṅgu.*—Lovedu means : there where things namely persons, cattle, goats and sheep are being brought as offerings. [101]

[5] The younger one.

[6] The instruments and formulae to prepare the rain-medicine.

[7] Chief weapon.

[8] Literally : upwards.

[9] Mountains near Haenertsburg.

[10] Lovedu and Mamabolo praise the same animal : the wild pig.

[11] See later the praise-names of the kings. [262]

[12] Ants = a delicacy.

[13] Mission Station.

[14] Name of mountain.

[15] Another Bantu-tribe.

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6
Venda FX19

AFRICA

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

VOLUME XI JULY 1938 NUMBER 3

THE PLACE OF THE NORTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL SOTHO IN THE SOUTH BANTU COMPLEX

EILEEN JENSEN KRIGE

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THE Sotho of the North-Eastern Transvaal Lowveld occupy an area with fairly well-marked geographical boundaries. To the east, the Game Reserve, low-lying, unhealthy, very sparsely populated even in the old days, remains an effective barrier to contact with and further migrations from the Shangana-Tonga of Portuguese East Africa. South are the Olifants River and the towering Drakensberg range curving north-west then northwards to merge into the well-marked escarpment on the west dividing Lowveld from Highveld. On the north the Klein Letaba river roughly demarcates our area from the Venda and the Shangana-Tonga of the Knobnose Location. The Sotho-speaking Venda of Tswale and Moila, who fall well within this area, resemble in culture their Sotho-ized neighbours more than their own Venda kin to the north; but the Shangana-Tonga, who occupy most of the lower-lying eastern and north-eastern portion of the area and comprise at least one-third of its total population, are unassimilated strangers of different stock coming from the north-east and east. They have been entering since about 1840, usually in small bands, at first seeking the protection of and subjecting themselves to the Sotho owners of the land. On the arrival

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'Africa': the Journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures is published by the Institute, but except where otherwise stated the writers of the articles are alone responsible for the opinions expressed.

[p. 265]

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6

of the white man, some of their headmen were granted independent locations which have served as nuclei for the building up of more united tribal groups. (See accompanying map.)

The most important Sotho tribes of this area are the Lobedu, the Narene and the Khaha who together comprise about three-quarters of the total Sotho population.[1] The outstanding demographical feature is, however, the numerical predominance of the Lobedu who, with a population of well over 40,000, are not only the greatest tribe, but outnumber all the other Sotho-speaking tribes put together.[2] The pre-eminence and cultural influence of the Lobedu in this area does not rest solely upon their numerical preponderance. It is based largely upon the fame of their queen, Modjadji, who, as the greatest rain-maker in the Northern Transvaal, is not only regularly approached with gifts by other chiefs but also sometimes places them on the throne (*ho bea bohosi*) and is appealed to in cases of disputed succession.

This area, though forming part of a greater cultural whole including the Northern Transvaal Highveld and probably Pediland to the south, is, however, sharply characterized by distinctive features, such as ritual suicide of the chief and recognition of women as rulers in their own right, that are not found elsewhere. These are sufficient to form a fairly well-defined culture pattern, which, owing to the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the Lobedu, if for no other reason,

[1] The Sotho population of our area is made up as follows, according to van Warmelo:

Lobedu	8237	taxpayers.	
Narene	2521	„	(Mahlo 1332, Letswalo 1189).
Khaha	1608	„	
Thabina (Moxoboya)	1088	„	
Phalaborwa	332	„	
Makroba	700	„	
Baha Mamidja	413	„	
Shai or Tsubye	256	„	
Tswale	357	„	Sotho-speaking Venda.
Moila	260	„	Sotho-speaking Venda.

The only large tribal groups among Shangana-Tonga are

Mohlaba	2918	taxpayers.
Nwamitwa	1347	„

[2] The proportion is Lobedu 8237 taxpayers.
rest 7535 „

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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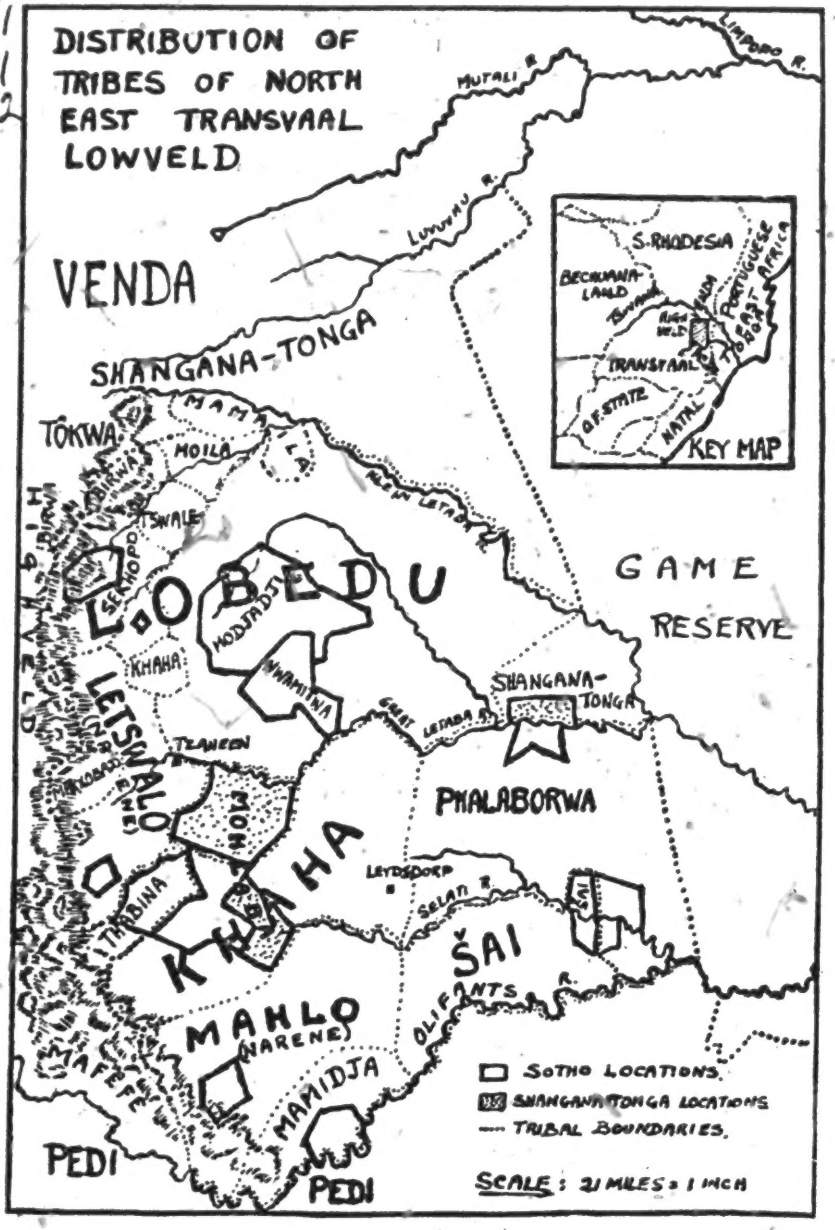

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3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

one might call the Lobedu culture complex, though it is not at all clear what the origin of its differentiating features is. In its most typical form this culture is found among the Lobedu of Modjadji, the Letswalo and the Khaha. To the north-west it merges into the not very different Venda culture complex; to the south, Pedi influences, noticeable on the edge of the Drakensberg, become increasingly apparent among the Mahlo and eventually predominate among the Baha Mamidja on the banks of the Olifants. In the east, the Phalaborwa have developed specialized responses to the challenge of an arid bushveld environment; while to the west along the escarpment, Tokwa influences are so marked that the Sekhopo branch of the Lobedu, who live there, differ more from the Lobedu of Modjadji than do the unrelated Khaha and Letswalo.[1] These gradations are to some extent hidden by the fact that owing to the mixed composition of every tribe differences in custom in any single tribe are often as great as differences from one tribe to another. The nature of this Lowveld cultural pattern, those features peculiar to this area and those held in common with other tribes, will best be shown by a short account in general terms of various aspects of the social and economic organization of these tribes.

General Aspects of the Lowveld Village. The Lowveld village, nestling among the trees and shrubs of the surrounding bushveld vegetation, which usually provides a natural fence, differs in general aspect from that of the Highveld tribes with its well-smeared, high-walled courtyards. While there is a tendency in the south, among Narene of Segororo and to a lesser extent among Thabina and Maake's Khaha, for villages to straggle in lines along the hill-sides, there is nowhere any sign of the large agglomerations of dwellings so typical of the Tswana town and present in an attenuated form also among Tokwa of the Highveld. The Lowveld village is not large, consisting generally of from two to twenty huts; but there is evidence that when times were more unsettled and the need for protection kept

[1] The Birwa who live partly in the Lowveld, partly in the Highveld, probably belong to the Lobedu culture complex. Though their culture differs in many respects from that of the Lowveld tribes there are also marked similarities, such as ritual suicide of the chief.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. KRIGE

The World View of the Lovedu

●101 THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

144 Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to
177 have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga
563 immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this
642 group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

231 Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the
241 South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pur-
231 suits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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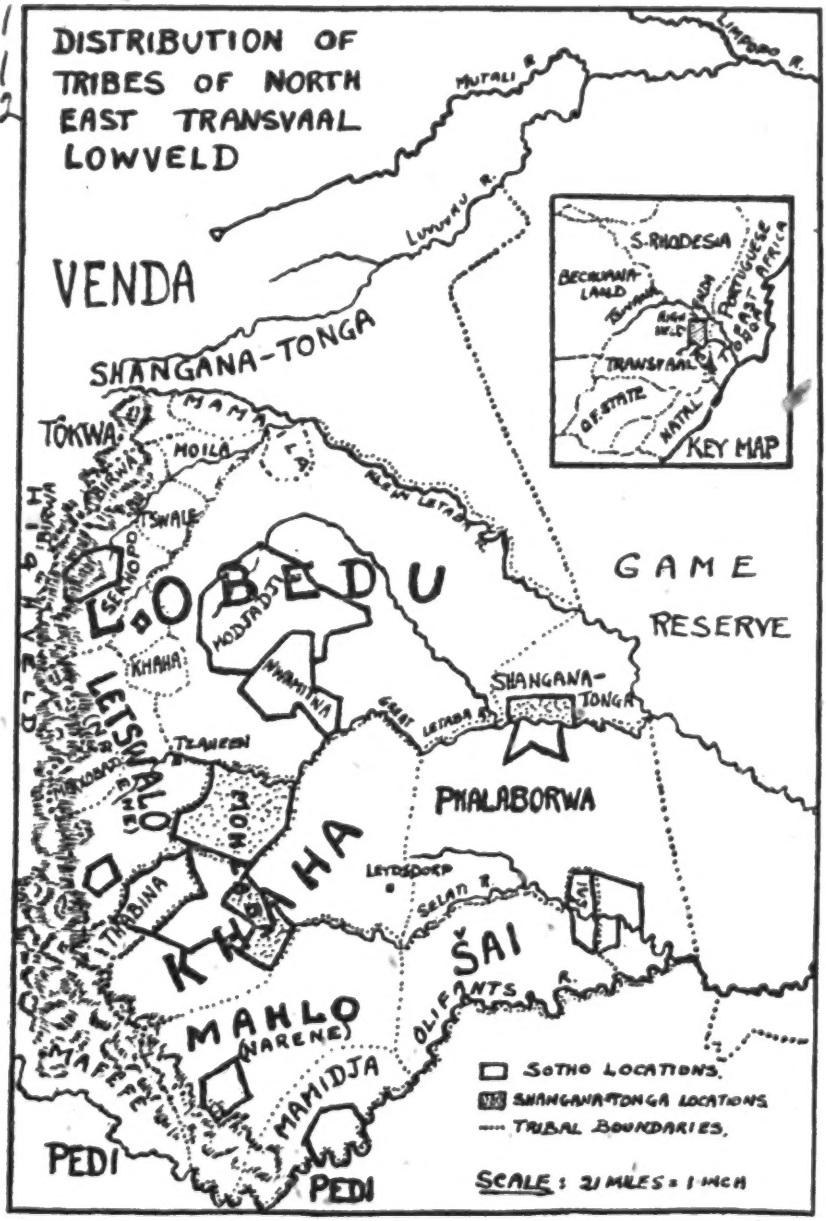

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1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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Semivowels: *y, w.*

Consonants:

Nasals: *m, n, ɲ* (dental) *ŋ* (velar).

Fricatives: *v, f,* (both bilabial); *z, s,*; *ž š; hh,*[1] *h; l, ɬ* (dental); *ɮ*[2]; *r.*

Plosives: *b, p; g, k; d, ḍ* (dental) *t, ṭ* (dental).

Affricates: *tsh, tšh.*

Diacritical letters:

h after a symbol=aspiration.

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[1] *hh* voiced aspirate *h.*

[2] *ɮ* see A. N. Tucker, M.A.—*The Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana Group of Bantu Languages*, p. 48, 143. London 1929.

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2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

123 sweating humanity. After an exhausting walk of ten miles or more over difficult country, in order to witness a ceremony, it is discouraging to be refused admittance to the performance or to find it postponed until the European leaves; but occasional success amply repays perseverance. In the timeless Lovedu society, even if the investigator is welcomed, he may have to wait hours for a performance to begin; but the time need never be wholly wasted. Personal observation brings to light bewildering variations in the culture. There is no such thing as rigid conformity, and rules are made for man, not man for rules. Until the observer's own cultural conditioning is re-conditioned by intimate touch with the society, he cannot hope to penetrate its meaning.

In this book we are concerned to describe custom and life as they are to-day, after fifty years of European contact. Every custom, every ceremony, every case in it, has been personally seen except in those instances, always clear from the context, in which the event, such as the death of a Lovedu chief, did not occur during the period of investigation. We have written about everyday things as they are enacted in the tribe to-day, not as they were in the past. For obvious reasons, names mentioned in illustrative cases are all fictitious, save only where they are essential for the subject matter, as in the chapters on tribal history, social groupings, and political organization.

At the outset of our investigation we planned a rough division of work. One of us, E. J. Krige, concentrated upon magic and religion, family life, and women's activities; the other, J. D. Krige, upon laws and political organization, history, and man's activities. But our method of studying human situations as and where we found them, and of recording things as and when they occurred, precluded any rigid division, and each obtained information upon all aspects of culture. Each of us independently studied many institutions, such as marriage, economic life, and medical practices, and the diversity of our information and impressions—often reflections of our personal differences of outlook—provided useful clues to further observation and interpretation, besides showing that in field work the temperament of the investigator is a vital factor. In the preparation of this book E. J. Krige is responsible for Chapters II, V, VII, VIII, XII to XV, and J. D. Krige for Chapters I, III, IV, VI, IX to XI, XVI, XVII and the maps; but each has carefully gone through the work of the other and the whole is the result of the fullest co-operation between us. It does not seem necessary to mention in detail which of us took the photographs reproduced.

197 As regards the language of the Lovedu, we found that, difficult as it was to acquire, a working knowledge was absolutely essential, because implicit in it is a vast background of associations which can never be recaptured in translation. Khilovedu is now practically a dialect of Sotho, yet it cannot be adequately written in Sotho orthography. It approximates to Venda in much of its vocabulary, falls midway between Sotho and Venda in grammatical structure, and is Sothoized in phonology, 104 but many of its sounds are unknown in Sotho. Generally speaking, 194 we have adopted the orthography recommended by the International Institute with some modifications. For dental *d* and *t* we have used *ḍ* and *ṭ*

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

as in Venda, and now commonly used in Northern Sotho, where these sounds also occur, but, as in Sotho, the semi-flapped alveolar lateral fricative, a phoneme of *d*, has not been distinguished from ordinary *d*; and we have deemed it unnecessary to have a special letter for the sound of English *sh*, or *ts* or *c* for the sound *ch* in English 'church', which we write *tsh*. Many variations are evident in Khilovedu in its movement towards Sotho, the language taught in the schools: there are differences in vocabulary and sounds used by women and young children, on the one hand, and by those who go to town, on the other, and by the young as compared with the old. The old sound of English *z* in *azure* becomes in the mouth of the younger generation the English *j* as in 'John'; *z* as in 'prize' alternates with *dz*, which is more common among the young people; and an old prefixal form, *lu*, is generally now *le*, except among the oldest people. We have used, *j*, *dz* more often than *z*, and *le* not *lu*, in accordance with modern trends. The *u* tends to become the closed *o*, and it is often very difficult to distinguish between these sounds; but here again we have kept as close as possible to the most prevalent pronunciation and have adopted *mu*, not *mo*, as the noun prefix.

We desire to thank the International Institute for publication and for the grants which enabled us to undertake this work, the Rev. W. and Mrs. Krause for hospitality while we were on their mission station, and numerous Lovedu friends, who must remain anonymous, for their co-operation. We desire also to express our gratitude to Dr. A. I. Richards for her invaluable assistance in seeing the book through the Press, and to Miss D. G. Brackett, the Secretary of the International Institute, for additional help in this connexion. But it is to Mrs. A. W. Hoernlé that we are most deeply indebted. When one of us was a student of economics and the other practising at the Johannesburg Bar, she, as lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand, awakened our interest in social anthropology, made us realize its paramount importance as the basis of policies and national welfare in this southern sub-continent of Africa, and gave us that invaluable background, both of knowledge and ideals, from which our work has since then been oriented. Later, as adviser and friend, she was to us the source of unfailing encouragement, stimulating suggestion, and inspired guidance. For these roles there is no one better equipped than she by knowledge and experience of the Bantu. It is due to her that we have devoted ourselves, not to the professions with which we originally began our careers, but to social anthropology and to the ideal of putting it in the service of the practical problems of black and white in Africa.

E. JENSEN KRIGE.
J. D. KRIGE.

PRETORIA.
November, 1939.

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Identification

The Lovedu nation is here taken as synonymous with the "Lowveld Sotho" tribes of the Transvaal. All are of highly mixed origin. Though sometimes classed with the Venda group, their languages are "heavily Sothoized." The Kriges think the Lovedu proper may be of Kalanga origin, greatly mixed with and overlaid with Sotho, Venda, and recent Shangana-Tonga elements. The Lovedu are the source of Rider Haggard's novel "She." The tribes herewith classed as Lovedu in the broad sense (excluding many immigrant Shangana-Tonga) are the following:

a. Lovedu (Balovedu, Lobedu)--population over 40,000--politically dominant of diverse ethnic elements.
b. Narene (including Mahlo and Letswalo)--population c. 15,000.
c. Khaha--population c. 10,000.
d. Thabina (Moxoboya)--population c. 5,000.
e. Smaller tribes totaling roughly 10,000--Phalaborwa (Borwa), Sai (Shai, Tsubye), Mamidja (Baha Mamidja), Makxiba, etc.

The non-Lovedu tribes of this cluster are sometimes collectively classed as Laudi.

Basic Economy

Primarily agricultural, with maize as the staple. Eleusine is the oldest grain and the most encrusted with ritual. Kafir corn (Sorghum) and millet (Pennisetum typhoides) are important, as are pumpkins, beans, groundnuts, and sesame, and some peanuts (recent, in contrast to groundnuts), peas, and sweet potatoes are also grown. Though skill in animal husbandry is much inferior to that in agriculture, cattle and goats are numerous and important, but not for food, though both are milked. Cattle are crucial for marriage exchanges and goats for religious sacrifices, feasts, and hospitality. Sheep are few and unimportant. Chickens are numerous, but are a recent introduction from the Shangana-Tonga. Donkeys, used for plowing, were introduced 30 years ago, and pigs still more recently (pork is not eaten). Flesh but not eggs of chickens are eaten. Gathering is of considerable consequence, but hunting is unimportant. Fishing is not even mentioned in a full account of subsistence activities. There are no markets, and the Lovedu dislike barter and all commercial transactions.

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Sex Division of Labor

Cattle are herded by boys (formerly armed men). Men and boys milk. Cattle are not tabooed to women, though they have little to do with them. Gathering is done by girls. Both sexes have always participated in agriculture. Men alone clear land. Formerly both sexes hoed, weeded, and reaped, but today there is a strong tendency for men to plow and women to hoe. The cultivation of cereals is a joint task of both sexes, but other crops, especially groundnuts, are cultivated either exclusively or mainly by women.

Property

The chief form of wealth is cattle, owned by either sex, as private property; they are used exclusively in marriage transactions and are never bought or sold. Land cannot be bought and sold. It is alloted for use by district chiefs, not headmen.

Inheritance is patrilineal. The distribution is supervised by the ElSi and Br of the deceased. Sons are apparently favored over brothers.

Social Stratification

There is a royal stock or class, the Lovedu proper, constituting about ten per cent of the total population. Between the various ethnic groups in the population there are gradations in status, and marriage is not allowed with some of them, e.g., the Shangana-Tonga. This is specifically Lovedu, but doubtless pertains to other tribes as well. Apparently there is no slavery.

Marriage

A substantial bride-price is paid. There is no bargaining; its value and equivalences are traditionally fixed at about 8 cattle, 7 goats, some money, and a few trinkets. It is called munywalo. For marriage purposes, lineages or fractions thereof are arranged in a ring, reminiscent of the Trobriand kula; women move from group to group in a clockwise direction, cattle in a counter-clockwise direction. Basically the partners are "cattle-linked" brothers and sisters, for a bride-price for a woman secures a wife for her uterine brother. The preferred union, occurring in 60% of all cases, is with a MoBrDa. Obligations incurred

are transmitted within the patri-lineage. Special arrangements cover shortages of sons or daughters in the groups involved. If a married woman has more daughters than sons, the extra bride-price cattle are not used by her Hu to finance marriages of sons by other wives but are given by the Wi to her own MoBr as an investment to provide a wife for a son of her daughter. These and other arrangements and kin obligations take care of marriages for surplus sons. Princesses as well as common women are married by a bride-price. Even a woman can secure "wives" in this way, buying a daughter from her cattle-linked brother as the wife of a non-existent son--actually her own "wife" though called "daughter-in-law."

Polygyny is preferential and is practiced by about one-third of the men. Each wife has her independent household. The chief wife is the MoBrDa. Though non-sororal polygyny occurs commonly, the sororal form is preferred. Custom requires a Hu to treat all his wives with the most rigorous impartiality. He is subject to nagging if he spends even a little more time with one than another, and if he gives one a gift or some extra attention he must do exactly the same for the others. This competitive situation gives polygynous wives considerably more influence than polygynous ones [among monogamous Christian Lovedu the status of women has fallen].

Family

The polygynous family rather than an extended family is the norm.

Residence

The patrilocal rule appears to be universal.

Kin Groups and Exogamy

Local exogamy is the rule.

There are corporate exogamous patri-lineages, each with a territorial organization. It is within them that kinship terminology is used. They are aggregated into non-exogamous patrilineal sub-sibs and sibs, which are definitely unilinear descent groups but not corporate bodies. Sibs are aggregated into non-patrilineal "divisions" of common historical origin (e.g., the Mamavolo Pigs and the Lovedu Pigs), and these are aggregated into larger "clusters" or name-groups, which may or may

not have totemic taboos in common. These clusters are often of diverse ethnic origin, e.g., Kalanga, Venda, Pedi, Shangana-Tonga, Tlokwa, Nyai, Mamavolo, and Lemba. The clusters may bear animal names (e.g., Crocodiles, Lions, Pigs, Wild Dogs, Porcupines, Goats) or tribal designations (e.g., Venda, Lemba, Koni, Kalanga, Manyika, Shangana-Tonga). Among the latter are the Lovedu cluster (the royal stock) and several other clusters related to it as "brothers" or "maternal uncles." Khaha sibs are exogamous.

There are no bilineal kin groups and apparently no kindreds. Marriage is allowed with any cross-cousin, preferred with MoBrDa, forbidden with parallel cousin.

Kinship Terminology

Fa--bopape. Mo--mma. Ch--ngwana. Hu--monna. Wi--mosadi. Avuncular terminology is bifurcate collateral; also nepotic terms. Cousin terms are of Iroquois type.

Settlement Pattern

There are settled communities, but individual settlements are very small, really hamlets of 5-15 huts on the average. The real community is a cluster of hamlets with a single headman. Huts are round in ground plan with conical thatched roofs. They are arranged in a circle or in two incomplete semicircles. There is a special hut for boys and unmarried men.

Community Organization

Socially the cluster of hamlets is a patrilocal clan-community. There are age-sets for each sex but no formal age-grades.

Local Government

Each hamlet has its head--a sub-lineage headman. The senior among such heads is the headman of the community--the "district chief." Succession is patrilineal to these offices, but the precise manner is not specified.

State

The nation, which numbers about 50,000 people occupying about 5,000 square miles (a large proportion of alien ethnic stock), is divided

into 70 "districts"--mostly really communities, some exclusively of alien stock. The organization is territorial, the "district chiefs" paying tribute to the paramount chief or monarch in women, who are distributed among the monarch's confidential advisers (relatives and important district chiefs residing in the capital city). The monarch, among the Lovedu always a queen since about 1800, is the mother-in-law of all district chiefs through their daughters given as "tributary wives." The queen is a divine monarch--essentially a rain-maker. In theory the Lovedu queen must have no blemish, and must commit suicide by poison before she becomes unfit to rule (the last queen to die, the second in a series of 3 over 140 years--committed suicide thus in 1894). Before the event she calls a small council of very close relatives to choose a successor. The queen's death is not announced for a year; then there is a new-fire ceremony; then all claimants to the throne pass before and knock on the door of the house where she died; the one for whom the door is opened is the next ruler. There is no fixed rule of succession for the Lovedu proper. The queen bears children but has no legitimate husband; she does, however, have "wives," and apparently the successor is normally the child of one of them.

Warfare

Inferentially the Lovedu are a peaceful people.

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1: Kruger, Ferdinand. The Lovedu. Bantu Studies, Vol. X, pp. 89-105. Johannesburg: The University of the Witwatersrand Press, 1936.

Yale: Nkd74 B228 v.9-10

/This brief source contains the text and translation of a short history of the tribe by a native Lovedu. It is mostly concerned with the migration of the tribe to its present homeland, a listing of the dynastic genealogy, and an account of how the rulership passed from the male to the female principle. --Analyst/

Field date: ca. 1930
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

Evaluation: Missionary - 5
Processed in 1958

2: Krige, E. Jensen and J.D.Krige. The Realm of a Rain Queen. London: Oxford University Press, 1943.

Pp. xv, 336; 4 maps; 16 plates; index.

Yale: Nkd85.L9.943k

/This is a systematic account of the Lovedu, a Bantu tribe in South Africa. It includes descriptions of its economic activities, political structure, social relationships and religious beliefs. Throughout the book, the attitudes and interests of the people are recorded sympathetically and objectively. The impact of Western civilization, especially that of Christianity, upon native institutions and individual psychological outlook is adequately treated. A historical reconstruction of tribal movements and cultural diffusions among the Lovedu and the surrounding tribes provides the reader with interesting data for comparative studies. The Kriges are considered outstanding specialists on South African tribes. They have been teaching at the University of Natal and were members of the International African Institute--Analyst./

Field date: 1928-39
Analyst: Robert Lee

Evaluation: Ethnologists-5
Processed in 1958

3: Krige, Eileen Jensen. The Place of the North-Eastern Transvaal Sotho in the South Bantu Complex. Africa, Vol. XI, pp. 265-293. London: Humphrey Milford for Oxford University Press, 1938.

Yale: Bk2 10 11

/This source contains general materials on the cultures of the lowveld culture area in northeast Transvaal, of which the Lovedu form the major group. However, the Shan-gana-Tonga, an immigrant group, form about one-third of the total population of the area. Therefore, while most of the material does pertain to the Lovedu, the researcher must be careful in applying the materials in this source wholesale to a study of Lovedu society and culture. The article touches on the political system, economics, marriage, family and clan, education, and religion. It closes with a comparison of Lovedu culture with that of other southeastern Bantu groups. For information about the author see 2: Krige and Krige, this file. --Analyst/

Field date: 1928-1938
Analyst: Timothy J. O'Leary

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Yale: NKc58.954J

/This is a systematic description and analysis of Lovedu religious concepts and social values. The importance of Lovedu cosmology, ancestor worship, religious cults, magic and witchcraft in their social, political and personal life is clearly delineated. The authors characterize the Lovedu society as one that is based upon cooperation and compromise among its members. The role of religious beliefs in such a society is presented with force and clarity. The concepts of law and morality are also shown to reinforce these basic values. For information about the authors see 2: Kringe in this file. --Analyst/

Field date: 1928-39
Analyst: Robert Lee

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1958

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Yale: Nkc86 964G. DLC: Gn480 .G72. DLC card no.: 64-55273.

[The Southern Bantu Lovedu have an agricultural economy with a hierarchical political administration on a patrilineal-territorial basis. The monarch is a divine queen and 'mother-in-law' of all district chiefs through their daughters given as tributary 'wives.' These tributary relations are one main feature of the Lovedu kingdom, which operates according to patrilineal principles with a partially matrilineal orientation. In this article she describes the bride-price exchanges of cattle and women in marriage as quasi-economic transactions, and considers the consequences of these transactions as they relate to polygyny and remarriage, marriage stability, lineage integration, household property control, family residence patterns, inheritance, and male-female relations. Underlying the family social organization and economy is the complex pattern of exchanges between brother and sister: the brother, in using the bride price paid for his sister to obtain a wife for himself, must provide a daughter as a wife for her son. This usually leads to

5: Krige, Eileen Jensen.

matrilateral cross-cousin marriage which creates sets of reciprocal obligations over generations between brothers' and sisters' families. But the author does not relate her data to the current theoretical polemic over the social value and significance of unilateral cross-cousin marriage in lineage societies with regard to alliance formation. Also, in discussing the growth and decline of families during the phases of the domestic cycle, she fails to relate these kinship structures and processes to the economics of property itself: i.e., how population changes and the uses of available economic resources may limit the amount of property entering into marriage exchanges or change the form of kinship reciprocity itself between family households.]

Field date: 1936-38, 1961-62
Analyst: Gilbert Winer

Evaluation: Social Anthropologist-5
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Yale: Nkd74 B228 v.11-12

/The Lovedu are one of 26 groups treated in this summary article. Since the relevant information is contained in 2:Krige and Krige, this File, this source was not processed for the Lovedu file.--Analyst/

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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(h) The incidence of cross-cousin marriage and its variations in two generations of descendants of A (counting only the actual members of his lineage as shown in Figure 9) over a time-span of over sixty years (i.e., from about 1895 to 1962) was 31 per cent (nine out of twenty-nine marriages).

The arrangements in the above lineage segment are by no means unusual. This lineage is that of a district head, but it is representative of numbers of cases that could be chosen from among non-Christian traditionalists who still form the majority of the tribe.

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2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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FOREWORD

I AM interested in this book for two reasons. The first is that the 114 authors are my nephew and his wife—both devoted anthropologists, to whom this painstaking research into the least known of our South African native tribes has been a real labour of love. While earth's foundations were shaking in the convulsion of our times they were absorbedly probing into the mysteries of the Rain-Queen and her 'timeless' society. To me this seemed an almost unnatural devotion to science—until I came to read the MS. of this book and found it a fascinating distraction to the war problems which form my daily life. Perhaps the curious reader may find it no less entertaining.

The second reason is that for at least half a century the Rain-Queen 643 and her people and the curious stories about them have interested me. She was said to be very light coloured: was she a descendant of one of a couple of Boer girls who were said to have been spared by those natives, when early in the nineteenth century they massacred the Van Rensburg party without leaving a trace behind? What was the mystery about her which made it almost impossible for Europeans to catch a glimpse of her? Had the Natives adopted a white queen as something divine? Even if these were mere baseless fancies, other points of personal interest attracted me to the subject of the queen. Long ago one of my daughters, when a college girl, visited the country of the queen with a company of friends in the hope that they might be able to see her. In that mountainous, almost roadless country the party was overtaken by a violent rainstorm and late at night arrived at her headquarters drenched, exhausted, and more dead than alive. The queen ordered a hut to be cleaned and prepared for them where they stayed the night; and next day, having probably heard that she was the Prime Minister's daughter, gave a personal audience to her. Imagine the thrill! That established a personal bond between the queen and my wife, suitably recognized in the customary South African way. Then many years after, my nephew and his wife were staying at the headquarters of the queen in order to gather the material for this book. From time to time they informed me of the most interesting anthropological finds they were making. I also learnt that near her headquarters was a forest of cycads (*Encephalartos transvenosus Burtt-Davy*), one of the most unique botanical features in South Africa. [137] This decided me at last to spend a holiday in the queen's country, and, with my relatives as guides, I had a most interesting experience. I saw how they had, through simple humanness, overcome the fears and the shyness of the people and were on most familiar terms both with the queen and her subjects. I saw my cycad forest. Best of all, I saw that wonderful woman, well over sixty, but strong in body and character—every inch a queen. We exchanged information and gifts in the traditional style, and I could thank her for her kindness to my daughter in the distant past. She was much taken up with all the useful domestic articles my wife had sent her. A couple of years afterwards I was once

[i.e. J.C. Smuts--Analyst]

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643 more Prime Minister, and I received a most charming letter from her, expressing her pleasure that she had met and personally knew the man who was 'wearing the crown of South Africa'. Accepting the complimentary expression so kindly meant, I was equally pleased to have met a woman who so impressed me with her force of character and intangible air of authority—a woman who really was a queen. No wonder her subjects look upon her as the embodiment of their divine order. And yet that woman is the centre—in the ritual of her tribe—of a great tragedy which awaits her, as it has awaited her predecessors. That ritual carries us back to the most dim and distant past of the human race, and the interested reader will find it in this book. Mujaji is one of the high lights of anthropology, and, looking at her calm, strong face, I wondered what she thought of the fate in store for her. Here are the tears in things mortal.

114 This book is interesting from another point of view. It paints the picture of a Native society in which the pattern or plan of the whole determines the character of all the main lines of detail. Religion, law, ethics, social institutions, all fit naturally and almost logically into the scheme as a whole—they appear to be products of the central pattern which has stamped its character on all the details. The social sanctions in law, religion, ethics, &c., are not external and superimposed on the social practice, but flow from the fundamental social system itself as its natural outcome. All are in one degree or another internal to the system. The writers of this study have succeeded in penetrating to this inner core of this particular type of Native society, and in showing the balance and harmony of the system as a whole. This gives, in my opinion, a very special anthropological value to this study.

They have no doubt been able to probe thus deeply into this Native society because of the sympathetic relations they have been able to establish with the Natives. The first task of the anthropological field-worker, that of gaining the confidence of the Native, is more difficult than is generally supposed. As those who know the Native mind realize, it requires qualities of tact, patience, and sympathy of the highest order. This task presents unusual difficulties among the people of Mujaji, whose suave and accommodating manners can be most effectively used to frustrate the quest of the field-worker. And if there is one thing about which they are persistent, it is the safeguarding of their secrets. The tenacity with which they keep these secrets is intelligible, for they attach as great importance to the mystery supporting the powers of their queen as an army commander to the strategy which will ensure the success of his campaign. The queen is rain-maker *par excellence* of South Africa, and to maintain that position her secret weapon must never be divulged. Moreover, intimately linked with the preservation of her powers are many of the constituent parts of the whole tribal structure. All the major institutional arrangements in some way subserve the grand purpose of making her the divine 'transformer of the clouds'. Since the foundations as well as the superstructure of the culture are interlocked with this purpose and are psychologically necessary, as the authors show, for sustaining men's faith in the Rain-Queen's role, investigations even into

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the most everyday occurrences arouse suspicion and are met with evasions. In these circumstances, penetration into the innermost life and values in the society is an outstanding achievement. The acid test of the investigator's understanding of the primitive people he studies is whether or not he makes sense of what appears to the ordinary observer as a mass of vices, follies, and superstitions. That is the test that the authors have satisfied. In this book, customs and an outlook so different from ours as to be regarded from our point of view as irrational and perverted emerge as perfectly natural and coherent—nay, inevitable in the total context of the culture.

Another reason for ranking this book high among monographs on the Bantu is that it deals with a people whose ethnic affinities give them an important place in future comparative studies. They occupy a country which has been subjected to influences emanating from three major clusters of the Southern Bantu: the Sotho of the central plateau, the Nguni of the south-east coastal regions, and the Shona to the north of the Limpopo. Migrating southward some centuries ago from the disrupted empire of Monomotapa, the land of our enigmatic Zimbabwe ruins, they have absorbed into their original culture many diverse elements from tribes in the south. The composite nature of their culture, which has none the less been welded into a remarkably coherent whole, and the feasibility of studying the character of its constitutional parts in other tribes are of great significance for the comparative study of tribal institutions. I believe that the time has arrived for such a study, at least of those sections of the Bantu of whom we have some considerable knowledge. In a limited sphere, that of the tribes of the Northern Transvaal, the authors, who have tested the value of comparative field-work, point out the perspective they have gained from this method and the clues for interpreting custom that it has given them.

Of the specific contributions in this book to our knowledge of Bantu custom and thought, I need refer merely to a few. The authors are concerned mainly with presenting a balanced analysis of the great dynamic forces in the social system, of the mentality and outlook of the people, and of the tendencies due to culture contact. It is therefore all the more significant that they have found room to emphasize the place in the lives of the people of the practical, everyday business of making a living. Not even a primitive people, however magic-ridden their culture, can afford to give less time and energy to provide for their material needs than to what we call their superstitions. What must strike every reader is the extent of their knowledge and use of the vegetation. We ought to know more of these things in Bantu life, not merely because of their intrinsic interest and the light they throw upon how far empirical relations are recognized by primitive peoples, but also it is upon knowledge of this kind that we can most profitably graft our own scientific conceptions, our measures for their material progress. This is not to say that we should not also know their philosophy of life, for fundamental values cannot be disregarded in the handling of human situations. But it is clear that the vast, only slightly explored field of the Native's knowledge of plants, their properties and uses, awaits intensive investigation. The authors are

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114 justified in their admiration for the Native's knowledge of the vegetation. Recent chemical analysis of several Native relishes shows that their protective and nutritional value is not inferior to that of our vegetables and greens. We know very little of the therapeutic value of roots and barks used in Native medicine, but, since close observation of nature and a real capacity for understanding empirical relations is evident in all their practical activities, there is ample justification for research in these matters, even though Native medicine is largely dominated by magical conceptions.

In the complex of social institutions, women have an unusually exalted position, higher even than among the Venda. It is evident that the claims of women to achievement are given special recognition. The maintenance of their status in a patrilineal society is not merely a survival; it is closely connected with the distinctive pattern imparted to the culture by a queen, who, besides being the religious head, is the nucleus of a network of political alliances. Social links in the society have ingeniously been co-ordinated with its predominant pattern. The special link between brother and sister has, for instance, been coupled to the chain of the bride-price cattle exchanges, and in the result a web of influences radiates from the sister to the various parts of the social system. Women thus become the nucleus of a system which holds together the intermarrying groups, the district organizations and, to a large extent, the whole political structure. It is not to be expected that this power of women, in a society which accords legal precedence to men, will always go unchallenged. For that reason, among others, many conflicts as regards succession to important positions and other institutional stresses and strains arise.

The method of settling differences is discussed in an illuminating chapter appropriately headed 'The Genius of Juridical Adjustments'. This chapter throws new light upon, just as it makes an outstanding contribution to, Bantu jurisprudence. Law emerges as an extremely flexible body of rules, enforced chiefly by the complex interconnexions within the institutions of which they form part and administered by a body of men concerned not so much with the superficial issues presented by the parties as with the fundamental causes of friction between them. As contrasted with our legal system, in which law decides between issues, their method is to reconcile persons. The arbitrational machinery in the service of their system ramifies through the whole society. Like the genius of the complex royal institutions, its genius is directed towards appeasement and the maintenance of a well-balanced equilibrium. The emphasis upon these things, coupled with other arrangements in the society, has brought about a system which functions without involving, or at least without relying for its validity upon, sanctions of physical force. The effective sanctions are to be found in the interplay of a network of reciprocal rights and obligations: if the reciprocities are respected life is worth living, if they are neglected life is difficult, often impossible.

Besides these contributions to the working of the society, the book contains a series of chapters on the philosophy of life of the people and their mentality. They do not, of course, speculate about final causes, but

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their conceptions of the causation of disease and death—the great evils they recognize—and of the interrelations of the worlds of natural and supernatural forces provide evidence of their outlook upon final causes. It is an outlook very different from our own, but nevertheless coherent. If we start from their premisses and the small measure of control they have over the forces of nature, we may come to conclusions not unlike theirs. Their conclusions are, in other words, neither absurd nor the inferences of irrational beings with minds operating differently from ours. This difference in outlook upon final causes is found also in the sphere of what we may call 'moral qualities', such as honesty, industry, moderation. It is in this sphere, as the authors show, that grave misunderstandings are liable to arise between Europeans and Natives in their practical relations with one another. In the timeless society of the Native the need there is among us for intensive striving, precision, and punctuality does not exist; and as a result friction is liable to arise in the employment situation. This is but one of the many instances in which incongruities in the two cultures may cause conflicts when they are brought into contact with one another. The merit of the discussion of this subject lies both in that Lovedu traits and attitudes are shown to be inevitable consequences of the cultural pattern and in the appreciation of the reality of the difficulties encountered by the European in the contact situation. This is the kind of realism that will go far towards making the conclusions of social anthropology more acceptable to practical men and more useful to the administrator.

These are only a few of the many interesting and remarkable features of this study. Other readers may be attracted by other features in it. I commend the book as a whole as one of the most honest and penetrating researches into Native life that I have come across. And I am aware of the hard work and loving care that have gone to the making of it.

J. C. SMUTS.

CAPETOWN.
March, 1941.

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principles, but eschewed the details. Upon a limited canvas we have striven to draw the main outlines in such a way as both to maintain the proportions of the culture and to interest the general reader as well as the student. Much is left unsaid about such aspects of the culture as the manner in which men try to harness the powers of nature and to condition the individual to his social function, the basic assumptions of the magico-religious world and the elements imparted to the culture by contact with other peoples, both African and European. We have not touched upon many aspects usually dealt with in the larger anthropological monographs. In view of our general object, we have omitted not only whole subjects of interest to the anthropologist, such as birth and death ceremonial, arts and crafts, village organization and kinship terminology, but also details on practices of importance to specialists, such as care of cattle, cultivation, diet and diseases, land tenure and medicine. While we believe that the many omissions do not detract from the essential balance and unity of the whole, it is our intention to fill in the gaps with articles on specialized aspects of the culture, and with additional books on larger topics such as law and judicial arrangements, marriage and social organization, magic, and religion. Too much must not be expected in the present volume.

Our contacts with the Lovedu began more than ten years ago with short visits of a month each in 1928, 1930, and 1932. These visits served as an introduction, but sustained field investigation was rendered possible only when, between 1936 and 1938, we held a Fellowship of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. During this period we were in the field sixteen and a half months in all: April to July, 1936, November, 1936, to July, 1937, September and October, 1937, and May to August, 1938. In some of the intervening periods, while one of us was ill, the other as far as possible maintained personal touch with the Lovedu and, in order to verify some of our observations and to investigate a ceremony not held since 1905, we also paid some visits of a few days each in 1939.

Except to mention two points, we shall refrain from expounding our methods of investigation. The principles we adopted were, on the one hand, personal and intensive local observation, and, on the other, comparative investigation over a large area. Personal observation is essential because, though verbal accounts given by reliable informants may serve as useful starting-points, they generally not only are unconsciously idealized, but assume a background unknown to the investigator and often entirely escaping his attention. Accounts may reflect theory and ideals, but often give a very wrong impression of practice and real life; they never convey atmosphere and personal relationships. By comparative study, we obtained a mass of valuable clues as to lines of inquiry or interpretation which we could follow up and check by further local and intensive as well as extensive observation.

Personal observation is tiring, slow to yield results, and usually objectionable to the Lovedu; but in the end the rewards are great. After a long day's work, it is distasteful, but often essential, to keep awake all night sitting in the stifling atmosphere of a hut crowded with dancing,

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Monoalo a o fede*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tsetse* (or *muduhulu*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*muduhulu*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

BANTU STUDIES

A JOURNAL

devoted to the Scientific Study of

BANTU, HOTTENTOT & BUSHMAN

EDITED BY

J. D. RHEINALLT JONES

AND

C. M. DOKE

VOLUME X

1936

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND PRESS
JOHANNESBURG

[title page]

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THE LOVEDU

By FERDINAND KRUGER

101 128 The Lovedu are a Bantu-tribe residing in the East of the Northern Transvaal. The history of the tribe which is published here is the work of a Lovedu. With assistance of a number of old Lovedu-men and some teachers I tested the facts and rewrote the whole paper in correct Lovedu-dialect. The translation given by me is as literal as possible.

104 Vowels: *a, e, i, o, ɔ, u.*

Semivowels: *y, w.*

Consonants:

Nasals: *m, n, ɲ* (dental) *ŋ* (velar).

Fricatives: *v, f,* (both bilabial); *z, s,*; *ɮ ɬ*; *hh,*[1] *h*; *l, ɬ* (dental); *ʃ*; *r.*

Plosives: *b, p*; *g, k*; *d, ɖ* (dental) *t, ʈ* (dental).

Affricates: *tsh, tlh.*

Diacritical letters:

h after a symbol=aspiration.

w after a symbol="back labialization."

y after a symbol="front labialization."

y after a nasal=palatalization.

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[1] *hh* voiced aspirate *h*.

[2] *J* see A. N. Tucker, M.A.—*The Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana Group of Bantu Languages*, p. 48, 143. London 1929.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

VALOVEɮU

539 1. *khetĪhava kha valoveɮu khe ʃholehhile gua leɮagoni la vokhalaga. ga ʃhao e rehho hhé motho wa voloveɮu a khe lotĪha va re : " mmalo, moloveɮu, mmalo makhalaga, motho wa leɖaža, motho yo a voahho vokhalaga ʃ" hhabé ge " ɮigolové za hha—mohhale." va re tĪhava kha voloveɮu khe gwa hhóna.*

2. *va re khosi ya hhóna e vé e née varwa va vaveɮi. hhundonu yo momyé a ʃhiwâ bula. ga morahho yo mohholo a thaméla khelo kha yo mothokho. a ya hho hhobela bula hho monnahhavó. hhundonu moratho wahhwé a hhana hho mo ʃha bula. mohholo a mo zohhéla ga marumó. moratho a tĪhava, a leva thogo yeeno ya hheɮimo, a wéla molabó wa levébé la vokhalaga. mo zeleni va arohhana zwiriba zwi zwivili. khe khemyé kha leva thogo ya vorwa. kha ahha gua vyaɖaɮi e vehho khetĪhava kha mamavolo. le vóna ge " ɮigolove ža maɖaži."*

3. *hhundonu valoveɮu vona va vé va khe nyaga ɮagó la hho nakha le le vehho le mavu a hho nakha, le nahho le zwiolo. va vé va khe romela masohhana hho va éda bele hho nyaga leɮagó le le vyažé. hhundonu vóna ya re khé va ʃhirile leɮagoni la važwéɖa va khumana leɮago—ɮagó le le vehho le merula le zwiolo gwa thogo ya vogwažaži vya thava ye momose a ahhilwéhho " medingen " e lehho gua khumeloni.*

4. *vóna va khumana hho ahhile khetĪhava khe tshemyé khe khe vižwahho kha hha—kheoóga. hhundonu vatho vao va vé va kha zeve molló. va vé va khe ʃa zwiʃewa zwóʃhe zwa vóna zwi kha abeewa. va zwi ʃa vyayé ga zwiphóóʃhóló.*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

1. The Lovedu-tribe took its origin in Mashonaland. Therefore, when a Lovedu salutes, they say: "In truth, Lovedu, in truth Khalaga,[1] person of Ledaka,[2] person who comes from Mashonaland!" Furthermore they are "the Pigs of Mohale."[3]—They say there is the home of the Lovedu.[4] 173 576

2. They say the king there had two sons. Now one of them[5] was given the rain.[6] Afterwards the elder brother desired the thing of the younger one. He went to ask his younger brother for the rain. But the younger brother refused to give him the rain. The elder brother rose against him with spears.[7] The younger brother escaped southward,[8] he crossed the Limpopo-river of Mashonaland. On the way they separated into two groups. One tended towards the South and settled at Vyadadi[9] namely the Mamabolo-tribe. They are also "Pigs[10] of Madaži."[11] 173

3. Now the Lovedu were looking for a nice country with fertile soil and with ant-hills.[12] They sent the young men in advance to look out for such a country. And indeed—when these passed Vendaland they found the right country having merula-trees and ant-hills in the east of the mountain where there is established "Medingen"[13] to-day—namely at Khumelo.[14] [197]

4. They found that there was living another tribe called that of Kheoga.[15] Those people did not know the fire. They ate all their food unboiled. They ate it just like the wild animals.

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[1] Name for the inhabitants of Mashonaland.

[2] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[3] Name of chief.

[4] I was given the following explanation of the word "Lovedu": *Volovedu khd khe khe fhadolwa ge khore: mo hho lovahho zwilô, e lêhho vathu le ikhomu le riâga.*—Lovedu means: there where things namely persons, cattle, goats and sheep are being brought as offerings. [101]

[5] The younger one.

[6] The instruments and formulae to prepare the rain-medicine.

[7] Chief weapon.

[8] Literally: upwards.

[9] Mountains near Haenertsburg.

[10] Lovedu and Mamabolo praise the same animal: the wild pig.

[11] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[12] Ants = a delicacy. [262]

[13] Mission Station.

[14] Name of mountain.

[15] Another Bantu-tribe.

539 5. *valoveɭu va va vužisa hhore va phela vyani ndé le mollô. va hha —kheóga va re : " mollô ge eni? o ɭiyani? "—valoveɭu va re : " re óra mollô le hho abea zwiʃewa ga wóna. ge hhe va fha zwiʃewa zwe zwi abiilwé-hho ga wóna. hhundonu hhé va lle, va ḑwa zwi khe ḑefha. va lóba va hhobéla mollô hho valoveɭu. va rada hho abea ga wóna le hho óra. hhe o phimile va voéla hhabé hho hhobéla mollô. hhundonu va khe diya ga wóna.*

6. *zweeno valoveɭu va vé va khe ɭuměza leŧagô le voḑéle vya lóna. zweeno va rada hho le vosa. fhéla va sidwa ga hhovane va khumane le no veenyi. zweeno va ɭiya maanô a hho ɭiya ndwa hhore va phaḑélé va hha-kheóga mo leŧagoni.*

7. *hhundonu va hhobola hhore marumô a vóna e ga va mollô. ge hhé va khe laéla vaʃhaṅga hhore va ziyé zwisa zwa mollô. va montŧha meze ya hhakheógo ga hho fhesa leŧagô hore mollô o ḑo fhesa le meze hho thihi le vatho. vaʃhaṅga va ɭiya vyažé. mollô wa zwa mathogoni aao, wa fhesá meze. va hha—kheóga va vé va e gozeni e kholo. va gwa mezeni va ŧova. zweeno va ʃhóga mo va ga gwahho hhóna hhovane mollô o thigile leŧagô gamoga.*

8. *va vamyé va naméla ɭithavana, vaa thuswa ge mafhiga a mahholo, mo mollô o sidwahho hho fhiʃha hhóna. va vamyé va naméḑe mere. vóna va swa gamoga, ga hhovane maanye a vé a lelefhile hahholo, hhovane ho vé hho kheso ha zwa hho ḑohha mathomoni. vatho va vanži va fa lefu la ŧoro. hhwa pholohha vá khe gathe fhéla. le hhundonu vatho vao hha veso vaa va khetŧhava. mológô wa vóna hha o eso wa ḑala hho tshwana le melógô e memye.*

9. *hhundonu leŧagô la va la valoveɭu hho isa le momose. valoveɭu va khumana leŧagô lavô ga hho zwi lwéla ga mollô.*

10. *hhabé va re mo leédoni la hho gwa gua vokhalaga valoveɭu va ile va ʃhophéhha gudu hhe va khumane leŧagô le le omiléhho e khe leŧagô la maazi. melabô e mehholo e vé e hholé le vóna. va nyaga maazi a manži, va a ŧaya. khosi ya vóna va re o ile a khétha masohhana hhore a nyagélé khetŧhavá maazi. yéna a ya navô. va a nyaga. hhundonu va a ŧaya.*

11. *va re yena khosi o vé a tshwere khekhobo khe a khe fhilwéhho hho vobabaahhwé kha hho nesa bula. ge hhé a khe lega hho nesa bula hóna môówô. ga morahhonyana hha na bula e kholo, ya ḑaza melabô le meeli. hhé va voéla gua megoveni va fhiʃha va thabile ga maaḑa. vatho va vóna maazi a hho nwa le hho abea zwiʃewa. va re e vé e moʃhólô wa bele wa khosi yéétwô hovane gua vokhalaga hho vé hho khe nesa vobabaahhwé.*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

5. The Lovedu asked them how they managed to live without fire. The Kheoga said: "What is fire? what does it do?" The Lovedu said: "We warm ourselves by the fire and cook the food with it." Then they gave them cooked food. When they had eaten they found that it tasted sweet. So they asked the Lovedu for fire. They wanted to cook with it and to warm themselves. When it went out they returned again to ask for fire. Then they began to work with it. 173

6. Now the Lovedu desired the country and its wealth. They wanted to take possession of it. But they were unable (to do so), as they found that it had its possessors. So they planned to fight and to drive the Kheoga out of the country. 173 726

7. Now they thought that their weapons could be the fire. So they ordered the young men to seize fire-brands. They surrounded the villages of the Kheoga to set fire to the country that the fire might burn the villages together with the people. The young men did so. The fire burnt everywhere and laid the villages in ashes. The Kheoga were in great distress. They left their villages and fled. But there was no spot for them to get away, for the fire surrounded the whole country.

8. Some ascended the hills, they were protected by the large rocks, where the fire could not come. Others climbed upon trees. These burnt altogether, for the grass was very tall, for it had not been burned since the beginning. Many people died a terrible death. Only very few escaped. Even to-day these people have not yet become a tribe again. Their kin has not yet increased similar to others.[16]

9. So the country became property of the Lovedu until to-day. The Lovedu gained their country by fighting for it with fire. 173 773

10. Furthermore they say that on their journey from Mashonaland the Lovedu were in great troubles, when they found a dried-up country —a country without water. The large rivers were far from them. They were looking for much water and did not find it. It is said that their chief chose young men to look for water for the tribe. He himself went with them. They were searching but they missed it.

11. They say that the chief had taken with him the calabash which his father had given him to produce rain. So he tried to make the rain fall where they were. After a little while there fell a heavy rain and filled all the rivers and watercourses. When they returned to their shelters, they arrived wet to the skin. The people got water for drinking and cook-

[16] They have inter-married with the Lovedu and other tribes.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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12. *leina la khosi e lôvilêhho vokhalaga ya bele ge magaphele. ge yêna yo a žerehho šago la va hha—kheôga ga hho lwa ga mollo. khosi ya voveli ge mohhale. hha hho zevye zwezwinži zwahhwê.*

13. *khosi ya vorarô ge "kheale kha mmamohhale a leḑaza." ge kherêdô khahhwê. yêna o nesiže bula hho tshwana le vo—makholo—ahhwe.*

14. *khosi ya vone ge "phedola—khefhedola—maru—a—ḑaža." ge kherêdô khahhwê. va rêdwa ga maru, va re : va fhedola maru hho nesa bula.*

15. *Yena phedola o vê a nêe ṅwanavô e vehho mohholwane. ê ile hhê khosi a e khaufhi le hho ḑohha, a fha morwa yo mothokho lenaga la bula. fhêla vatho va vê va khe a zwi zeve hhore khosi e mo fhile naga la vohhosi. zweeno va hhobola hhore khosi e mo fhile naga la vohhosi. zweeno va hhobola hhore va ḑo khumana yo a veho le leina le lehholo la vohhosi hhore e ḑo va yêna e a tshwerehho naga la bula. leina la yo mohholo e vê e maḑaže, la yo mothokho e vê e makhoba. hhundonu va re "khosi ge maḑaze! o ḑo ḑaža melabô ga maazi a bula. hhê e le makhoba ge hhore o ḑo khoba melabô, hhundonu va ṭhôga maazi." ge hhore va khe thakhalêla maḑaže hhore e vê khosi yavô.*

16. *zweeno va phaḑêla yo mothokho hhore a ḑohhê lešagoni la volovelu. yêna a ḑohha le khethôpha khe khe mo fholofhêḑêhho. a rodohhêla gua ḑeḑolo, a fhiṭha nareni, a yaa lula thavaneni ya khevela.*

17. *zweeno gwa volovelu maḑaže a sidwa ge hho nesa bula. lešagô la hhôna la va lešago la lešaži le ḑala ga mažaži. ga gua hha khevala bula e na ga mažaži ga memyaahha yôthê e le lešagô la mavêle ga hhovane hho vê hho khe na bula.*

18. *zweeno vakhômaana va volovelu va thôma hho lla le hho veleela ga hhe va khe a zeva hore makhoba ge yêna va mo fhilêho naga la bula.*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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ing. It is said that this was the first miracle of that chief, for in Mashona- 773
land his brother had produced the rainfall.

12. The name of the first chief who left Mashonaland is Magaphele. 173
It was he who took possession of the country of Kheoga by fighting with fire. The second chief is Mohale. There is not much known about him.

13. The third chief is "Kheale kha Mmamohhale a Leḏaža."[17] This is his praise-name. He produced rainfall just like his fore-fathers.

14. The fourth chief is "Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a—ḏaža."[18] [551]
This is his praise-name. They praise them on account of the clouds, they say: "They transform the clouds so that the rain must fall."

15. He—Phedola—had a son who was the first-born[19] When the 173
king was about to die, he gave the younger son the rain-horn. But the 643
people did not know that the chief had given him the horn of chieftainship. They thought that they would find that he who had the great name of chieftainship[20] would be he who had received the rain-horn. The name of the eldest son was "Maḏaže" (the Filler) that of the younger one was Makhoba (the Finisher). Therefore they said: "Chief is Maḏaže! He will fill the rivers with rain-water. As to Makhoba that means he will empty the rivers, so that we shall have no water." Therefore they proclaimed Maḏaže their chief.

16. They drove the younger brother away so that he had to leave 173
the Lovedu-country. He left together with the troop which trusted in him. He went upwards and came to "Nareni"[21] and settled on the mountain of Khevela.[22]

17. Now in Loveduland Maḏaže was not able to produce rainfall. That country was a country of sunshine and hunger without intermission. There at Khevela rain was falling continuously every year; it was a country of corn, for the rain was falling.

18. Then the head-men of Loveduland began to cry and to complain that they did not know that it was Makhoba who had been given the rain-

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[17] Unknown names

[18] "Transformer—clouds are filled."

[19] —and therefore heir to the Crown according to the law.

[20] See [19]

[21] "At the Buffalo" name of the country in the South of Loveduland from the name of the tribes living there. They praise the buffalo.

[22] Near the confluence of the Selati-and Olifant-river.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

539 *hhundonu va lagana hhore a vižwê a voêlê hhaye e vê khosi. gê hhê va khe romêla va vamyê va vôna hho mo hhobêla hhore a voêlê volovelu a ḑê hho va khosi.*

19. *yena a hhana a re : " le mphaḑêḑe ṅga se ṭhwê ṅkha voêla hhôna." ge hhê va khe mo phêhhêlela. hhundonu a re : ṅga voya vyani? mohholowaga a ga mbolaya." zweeno va re : " re ḑo liya maanô hhore re mo phaḑêlê." hhundonu a lumêža, a ḑohha navo. hhe va khe fhiṭha gua nareni hha lezwalô va mo siya hhôna.*

20. *vôna ga hhovane va khe liya ga khephiri hho khosi maḑaže—hhe va khe fhiṭha mozeni wa valovelu, va ya hho khosi va re : zeva, makhoba ṅwaneno o gwile ga marumô, o nyaga ho hhu volaya, o hhôna zeleni, o ya ḑa. ê gwa ! u ḑohhê hore a khe hhu khumanê ! " khosi maḑaže a re : ṅga ḑohha vyani? vaṭhaṅga va ḑo ndwêla, ge ḑo va fhênya." ge hhê va khe mo habelêža. va re : " yêna o ḑa ga marumô a manži, re ḑo siawa. ê gwa khosi, u khuḑê, re re hhê re khe lwa navô, le hê va khe re fhênya va khe ge va volaya le wêna." hhundonu khosi ya hhana.*

21. *ge hê vakhômaana va vamyê va khe hhomêla morahhô va viža khosi makhoba hhore a no va a khe vaḑamêla. hhê a sa ḑe a e khaufhi, va voêla habê hho khosi maḑaže, va mo zivisa hhore momose o sa ḑe a e khaufhi. " ê gwa, e yo khuḑa re re hê re khe lwa navô va khe ge va hhu volaya." ge hhê khosi maḑaže a khe lumeža. a gwa mozeni wahhwê a lula lesolini. vosihhu khosi makhoba a zêna moženi vakhômaana va ya hho zivisa khosi ya vôna hore : monnahhenu o žene mozeni ga lira. o ya hhu zoma ga vohhale, zohha re ḑo hhu sudisêža gua thaveni ya levaga.*

22. *ge hhe khosi a zohha, a ya thaveni yêêwô. mo zeleni ya hho ya gua levaga hho vê hho nêe molabô o va rehho ge moḑazwi. molabô ôôwô o vê o kha lumêlêlwa hho wêlwa ge likhosi. zweeno e vê e khe re hhê khosi e ga o wêla, e ga se ṭhwê e kha vosa khetšhava. o ḑo va a tšhinyaḑe ga hho wêla malabô ôôwô. hhundonu hha liyêhha hhê a sa dê a o wêḑe va mo voža hhore : zeva ga hhovane u wêḑe molabô o khe a lumêlêlwahho hhô wêlwa ge khosi, momose u ga se vê khosi yesu.*

23. *va mo ḑohhêla hhôna, va ya hhaye, va voswa ge khosi makhoba. hhundonu va mo vea leina la vo—makholo—ahhwê phedola—khefhedola—*

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horn. And they planned to call him to return home and to become chief. 173
So they sent some of them to ask him to return to Loveduland, to come and to be chief.

19. He refused and said : " You have driven me away, I can never return." Then they urged him. But he said : " How can I go ? My elder brother will kill me." They said : " We shall make plans to drive him away." Then he agreed and left with them. When they came to " Nareni ha Lezwalô "[23] they left him there.

20. They however—for they wanted to hide the facts to chief Maḑaže—when they arrived in the village of Loveduland, went to the chief and said : " Know ! your brother Makhoba left with warriors, he wants to kill you, he is on the road, he is coming ! Flee ! Go away that he may not find you." Chief Maḑaže said : " How can I go away ? The young men will fight for me, I shall defeat them." They however pressed him. They said : " He comes with many spears, we shall fail. Go away, Chief, hide yourself, that, when we are fighting with them, even if they beat us, they cannot kill you." But the chief refused.

21. Then some of the head-men went back, they called chief Makhoba that he might approach. When he was near, they returned again to chief Maḑaže and informed him that he was coming to-day, that he was near : " Go away, hide yourself that, when we are fighting with them, they may not kill you." Then chief Maḑaže agreed. He left his village and abode in a thicket. During the night chief Makhoba entered the village. The head-men went to tell their chief : " Your younger brother entered the village with an army. He will seek you with rage, rise ! we shall lead you away thither to the mountain of Levaga.[24]

22. Then the chief moved off and went to that mountain. On the 173
road to go to Levaga there was a river called Moḑazwi.[25] It was not 643
allowed for the chiefs to cross that river. Whenever a chief crossed it, he was no longer able to rule over the tribe. He will be ruined by crossing that river. Now it happened when he just had crossed, that they said : " Know ! as you have crossed the river which may not be crossed by the chief, you cannot be our chief anymore.

23. They left him there and went home ; they were governed by 173
chief Makhoba. They gave him the name of his ancestor " Phedola-

[23] A " buffalo "-tribe living near the Letaba-river.
[24] In the North of Loveduland.
[25] In the North of Loveduland.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

539 *maru—a—ḏaža. a vosa lešagô, a nesa bula vyayê ga babaahhwê. vatho va mo rada ga maaḏa ga vaga la bula.*

24. *mafhêlêloni a vohhosi vyaahhwê yêna o vê a nêe morwa. hhundonu morwa yôwô a mo phelisa vyayê ga tshiwana, a mo ṭhôya, a mo liya vyayê ga lehholu. hhahholo a vê a khe liya hhore vatho va khe lemohhe hhore khosi e ḏo mo fha vohhosi vyaahhwê. ṅwaana yôwô o vê a ahhêḏwe ndô hholê le moze, a lula hhôna. o vê a khe re hê a khe ya hhaye a khe a žene khoroni babaahhwê o vê a mo liyêde zela e thokho ye e kha zevyehho ge motho. hhabê o vê a khe re hhê moyanayo a khe ḏa hhare hha vatho ga zela yôna yêwo, khosi a mo thivêla. leina la ṅwaana yôwô va re ge " mogôdô wa leḏaža, mogôdô thamo di mesimo," hhova "volaô vya tšhoma le vatho" hhova "mogôdô —mme—a—phedola—khefhedola—maru—a—ḏaža."*

25. *zwirêdo zwêo zwi lumile gudu vohosini vyaahwê. yêna e vê e khosi ya maaḏa le busô e thada, hhovane o vê a khe volaya vatho. hhabê o vê a khe volaya valoi le zwiṭhôḏôlô le va va khumanwehho va khe aba maaga. gaṭholoni yaahhwê o vê a khe a diisa hho volaya vatho. va vamyê va vê va hhogwa lithamô, va vamyê o vê a khe va hhogêlêla mafhiga, va va phôsêza ga voliveni.*

26. *hhabê mogôdô e vê e motho wa hho ṭhalefha mešumoni yaahwê. khe khe ga vônwahho le momose mešumoni ya voṭhale vyaahhwê ge meahhô ya meragô ye a e ahhilêhho ga voṭhale vyo voholo. mo šagoni motho hha a khumane meahhô e tshwanahho le yaahhwê. mo meahhoni yêwô hho khumanwa khelulô kha lefhiga khe khe veḏilwêhho zwa voze—voze. ê vê e khelulô kha khosi mogôdô. va re : o vê a khe lula hha khôna, hhe a khe ôrêla ležaži. le khona khe a magaža, khe veḏilwe ga voṭhale vyo vo-hholo. fhelo fhao e vê moze wa mosada, leina la hhôna va re ge levyeni. (va vamyê va re : meahô eya e ahhilwe ge kheale babaahhô mogôdô.)*

27. *meṭheni ya khosi mogôdô madona a maveli ahhwe a ve a vaga lešagô. hhundonu hhê khosi a khe romêla vaṭhanga vaahhwê hho lamola phabanô yêo vôna va khumana hho zohhile ndwa. hhundonu va hhomêla hhaye hho zivisa khosi. zweeno khosi a gwa ga nnosi hhê a khe fhitha thaveni ya mmanobi a arola malira zwiriba zwi zwivili hho thiga meze ya madona aao. hhe a khe vôna hhore khosi e ḏile hho lwa navô va fyêhha hhore va ḏo volawa. hhundonu va lova monye wa vôna. va nša vanyana va vavili, va hhobêla hhore khosi a va tshwarêlê votšhinyi vyôwô. hhundo-*

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Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɖaža." He ruled the country, he made the rain fall like his father. The people loved him much on account of the rain. 173

24. Towards the end of his rule he had a son. This son—he made him live just as an orphan, he hated him and treated him as a thief. He did so especially for the reason that the people should not perceive that the chief wanted to give him his chieftainship. That child had a house erected far from the village, he dwelt there. When he wanted to go home, he did not enter by the main-entrance. His father had made a small path for him unknown to every body; furthermore when the child happened to come amidst other people on that road, the chief prevented him from entering. The name of that child was "Mogôdô, the cast-out, Mogôdô the neck with fat-wrinkles, or the resting-place for property and men,[26] or Mogôdô-Mme-a Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɖaža."

25. These praises were widely spread during his chieftainship. He was a powerful chief of severe government, for he used to kill people. He killed sorcerers and adulterers and people who were found telling lies, When judging he liked to pass sentences of death. Some were strangled. others were ordered to be burdened with stones and drowned in a deep place in the river.

26. Furthermore Mogôdô was a clever man in his undertakings. 173
That what still to-day is to be seen of his clever undertakings is the stone- 643
work which he erected with great skill. In the country there are no 324
buildings which are similar to his. Among these buildings there is to be found a stone-seat which is beautifully carved. It was the seat of chief Mogôdô, when he was basking in the sun. It surprises really, it was hewn out with great skill. On that place there was the chief-kraal, its name is Levyeni.[27] (Others say that those buildings have been erected by Kheale, the ancestor of Mogôdô).

27. In the days of chief Mogôdô two of his head-men quarrelled 173
about their territories. Therefore the chief sent his young men to stop 643
the quarrel; they however found that war had broken out. So they returned home to inform the chief. Now the chief set out himself. When he arrived at the mountain of Mmanopi[28] he divided his army into two divisions to surround the villages of those head-men. When they saw that the chief had come to fight with them they were afraid that they would be killed. So they submitted to their lord. They offered two

[26] Property and men have space in the wrinkles of his neck.
[27] "At the rock."
[28] In the East.

539 *nu khosi a leža naga ya hho khovaganša malira aahhwê. hhe malira a khovagane fhelo hhothihi va vožwa hhore e fhêde. hhundonu khosi a žia naga yaahhwê ya marumô, a e leža, a phêbêla. malira gamoga a a zosa zwirêdô zwa hho rêda khosi, va re : " mogôdô thamo di mesimo, mogôdô o fhala ga naga la bula. ê le mogôdô mme a phedola, a re : ge vôlaya motho, o a volaya ; a re : ge a phelisa, o a phelisa.*

28. *ge hhê khosi a žia lerumô laahhwê a phêbêla, a khe ṭhava fhase, a suba vogwažaži. a voža malira a re : " gua vogwažaži hho do gwa litšhosi ze lintsho. le ḍo lwa le žôna, hhundonu le ḍo li fhênya. ge moga a ṭhava fhase hhabê a suba voṭhwažaži, a re : gua voṭhwažaži hho ḍo gwa lomênô le le khuvelu, hhundonu lôna le ḍo le fhênya hho isa le hho isa.*

29. *hhabê khosi mogôdô a lwa le khašane morwa wa babaahhwê. hhundonu khašane a šavela gua lešagoni le le vižwahho tshwale. hhundonu va va mo viza hhore a ḍê a lule šagoni le lemyê le le vižwahho moluveni mo hho zohhilêhho monna o momyê e vehho mamadêba, morwa wa khašane yo a khumanêhho mafhogo a molimo gua Port Elizabeth yo a khumanwêhho a khe lwa le letšhwifhi meṭheni ya morudi knothe le Reuter. a va a volawa ge khosi ya voveli ya mosali e vehho masalanavo ga vaga la évaṅgeli.*

30. *mogôdô o vê a nêe varwa va vaveli. hhê va khe vaga vohhosi vya babavô vohhosi vya fhiwa moroli waahhwê e vehho khosi ya mosali možaži wa bele. likhaizali za a ragwa šagoni ge moṭhôlô wa lehhabana le khesa kha mollô zwi zwi vehho zwi khe lugiswa ga melemô ya hho phaḍêla vatho šagoni.*

31. *hhundonu khosi ya va možaži, a vosa lešegô la valovelu zwa voze vyayê ga babaahhwê. le yêna a volaya va va lishinyahho e lehho valoi le mahholu le va maaga. a nesa bula vyayê ga babaahhwê, a lovya ge mahhosi a gwahho hholê ga makhumô a meḥhuda—hhuda le managa a liḍou a gwahho hha mazulu, hha sekhukhuni, hha ramabulana le hha ṅguṅgunyane.*

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girls and asked that the chief might pardon them this trespass. Then the chief sounded the horn to assemble his troups. When the troups had assembled on one place, they were told that it was finished. Now the chief seized his war-horn, blew it and jumped about. All the troups intonated praise-songs to praise the chief; they said: "Mogôdô, the neck with fat-wrinkles, Mogôdô, he rules with the rain-horn." It is 'Mogôdô-Mme-a—Phedola," he says: 'I kill a person'—he kills; he says; 'I make live'—he makes live." 173 643

28. Then the chief took his spear, danced, pushed it into the ground and pointed to the East. He said to his warriors: "From the East there are coming black ants. You will fight with them, and you will defeat them." Then he pushed down again, pointed to the West and said: "From the West there will come red ants, these will defeat you over and over again."[29] 173

29. Chief Mogôdô fought also with Khašane, the son of his father. But Khašane fled into the country called Tshale.[30] Then the people called him to come and stay in another country called Moduveni,[31] where a certain man namely Mamadêba, a son of Khašane grew up, who found the Word of God at Port Elizabeth, who was found fighting against the darkness in the days of Rev. Knothe and Reuter.[32] He was killed by the second female chief Masalanavô for the sake of the Gospel. [797]

30. Mogôdô had two sons. When they quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father, the chieftainship was given his daughter who became the first female chief Možaži. The brothers were driven out of the country by the magic power of the little calabash[33] and the fire-stick[34] which had been strengthened with medicines of driving people out of the country. 173 643 [789]

31. So Možaži became chief, she was a good ruler over the country Lovedu like her father. She also killed the wrong-doers namely the socerers and thieves and liars. She produced rainfall like her father, she received homages of chiefs who came from far with treasures of different kinds and elephant-tusks—coming from Zululand, Sekhukhuni, Ramabulana[35] and Ñguñgunyane.[36]

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[29] A prophecy attributed also to the chief Sekhukhuni.
[30] In the West.
[31] In the West.
[32] Missionaries among the *Golovê*.
[33] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[34] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[35] In Vendaland.
[36] In Thongaland.

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539 32. *ga vaga lêô kherêdô kha khosi možaži khe re : " možaži mma —la—khovêla, mošava—nḏoni, ge lala zela, ge moṭholohhaḷi, khe na molodi. ge mphaga wa ḏou, mmakhweleni wa khehhaḏeni ; o ḷa ṇama, mošava nḏoni.*

33. *khosi ya voveḷi e vê e mmasala—navô. leina lêwô o le fhilwe ga va va hhwilêhho hhê a khe vewa vohhosi hhundonu le yêna o vosiže vyayê ga ḷikhosi že ḷimyê. kherêdô khahhwêr khe re : " mmasala—navô, u abê voya. wa aba mbê, khetšhava khe ḏo balagana. ê le khosi khethubuḷi kha voṭhalaga khe ilehho : ' vatho khe va rone (ge hhore : hhá ge rade vatho). ga fheža ga hho gwa kheso ga moṭhana, ga re : vatho, ṅwaeni!'— khehhoḷi, mma va ndeva mariža, ndevêlêlê ga belo ya leṭhôyô."*

34. *mohhumahhaḷi yôwôô o vê a nêe ḷikhomu ža ḷitshaḷi že ḷi hhamiwahho. hhundonu ḷikhomu žêwo di vê di khe vižwa voṭhabô vya mosada. ḷi vê di khe hhamiwa ge mokhômaana yo a khêthêdwêhho hho ḷi hhama. hhe ḷi hhamilwe morwaḷi wa mafhi o vê a khe re hho rwala, a a isa ga hhaye, e re hhê a khe ṭhagana le vatho, vôna va gwadame ga ḷikhuru hho isa hhê a fhirile. ê vê e mokhwa wa hho hhodisa zwiḷewa zwa khosi. ê re he motho a ga êma ga maodo hhê mafhi a khe fhera khaufhi hhahhwê, e vê molado o mohholo. khomu zêwo ḷi vê di khe a ḷula šageni lethihi le khomu ža moze, ḷi vê ḷi khe ḷula ḷii nosi.*

35. *hhabê khosi mmasala—navô o vê a ṭhoile valumeḷi. moḷumeḷi o vê a khe a ḷumêlêlwe hho žêna ga mozeni wa mosada. hhê moḷumeḷi a nêe dava hho e isa mosada, o vê a khe ḷula nḏê hha moze ga fhase hha more, a romêla mafhogo ga khevùga gua mosada.*

36. *khosi khesêthwane yo a vosahho momose le yêna a vižwahho možaži ge khosi ya vorarô ya mosaḷi. yêna o nesa bula. o amohêla valumeḷi hho žena khoroni le mozeni waahhwê o thakhalêla thudô. hho vile hho ahhilwe gêrêgê mo khoroni ya mosada. vana va mosada va žêna khegôlô ga daêlô yahhwê.*

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32. Therefore the praise-song of chief Možaži says: "Možaži—when the sun sets—trader in the hut;[37] I sleep on the road,[38] I am a widow,[39] I have no one who watches me. I am the elephant-knife on the hip in the sheath;[40] she eats meat,[41] the trader in the house." 173 643

33. The second chief was Masala-Navô. She was given this name by the dead (queen), when she was raised to the throne. She governed also like the other chiefs. Her praise-song says: "Mmasala-Navô,[42] speak good (words). When you are speaking bad (words), the tribe will split. It was the chief Khethubudi of Mashonaland who said: "I do not like the people.—Finally I got an ulcer on my back and said: 'People, scratch me.'"[43]—The hawk, at which they look with fear, they look at me with hearts full of hatred."[44]

34. This queen had milk-cows. They were called "the selected" of the chief-kraal. They were milked by a head-man who had been chosen to milk them. When they were milked, and the carrier of the milk was carrying it to bring it home—when it happened that he met people, they had to kneel down until he had passed. This was a custom to honour the food of the chief. When a person was standing when the milk passed near him, it was a great crime. These cows were not kept in one kraal together with the cattle of the village, but they remained separated. 173 234 643

35. Furthermore chief Mmasala-Navô hated the believers (in Christ). A Christian was not allowed to enter the chief's kraal. When a Christian had a case to be settled in the chief's Court, he had to sit outside the village under a tree; he sent his words through the messenger of the chief. 173 797

36. Chief Khesêthwane who governs to-day, and who is also called Možaži, is the third female chief. She produces rainfall. She allows the Christians to enter the official meeting-place and her village. She is fond of education. A church has been built near the meeting-place of 175 797

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[37] It is not necessary that she goes round to "sell" the rain. People are coming to her to buy in her hut.

[38] Like a prostitute (?)—she was not married but is said to have had many lovers.

[39] Because she had no husband.

[40] Praise of her blood-thirstiness.

[41] She killed her chief counsellor always after a short service.

[42] "She who remains with them."

[43] That chief thought that he was able to live without needing other people, until he became ill and was unable to help himself. Then he was obliged to call for assistance.

[44] Praise of the cruelty of the Queen.

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539 37. *khosi khesethwane mo mosada hha a ɮumêlêlê hhê motho a ga žêna a abere zwiêda maodoni—hhê motho a khe vadamêla khôrô o tshwanêḑe hho gola zwiêda a zwi siyê mônô nḑê hha khôrô, a khôna a tshe žêna ga khoroni.*

mathômô a mmuôô wa ɮikhosi ža vasaɮi gua voloveɮu.

1. *khosi ya mafhêlêlô wa monna ge mogôdô. o ve a nêe varwa va vaveɮi e vehho malegudu le kheêbe. hhundonu masohhana aao a vê a vaga vohhosi vya babavo, yêna a kha phela. hhundonu va vê va nêe khaižaɮi ya vôna, va vê va khe re ge možaži. ge hhê vohhosi vo khe fhiwa yêna hhore e vê mmusi wa khetshava. ɮikhaižaɮi žôna ža phadêlwa.*

2. *hhê motho a khe fhiwa vohhosi voloveɮu o vê a tshwanêḑe hho fhiwa khesa kha mollô le khetshobo kha maazi. zweeno va re va ile va fha khaižaɮi khesa le khetshobo hhore a zwi isê hha malegudu, khaizaɮi yo mohhololo. hhundonu va re va vê va zwi ɮiyile ga mṭhôlô ya melemo ye e rêhho hhê motho a khe e levêlêla ga maaṭho, a ṭhagama ṭhôhhô. hhondonu a va vyayê ga mophêgô, a ḑohhêla maɮulô, a gwa, a ya šagoni le lemyê, a ɮula hhôna.*

3. *va re malegudu hhê a vone khesa le khetshobo a dohhêla lešago la vobabaahhwê a ya gua zwêḑa, a hhwêla hhôna. le kheêbe morwa yo mothokho yo a vagilêhho vohhosi le yêna o ɮiyilwe vyazê ga yo mohholo. a ḑohhêla lešagô, a leva thogo ya thôvôlô ; hhundonu a hhwêla hhôna.*

4. *ge hhôna vohhosi vya fhiwa moroɮi wa mogôdô e vehho možaži wa mathômô. yena a bêba moroɮi wahhwê e vehho masalanavô. yêna a ladêla mmaahhwê vohhosini.*

5. *masalanavô o vê a khe na ywaana hho isa vokhêgoloni vyaahhwê. moga o vê a nêe moratho wahhwê wa mosaɮi. yêna o vê a fhilwe vaana vaveɮi. ṅwaana wa bele e vê e mosimana, wa voveɮi e vê e monyana. va khêtha ṅwaana wa monyana yo a vižwahho khesêthwane hhore e vê khosi, ge yêna možaži a kha vosahho le momose.*

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the royal kraal. The children of the chief's kraal are attending school at her command. 175 791

37. Chief Khesêthwane does not allow that a person enters her kraal with shoes on his feet. When somebody approaches the main entrance, he must take off the shoes and leave them outside the main-entrance that he may be allowed to enter the meeting-place. 643 576

The beginning of the government of female chiefs in Loveduland

1. The last male chief is Mogôdô. He had two sons : Malegudu and Kheêbe. These young men quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father when he was still alive. Now they had a sister who was called Možaži. So the chieftainship was given her that she might be the ruler of the tribe. The brothers were driven away. 173 643

2. When a person is made chief in Loveduland, he must be given the fire-stick and the water-calabash. Now they gave the sister the fire-stick and the calabash that she might bring it to Malegudu, the elder brother. But it is said that they had been strengthened by magic charms which make a person mad who looks at them with his eyes. He will behave like a mad person, he will leave his home, go away and move to another country and dwell there. 643 789

3. They say when Malegudu had looked at the fire-stick and the calabash, he left the land of his father, went to Vendaland and died there. Kheêbe the younger son who had quarrelled with him about the chieftainship was treated in the same way as the elder one. He left the country went to Thôvôlô[45] and died there. 173 643

4. So the chieftainship was given the daughter of Mogôdô namely Možaži I. She had a daughter called Masala-Navô. She followed her mother in the chieftainship.

5. Masala-Navô had no child until her old age. But she had a younger sister. She had two children. The first child was a boy, the second one a girl. The girl-child called Khesêthwane was chosen to be chief. She is Možaži who governs still to-day.

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[45] In Portuguese-East-Africa.

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THE REALM OF A RAIN-QUEEN

A STUDY OF THE PATTERN OF LOVEDU SOCIETY

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Published for the
INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES & CULTURES
by the OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO
1943

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
AMEN HOUSE, E.C.4
London Edinburgh Glasgow New York
Toronto Melbourne Capetown Bombay
Calcutta Madras

HUMPHREY MILFORD
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY

THE TYPOGRAPHY AND BINDING
OF THIS BOOK CONFORM TO THE
AUTHORIZED ECONOMY STANDARD

[p. ii]

Printed in Great Britain

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

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FOREWORD

I AM interested in this book for two reasons. The first is that the 114
authors are my nephew and his wife—both devoted anthropologists, to whom this painstaking research into the least known of our South African native tribes has been a real labour of love. While earth's foundations were shaking in the convulsion of our times they were absorbedly probing into the mysteries of the Rain-Queen and her 'timeless' society. To me this seemed an almost unnatural devotion to science—until I came to read the MS. of this book and found it a fascinating distraction to the war problems which form my daily life. Perhaps the curious reader may find it no less entertaining.

The second reason is that for at least half a century the Rain-Queen 643
and her people and the curious stories about them have interested me. She was said to be very light coloured: was she a descendant of one of a couple of Boer girls who were said to have been spared by those natives, when early in the nineteenth century they massacred the Van Rensburg party without leaving a trace behind? What was the mystery about her which made it almost impossible for Europeans to catch a glimpse of her? Had the Natives adopted a white queen as something divine? Even if these were mere baseless fancies, other points of personal interest attracted me to the subject of the queen. Long ago one of my daughters, when a college girl, visited the country of the queen with a company of friends in the hope that they might be able to see her. In that mountainous, almost roadless country the party was overtaken by a violent rainstorm and late at night arrived at her headquarters drenched, exhausted, and more dead than alive. The queen ordered a hut to be cleaned and prepared for them where they stayed the night; and next day, having probably heard that she was the Prime Minister's daughter, gave a personal audience to her. Imagine the thrill! That established a personal bond between the queen and my wife, suitably recognized in the customary South African way. Then many years after, my nephew and his wife were staying at the headquarters of the queen in order to gather the material for this book. From time to time they informed me of the most interesting anthropological finds they were making. I also learnt that near her headquarters was a forest of cycads (*Encephalartos transvenosus* [137]
Burtt-Davy), one of the most unique botanical features in South Africa. This decided me at last to spend a holiday in the queen's country, and, with my relatives as guides, I had a most interesting experience. I saw how they had, through simple humanness, overcome the fears and the shyness of the people and were on most familiar terms both with the queen and her subjects. I saw my cycad forest. Best of all, I saw that wonderful woman, well over sixty, but strong in body and character—every inch a queen. We exchanged information and gifts in the traditional style, and I could thank her for her kindness to my daughter in the distant past. She was much taken up with all the useful domestic articles my wife had sent her. A couple of years afterwards I was once

7/8 [i.e. J.C. Smuts--Analyst]

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643 more Prime Minister, and I received a most charming letter from her, expressing her pleasure that she had met and personally knew the man who was 'wearing the crown of South Africa'. Accepting the complimentary expression so kindly meant, I was equally pleased to have met a woman who so impressed me with her force of character and intangible air of authority—a woman who really was a queen. No wonder her subjects look upon her as the embodiment of their divine order. And yet that woman is the centre—in the ritual of her tribe—of a great tragedy which awaits her, as it has awaited her predecessors. That ritual carries us back to the most dim and distant past of the human race, and the interested reader will find it in this book. Mujaji is one of the high lights of anthropology, and, looking at her calm, strong face, I wondered what she thought of the fate in store for her. Here are the tears in things mortal.

114 This book is interesting from another point of view. It paints the picture of a Native society in which the pattern or plan of the whole determines the character of all the main lines of detail. Religion, law, ethics, social institutions, all fit naturally and almost logically into the scheme as a whole—they appear to be products of the central pattern which has stamped its character on all the details. The social sanctions in law, religion, ethics, &c., are not external and superimposed on the social practice, but flow from the fundamental social system itself as its natural outcome. All are in one degree or another internal to the system. The writers of this study have succeeded in penetrating to this inner core of this particular type of Native society, and in showing the balance and harmony of the system as a whole. This gives, in my opinion, a very special anthropological value to this study.

They have no doubt been able to probe thus deeply into this Native society because of the sympathetic relations they have been able to establish with the Natives. The first task of the anthropological field-worker, that of gaining the confidence of the Native, is more difficult than is generally supposed. As those who know the Native mind realize, it requires qualities of tact, patience, and sympathy of the highest order. This task presents unusual difficulties among the people of Mujaji, whose suave and accommodating manners can be most effectively used to frustrate the quest of the field-worker. And if there is one thing about which they are persistent, it is the safeguarding of their secrets. The tenacity with which they keep these secrets is intelligible, for they attach as great importance to the mystery supporting the powers of their queen as an army commander to the strategy which will ensure the success of his campaign. The queen is rain-maker *par excellence* of South Africa, and to maintain that position her secret weapon must never be divulged. Moreover, intimately linked with the preservation of her powers are many of the constituent parts of the whole tribal structure. All the major institutional arrangements in some way subserve the grand purpose of making her the divine 'transformer of the clouds'. Since the foundations as well as the superstructure of the culture are interlocked with this purpose and are psychologically necessary, as the authors show, for sustaining men's faith in the Rain-Queen's role, investigations even into

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the most everyday occurrences arouse suspicion and are met with evasions. In these circumstances, penetration into the innermost life and values in the society is an outstanding achievement. The acid test of the investigator's understanding of the primitive people he studies is whether or not he makes sense of what appears to the ordinary observer as a mass of vices, follies, and superstitions. That is the test that the authors have satisfied. In this book, customs and an outlook so different from ours as to be regarded from our point of view as irrational and perverted emerge as perfectly natural and coherent—nay, inevitable in the total context of the culture.

Another reason for ranking this book high among monographs on the Bantu is that it deals with a people whose ethnic affinities give them an important place in future comparative studies. They occupy a country which has been subjected to influences emanating from three major clusters of the Southern Bantu: the Sotho of the central plateau, the Nguni of the south-east coastal regions, and the Shona to the north of the Limpopo. Migrating southward some centuries ago from the disrupted empire of Monomotapa, the land of our enigmatic Zimbabwe ruins, they have absorbed into their original culture many diverse elements from tribes in the south. The composite nature of their culture, which has none the less been welded into a remarkably coherent whole, and the feasibility of studying the character of its constitutional parts in other tribes are of great significance for the comparative study of tribal institutions. I believe that the time has arrived for such a study, at least of those sections of the Bantu of whom we have some considerable knowledge. In a limited sphere, that of the tribes of the Northern Transvaal, the authors, who have tested the value of comparative field-work, point out the perspective they have gained from this method and the clues for interpreting custom that it has given them.

Of the specific contributions in this book to our knowledge of Bantu custom and thought, I need refer merely to a few. The authors are concerned mainly with presenting a balanced analysis of the great dynamic forces in the social system, of the mentality and outlook of the people, and of the tendencies due to culture contact. It is therefore all the more significant that they have found room to emphasize the place in the lives of the people of the practical, everyday business of making a living. Not even a primitive people, however magic-ridden their culture, can afford to give less time and energy to provide for their material needs than to what we call their superstitions. What must strike every reader is the extent of their knowledge and use of the vegetation. We ought to know more of these things in Bantu life, not merely because of their intrinsic interest and the light they throw upon how far empirical relations are recognized by primitive peoples, but also it is upon knowledge of this kind that we can most profitably graft our own scientific conceptions, our measures for their material progress. This is not to say that we should not also know their philosophy of life, for fundamental values cannot be disregarded in the handling of human situations. But it is clear that the vast, only slightly explored field of the Native's knowledge of plants, their properties and uses, awaits intensive investigation. The authors are

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114 justified in their admiration for the Native's knowledge of the vegetation. Recent chemical analysis of several Native relishes shows that their protective and nutritional value is not inferior to that of our vegetables and greens. We know very little of the therapeutic value of roots and barks used in Native medicine, but, since close observation of nature and a real capacity for understanding empirical relations is evident in all their practical activities, there is ample justification for research in these matters, even though Native medicine is largely dominated by magical conceptions.

In the complex of social institutions, women have an unusually exalted position, higher even than among the Venda. It is evident that the claims of women to achievement are given special recognition. The maintenance of their status in a patrilineal society is not merely a survival; it is closely connected with the distinctive pattern imparted to the culture by a queen, who, besides being the religious head, is the nucleus of a network of political alliances. Social links in the society have ingeniously been co-ordinated with its predominant pattern. The special link between brother and sister has, for instance, been coupled to the chain of the bride-price cattle exchanges, and in the result a web of influences radiates from the sister to the various parts of the social system. Women thus become the nucleus of a system which holds together the intermarrying groups, the district organizations and, to a large extent, the whole political structure. It is not to be expected that this power of women, in a society which accords legal precedence to men, will always go unchallenged. For that reason, among others, many conflicts as regards succession to important positions and other institutional stresses and strains arise.

The method of settling differences is discussed in an illuminating chapter appropriately headed 'The Genius of Juridical Adjustments'. This chapter throws new light upon, just as it makes an outstanding contribution to, Bantu jurisprudence. Law emerges as an extremely flexible body of rules, enforced chiefly by the complex interconnexions within the institutions of which they form part and administered by a body of men concerned not so much with the superficial issues presented by the parties as with the fundamental causes of friction between them. As contrasted with our legal system, in which law decides between issues, their method is to reconcile persons. The arbitrational machinery in the service of their system ramifies through the whole society. Like the genius of the complex royal institutions, its genius is directed towards appeasement and the maintenance of a well-balanced equilibrium. The emphasis upon these things, coupled with other arrangements in the society, has brought about a system which functions without involving, or at least without relying for its validity upon, sanctions of physical force. The effective sanctions are to be found in the interplay of a network of reciprocal rights and obligations: if the reciprocities are respected life is worth living, if they are neglected life is difficult, often impossible.

Besides these contributions to the working of the society, the book contains a series of chapters on the philosophy of life of the people and their mentality. They do not, of course, speculate about final causes, but

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their conceptions of the causation of disease and death—the great evils they recognise—and of the interrelations of the worlds of natural and supernatural forces provide evidence of their outlook upon final causes. It is an outlook very different from our own, but nevertheless coherent. If we start from their premisses and the small measure of control they have over the forces of nature, we may come to conclusions not unlike theirs. Their conclusions are, in other words, neither absurd nor the inferences of irrational beings with minds operating differently from ours. This difference in outlook upon final causes is found also in the sphere of what we may call 'moral qualities', such as honesty, industry, moderation. It is in this sphere, as the authors show, that grave misunderstandings are liable to arise between Europeans and Natives in their practical relations with one another. In the timeless society of the Native the need there is among us for intensive striving, precision, and punctuality does not exist; and as a result friction is liable to arise in the employment situation. This is but one of the many instances in which incongruities in the two cultures may cause conflicts when they are brought into contact with one another. The merit of the discussion of this subject lies both in that Lovedu traits and attitudes are shown to be inevitable consequences of the cultural pattern and in the appreciation of the reality of the difficulties encountered by the European in the contact situation. This is the kind of realism that will go far towards making the conclusions of social anthropology more acceptable to practical men and more useful to the administrator.

These are only a few of the many interesting and remarkable features of this study. Other readers may be attracted by other features in it. I commend the book as a whole as one of the most honest and penetrating researches into Native life that I have come across. And I am aware of the hard work and loving care that have gone to the making of it.

J. C. SMUTS.

CAPETOWN.
March, 1941.

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PREFACE

121 643 THIS book presents the life and culture of the Lovedu, a Bantu tribe in South Africa. Its central figure is a sacred queen. Against the background of our world, she no doubt appears unreal in some respects, like the baseless fabric of a dream, but in others she is real enough. We can, for instance, readily visualize her, without official husband to cramp her authority, bearing her successor by a secret consort; or maintaining her strategic position at the centre of the tribe by re-distributing as favours the wives she receives as tribute. But it is a different and far more difficult matter to depict as real what we regard as mysterious; for, hallowed by a heritage of incest, she is chosen for her role by the ghost of her predecessor, and her destined end is death by her own hands, in order that she may rule by divine right. We have tried to show that these mysteries become realities when we see them as means to the supreme end of consecrating her power to make rain, and when we realize that this power implies control of half the cosmic forces and gives men faith to do their daily tasks.

121 162 Our main object has been to describe the culture of the Lovedu. We have set ourselves the task of showing the nature of its parts and their relation to one another. Some space is devoted to the royal institutions; the network of links woven by kinship, marriage and marriage cattle; the legal procedure of compromise and appeasement; and various aspects of magic, witchcraft, and religion. Considered as a whole, the culture emerges as a structure supporting and in turn supported by the Rain-Queen. We may think of the royal institutions as the foundations upon which men build for safety against famines and foes; the culture dispenses with reliance upon garden magic for success of the crops and upon a military system for national defence. Marriage cattle and the kin can be regarded as forging a frame which firmly holds the society together, binding its families, foreign groups and territorial units to one another and to the queen. Stresses and strains are taken by flexible devices for adjusting disputes by conciliation. A cult of masks and man-made mysteries appears to surmount the edifice like spires and pinnacles; we may envisage it as the cultural handling of those enigmas of nature, the exalted themes of growth and fertility.

Next, we have tried to outline the attitudes and interests of the people. They appear as carriers of the culture oriented toward the central figure and helping one another to bear the burden of a timeless society. Our chief concern has been to show how their ideals and motives have been moulded by the culture; why, for instance, they frown upon competition and appraise moderation, and how it is that they are not troubled by sex-guilt or inferiority complexes. We have finally turned to consider some aspects of culture contact, such as the fear and distrust of the agents of an acquisitive society against whom the carriers of the culture have no weapons save secrecy and deception.

In describing these lineaments of Lovedu society, as its stands facing the onslaught of Western civilization, we have set forth the general

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principles, but eschewed the details. Upon a limited canvas we have striven to draw the main outlines in such a way as both to maintain the proportions of the culture and to interest the general reader as well as the student. Much is left unsaid about such aspects of the culture as the manner in which men try to harness the powers of nature and to condition the individual to his social function, the basic assumptions of the magico-religious world and the elements imparted to the culture by contact with other peoples, both African and European. We have not touched upon many aspects usually dealt with in the larger anthropological monographs. In view of our general object, we have omitted not only whole subjects of interest to the anthropologist, such as birth and death ceremonial, arts and crafts, village organization and kinship terminology, but also details on practices of importance to specialists, such as care of cattle, cultivation, diet and diseases, land tenure and medicine. While we believe that the many omissions do not detract from the essential balance and unity of the whole, it is our intention to fill in the gaps with articles on specialized aspects of the culture, and with additional books on larger topics such as law and judicial arrangements, marriage and social organization, magic, and religion. Too much must not be expected in the present volume.

Our contacts with the Lovedu began more than ten years ago with short visits of a month each in 1928, 1930, and 1932. These visits served as an introduction, but sustained field investigation was rendered possible only when, between 1936 and 1938, we held a Fellowship of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. During this period we were in the field sixteen and a half months in all: April to July, 1936, November, 1936, to July, 1937, September and October, 1937, and May to August, 1938. In some of the intervening periods, while one of us was ill, the other as far as possible maintained personal touch with the Lovedu and, in order to verify some of our observations and to investigate a ceremony not held since 1905, we also paid some visits of a few days each in 1939.

Except to mention two points, we shall refrain from expounding our methods of investigation. The principles we adopted were, on the one hand, personal and intensive local observation, and, on the other, comparative investigation over a large area. Personal observation is essential because, though verbal accounts given by reliable informants may serve as useful starting-points, they generally not only are unconsciously idealized, but assume a background unknown to the investigator and often entirely escaping his attention. Accounts may reflect theory and ideals, but often give a very wrong impression of practice and real life; they never convey atmosphere and personal relationships. By comparative study, we obtained a mass of valuable clues as to lines of inquiry or interpretation which we could follow up and check by further local and intensive as well as extensive observation.

Personal observation is tiring, slow to yield results, and usually objectionable to the Lovedu; but in the end the rewards are great. After a long day's work, it is distasteful, but often essential, to keep awake all night sitting in the stifling atmosphere of a hut crowded with dancing,

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123 sweating humanity. After an exhausting walk of ten miles or more over difficult country, in order to witness a ceremony, it is discouraging to be refused admittance to the performance or to find it postponed until the European leaves; but occasional success amply repays perseverance. In the timeless Lovedu society, even if the investigator is welcomed, he may have to wait hours for a performance to begin; but the time need never be wholly wasted. Personal observation brings to light bewildering variations in the culture. There is no such thing as rigid conformity, and rules are made for man, not man for rules. Until the observer's own cultural conditioning is re-conditioned by intimate touch with the society, he cannot hope to penetrate its meaning.

In this book we are concerned to describe custom and life as they are to-day, after fifty years of European contact. Every custom, every ceremony, every case in it, has been personally seen except in those instances, always clear from the context, in which the event, such as the death of a Lovedu chief, did not occur during the period of investigation. We have written about everyday things as they are enacted in the tribe to-day, not as they were in the past. For obvious reasons, names mentioned in illustrative cases are all fictitious, save only where they are essential for the subject matter, as in the chapters on tribal history, social groupings, and political organization.

At the outset of our investigation we planned a rough division of work. One of us, E. J. Krige, concentrated upon magic and religion, family life, and women's activities; the other, J. D. Krige, upon laws and political organization, history, and man's activities. But our method of studying human situations as and where we found them, and of recording things as and when they occurred, precluded any rigid division, and each obtained information upon all aspects of culture. Each of us independently studied many institutions, such as marriage, economic life, and medical practices, and the diversity of our information and impressions—often reflections of our personal differences of outlook—provided useful clues to further observation and interpretation, besides showing that in field work the temperament of the investigator is a vital factor. In the preparation of this book E. J. Krige is responsible for Chapters II, V, VII, VIII, XII to XV, and J. D. Krige for Chapters I, III, IV, VI, IX to XI, XVI, XVII and the maps; but each has carefully gone through the work of the other and the whole is the result of the fullest co-operation between us. It does not seem necessary to mention in detail which of us took the photographs reproduced.

197 As regards the language of the Lovedu, we found that, difficult as it was to acquire, a working knowledge was absolutely essential, because implicit in it is a vast background of associations which can never be recaptured in translation. Khilovedu is now practically a dialect of Sotho, yet it cannot be adequately written in Sotho orthography. It approximates to Venda in much of its vocabulary, falls midway between Sotho and Venda in grammatical structure, and is Sothoized in phonology, 104 but many of its sounds are unknown in Sotho. Generally speaking, 194 we have adopted the orthography recommended by the International Institute with some modifications. For dental *d* and *t* we have used *ḍ* and *ṭ*

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as in Venda, and now commonly used in Northern Sotho, where these sounds also occur, but, as in Sotho, the semi-flapped alveolar lateral fricative, a phoneme of *d*, has not been distinguished from ordinary *d*; and we have deemed it unnecessary to have a special letter for the sound of English *sh*, or *ts* or *c* for the sound *ch* in English 'church', which we write *tsh*. Many variations are evident in Khilovedu in its movement towards Sotho, the language taught in the schools: there are differences in vocabulary and sounds used by women and young children, on the one hand, and by those who go to town, on the other, and by the young as compared with the old. The old sound of English *z* in *azure* becomes in the mouth of the younger generation the English *j* as in 'John'; *z* as in 'prize' alternates with *dz*, which is more common among the young people; and an old prefixal form, *lu*, is generally now *le*, except among the oldest people. We have used, *j*, *dz* more often than *z*, and *le* not *lu*, in accordance with modern trends. The *u* tends to become the closed *o*, and it is often very difficult to distinguish between these sounds; but here again we have kept as close as possible to the most prevalent pronunciation and have adopted *mu*, not *mo*, as the noun prefix.

We desire to thank the International Institute for publication and for the grants which enabled us to undertake this work, the Rev. W. and Mrs. Krause for hospitality while we were on their mission station, and numerous Lovedu friends, who must remain anonymous, for their co-operation. We desire also to express our gratitude to Dr. A. I. Richards for her invaluable assistance in seeing the book through the Press, and to Miss D. G. Brackett, the Secretary of the International Institute, for additional help in this connexion. But it is to Mrs. A. W. Hoernlé that we are most deeply indebted. When one of us was a student of economics and the other practising at the Johannesburg Bar, she, as lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand, awakened our interest in social anthropology, made us realize its paramount importance as the basis of policies and national welfare in this southern sub-continent of Africa, and gave us that invaluable background, both of knowledge and ideals, from which our work has since then been oriented. Later, as adviser and friend, she was to us the source of unfailing encouragement, stimulating suggestion, and inspired guidance. For these roles there is no one better equipped than she by knowledge and experience of the Bantu. It is due to her that we have devoted ourselves, not to the professions with which we originally began our careers, but to social anthropology and to the ideal of putting it in the service of the practical problems of black and white in Africa.

E. JENSEN KRIGE.
J. D. KRIGE.

PRETORIA.
November, 1939.

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To

A. W. HOERNLÉ

The mother of Social Anthropology
in South Africa

[p. xvi]

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CHAPTER I

PAGEANTS OF THE PAST

Fame of Mujaji transformer of the clouds—the cycle of the kings—the cycle of the queens—from the pageants to the people.

FAME OF MUJAJI, TRANSFORMER OF THE CLOUDS

THE Lovedu are not numerous and, from a military point of view, they are insignificant. Yet among their neighbours and among tribes as far away as the Zulu they have a great reputation. The fame of their queen, Mujaji, is spoken of even by white men as if it were the fame of the monarch of a mighty empire. That is doubly curious. For, on the one hand, the nineteenth century in the southern sub-continent of Africa opens with the Napoleonic career of Chaka, king of the Zulu, whose exploits, followed by great displacements of peoples and spectacular reconstructions of tribes, overshadow everything else. On the other hand, the Lovedu, at the end of the century, ignominously surrendered to the European without a shot being fired.

Upon what basis has Mujaji, queen of an obscure tribe in the far north-eastern corner of the Transvaal, built her fame? By 1800 the kingdom of the Lovedu had already existed for two centuries in the seclusion of the sheltering foothills of the Drakensberg. It was undistinguished among its far mightier neighbours, the Venda, the Pedi, and even the Ḍokwa. A mere glance at the map shows their insignificance beside the overwhelming masses of Shangana-Ṭonga, now almost completely encircling them. They were too microscopic even to be seen on the stage of the sub-continent, when mighty empires succumbed and new nations were born. Nevertheless, it was amid these convulsions, even as a challenge to them, that the kingdom of the Mujajis arose to prominence. The Lovedu kings had always been sacred kings; they had a reputation for rain-making, but it was no unique reputation, shared as it was by several of their neighbours. Among the Lilliputian tribes who had penetrated the geographical barriers isolating the Lovedu lowveld—the tsetse-fly belt east and north along the enveloping curve of the Limpopo, the Drakensberg on the south and the escarpment on the west—the Lovedu could claim precedence and ascendancy. But if the Zulu legions or any one of the pillaging hordes which their ravages had set into motion had violated the sanctuary of Vulovedu, little would have survived of the Mujajis.

To the Zulu, so we are told by Bryant, their historian, Mujaji was the greatest magician of the north. Queen of locusts and of drought, a four-breasted marvel, her name struck terror in the hearts of would-be enemies, and her fame surpassed that even of Mantatisi, the ferocious female tyrant who was leading the Kololo (Ṭlokwa) and laid the foundations of the Rotse empire. Mujaji also it was who magically smote to death dread Zwide, fleeing from Chaka, when he came too near Vulovedu, even though it was appeasement, not conquest, that he sought. According to

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Bryant, Mujaji was conceived to be immortal, inaccessible, mysterious. That is a fair reflection of the opinion held both by her neighbours and by peoples living far from her domain. Even to her own people she was practically inaccessible, appearing but seldom before them; but she was not immortal, and her mystery, if what is natural and inevitable be mysterious, was the mystic power of transforming the clouds into rain. To this central conception the name Vulovedu (or Lovedu) bears witness. It is interpreted to mean the country where the cattle and the wealth, even the sisters and the daughters, of foreign chiefs are utterly lost (*hu lova*); they are the offerings for rain which, by accruing to Mujaji, 'waste' the substance of the suppliants. That is the simple secret, out of which the colourful phantasy of the mystery of Mujaji has been elaborated. But it is more than a simple matter. The ancestors of Mujaji also were rain-makers; but they were kings, not queens. If it was the feminine attributes of the ruler which made Mujaji famous among her neighbours, it was, however, the fairness of her skin which captured the imagination of the early European pioneers.

There was enough in the environment itself to lend colour to the picture. The mist-covered mountains are an appropriate setting for the mysterious Mujaji, 'Transformer of the Clouds' (*Khifidula-maru-a-Ḍaja*), for such is her great praise. You can watch from afar how those vapour-laden clouds roll over the hills, constrained, as it were, to pour out their life-giving rain. You can easily imagine the 'huckster in her hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) where it nestles, secreted in the bush, on the edge of a precipice, and from which she sells her rain-making magic. It is well known that there are others who claim the power to constrain the heavens, and it is curious that the greatest among them are or have been women; but by comparison with Mujaji they are mere amateurs, even dabblers and quacks, trespassing upon her prerogative. They can raise storms and send hurricanes, but they do not have the power to withhold rain from the undeserving or to drop it gently upon the deserving with mathematical precision.

If these things appealed to the Native mind, the European was not unimpressed by the babbling of the streams mingling with the sounding of the drums, by the forest-clad ravines that are sanctuaries of ancestral spirits, and by the grotesque kopjes standing out as sentinels guarding the seclusion of savage men. The gateway to Vulovedu is the Valley of the Devils (Duivelskloof), a name which reflects the reaction of the pioneers to what was regarded as uncanny. But it was particularly the observances and ceremonial requiring the seclusion of the queen, thereby shielding her from the public eye, restraining her movements and preserving unsullied the secrets of her power, which fired the imagination. No European had seen the predecessor of the present queen; and the fairness of her complexion easily became the subject of rumour and phantasy.

That Mujaji II, who died in 1894, was fair cannot be disputed. Fairness is a feature of many Lovedu; it is a highly prized quality. There are tales among Europeans of the adventures of a Portuguese Don Juan in the bad old days; and undoubtedly, by Lovedu legend, a Portuguese trader visited the royal court. But if he had designs upon the queen, as

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is alleged, they were frustrated by the beer which was pressed upon him and rendered him powerless. We cannot attribute the sagacity of the queens, as did Rider Haggard, in his story of *She-who-must-be-obeyed*, to her pure Arabian ancestry. There may be Arab blood in her veins, as there probably is in the veins of all her people; certainly it was not by virtue of any foreign blood that 'She' ruled the tribe, and there is nothing that suggests that the Lovedu owe their organization of culture to an alien conqueror. They are among the politically weakly organized rather than highly centralized Bantu. Haggard's book, which appeared in 1886, correctly emphasizes the high status of women, the pride in female ancestry, the inaccessibility of the queen; and it is upon her immortality that the plot turns. There are also mysterious caves, but people never lived in them.

A more recent picture of the Rain-Queen, based upon local rumour, has been given by Dicke in his *The Bush Speaks* (1936). There she is represented as a crafty woman of mixed white extraction who came with her people from West Africa, and with diabolic cunning induced among her people the belief that she was endowed with the supernatural power that created the clouds so often resting upon her mountains. The rain-priestess soon acquired fame, which she used to found a great kingdom, without, however, relying upon force of arms. To account more adequately for her Machiavellian intrigues, he supposes that her female ancestors were white women, sold to the Arabs on the slave markets of West Africa, who enchanted their masters with their sexual attractions; hence the device of ruling her councillors by remaining unmarried; hence also the many girls, wives of the queen, whose duty was to captivate foreign chiefs, to spy, 'to induce their new masters to attend the festivities, dances, beer drinks, orgies, licentious debaucheries continuously held at the rain-priestess' capital'. Thus we get from Dicke's book a picture of intrigue and debauchery at the capital, supported by assassinations and poisonings, of a kingdom 'built up on immorality, deceit and crime, with no effective striking force to support it'. Her councillors preferred to be ruled by a woman, so that sons of the queen always died before reaching maturity.

There is much else that may be gleaned from local gossip. People are incredulous if one says that one has seen the queen. They remember how Mujaji II deceived Joubert, the Boer general, who, after subjugating the tribe in 1894, was shown, not the true Mujaji, but some one who impersonated her. Forgetting the signal service of the missionary, the Rev. F. Reuter, who intervened on her behalf, they attribute to the cunning of the queen her acquittal of complicity in the rebellion which brought Joubert upon the scene and which led to the defeat and wholesale transportation of several tribes in the lowveld. The diplomacy of the queen had overcome the white man. These are the beliefs that have contributed to the fame of the Lovedu. Whatever basis in reality there may be for them, there is one thing we must note. Mujaji lives no more than twenty-one miles from Duivelskloof. There are flourishing European farms, particularly all along the west and south of her country. Yet the Lovedu have maintained intact their culture and their institutions,

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643 even the royal constellation of institutions, curious and incongruous with modern conditions though they might be.

000 And it is to a brief history of the royal institutions, as providing the key to an understanding of the Lovedu, that we shall now proceed. But let us say this: truth is ever stranger than fiction, yet it is also more complex and elusive. The truth that obtains in a strange world, made up of beliefs and values very different from our own, is not easy to recapture; there is no basis, no framework, in our lives for it. We are continuously confounded by inconsistencies and paradoxes, try as we would to turn our conceptions and theories this way and that and even upside down to fit the facts into them. What we shall try to do is to give a visual representation of a few historical events, by way of a series of pageants passing in review. A complete account of the background of the past is far beyond our purpose. It will be sufficient to represent the spirit of these events, leaving for another occasion the question of how far they have a true basis in fact.

173 The pageants are not arranged into groups by the tribal historian, but we may present them as if they were colossal cycles, the cycle of the kings and the cycle of the queens. Each cycle opens in mystery, the mystery of an incestuous conception that, instead of corrupting the world, crowns the sinner; it is the ritual vindication of revolutionary change. In the first cycle, which starts just before 1600 and ends two centuries later, the change signalizes the birth of the tribe; then follow wanderings and the settlement of an infant community, which slowly develops to the splendid stature of manhood; and, finally, corruption and dissensions lead to a downfall. But in the midst of the ruins of the catastrophic civil war, which ends the first cycle, a new conception is born and we are at the beginning of the second cycle. The first cycle is handled with simple power; but no single doctrine in it runs its full course. Yet it cannot be mere coincidence that the mystery which marks the birth of the tribe should also be invoked to account for the momentous change from kings to queens.

The cycle of the queens has not yet been completed; it began about 1800 and rapidly ran to the height of its splendour; and its crisis, prematurely brought to a head, has also been indefinitely lengthened by the intervention of a new order of things, ushered in by the advent of the European. We cannot predict when the crisis will end or what the outcome of so prolonged a suspense will be, for the response to the challenge of this new order is now only taking shape and direction. But of this we can be certain, that in a world ordained by the white man there is less room for the vast sweep of the legendary mysteries. The tribal historian is unequal to the task of harmonizing the play of new, intractable forces with the theme of his exalted design.

The history of Lovedu kings and queens is not unlike the legends of the saints. The tribal historian is, of course, not troubled by a sacred theme, by the eternal struggle between Good and Evil; but he must justify historical events, he must bring them into relation with the grand purposes of the tribe. He never consciously tampers with essential facts; he uncritically accepts tradition that has been handed down to him.

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There is no direct falsification, but the way in which all distinctions of place and time are ignored leads to strange distortions. The tribal historian pictures man and events, not in the shape of their setting in the past, but in the colours of the values of the present. This involves inevitable selection and rearrangement. Again, legend without dramatic appeal is liable to be lost in oblivion; and so the historian, telling his story by the fireside, must be a dramatist. He groups his material, centres them upon important events and colours them to harmonize with the total picture of the society he has in mind. It is not always easy to reproduce either the whole picture or that touch here and those lines there, which give it its distinctive character and meaning. There are delineations of what in the society are regarded as we regard original sin, but they effect the salvation, not the damnation of man. A treacherous deed assumes the form of a glorious achievement. A usurper is turned into a hero. Royal incest, instead of threatening the security of the society, strengthens the divine right to rule. These are some of the critical moments in the history of Lovedu kings and queens that we wish to present by a series of pageants.

THE CYCLE OF THE KINGS

The First Pageant (*c.* 1500). The sons of Monomotapa, mighty monarch of the Vakaranga, quarrel and each sets himself up as an independent *mambo*, or chief, dividing Vukhalaga, the empire of their father, among themselves. One of these chiefs has his capital at the mountain of Maulwi, somewhere in Rhodesia. His people, prostrating themselves in his presence, call him *mulozwi* or *murozwi*, but he has merely taken that name as a praise title to mark the link between him and the king of the Rozwi. Perhaps it is only a political link, not implying kinship of any kind. We do not know. Mambo rules his people, not by force, but through his supernatural prerogatives, for he is a sacred king. Tradition dictates that he should end his reign by ritual suicide. He is appointed, not in accordance with man-made rules, but by the spirit of his predecessor, who holds the door of the hut in which he died against all but the true heir; and it is only through that doorway that his successor can ascend the throne.

This *mambo* has a daughter, Dzugudini, and, though she is unmarried, she has an infant son, Makaphimo. Mambo wishes to punish the seducer of his daughter, but Dzugudini and her mother refuse to disclose the identity of the culprit, saying, 'The father of the child of a king's daughter is not to be known.' Mambo becomes more and more suspicious. Dzugudini's mother steals the rain charms and the sacred beads, and feverishly teaches her daughter their virtues and their use; and before Mambo can take action, Dzugudini and her infant son flee to the south.

After a long and eventful journey, the fugitives, accompanied by a handful of followers, arrive in Vulovedu, where they settle and found the tribe of the Lovedu. We do not know whether Mambo ever discovered who had seduced his daughter; but Lovedu tradition records that Makaphimo was the issue of the incestuous union of uterine brother

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173 and sister. The brother remains as *mambo*, successor to his father; the
643 sister, Dzugudini, by virtue of her incest, justifies the creation of a new people.

The Second Pageant (*c.* 1650). Both Dzugudini and Makaphimo have died, the first in Nareni, the second at Khumeloni. One of the nobles, remaining on the highveld, is moving southwards from near Munnik, later to establish the chiefdom of Mamavolo; two brothers of Makaphimo tarry on the way down the escarpment, and we see the one, Mahasha, sowing his seeds (*hu hasha*) to test the agricultural possibilities, the other, Mudiga, struggling to drive off the lions which surround (*hu diga*) his settlement. Muhale, son of Makaphimo, is ruling at Khumeloni. He is the acknowledged founder of the greatness of the Lovedu during the cycle. He successfully appeals to Mahasha and Mudiga to rejoin him; they give him their daughters as wives and he makes them his great headmen.

But Muhale's reign stands out boldly because of his subjugation of the Khiɔga, primitive denizens of the forest of Ḍaja. They have no fire, and live like wild animals, eating raw meat; their huts are badly constructed and dirty; they till the soil with sharpened sticks instead of hoes; and they have neither chief nor any visible form of government. The fair-skinned, cultured Lovedu set about educating these Calibans of savage humanity, teaching them the uses of fire. The Khiɔga find a new contentment in the sweetness of cooked food and in warming themselves by the hearth fires. Savage pupil and cultured tutor become close friends, so close that the savage unsuspectingly shows his benefactor the qualities of 'the place of the gods' (*vadimoni*) in the forest at Ḍaja. They envisage a brave new world, but they do not know that they are being deceived For in reality the Lovedu, coveting 'the place of the gods', are planning their destruction, They do not disclose the knowledge that fire can burn the veld; for they intend that 'their spears shall be fire'. And presently they set the grass alight and the fire scatters some Khiɔga, but burns most of them to death.

A moment later we see the Lovedu praying at the shrines at Ḍaja. When Muhale dies they bury him there; the Lovedu no longer fear the ancestral spirits of the Khiɔga. (For the fire, we may suppose, is here, as in the great transition ceremonies, a sacred rite. It effects the transition from danger to safety, from defilement to sanctity; the power for evil of foreign spirits it converts to a power for good in the service of the usurper; it cleanses the alien past and welds it firmly into the present.) As the pageant passes we see the ruins of another strange people, the Ḍgɔna. The Lovedu dread these ruins; they build far from them; avenging spirits, who have never been assimilated, contaminate the soil; the fire which purified and aggregated the sacred places of the Khiɔga was not used against them.

The Third Pageant (*c.* 1700). At Ḍaja, beside the grave of Muhale, we see another, that of Malaji. 'He who makes the country sleep', for that is what his name means, has left behind him peace and plenty. The

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little colony, sheltered in the fastnesses of its seclusion, is busy working 173
out its salvation. The Lovedu have ample living space, for the lowveld 643
is still almost devoid of inhabitants. Beyond it there are great nations, kept at a distance by geographical obstacles. The Lovedu are not only secure in their mountain fastnesses, but also protected by those far-off barriers—the massive mountains towering over the Olifants River in the south, stretching forth a gigantic limb to the north, and the deep, tsetse-fly infested Limpopo Valley circling the west as a moat defensive of their home.

Men are discussing to whom Malaji has entrusted the rain charms, to Pheduli, 'the Drainer of the Rivers,' or to his eldest son, Maḍaji, whose nickname, 'the Filler of the Rivers,' is much more auspicious. Maḍaji settles their doubts by driving off Pheduli and seizing the throne. But in the sequel we see drought and famine in Vulovedu, while at Khivela, where Pheduli rules, copious rains bring plenteous crops. Year after year Maḍaji's magic sweeps up gales that scatter the clouds hanging over Ḍaja, whereas Pheduli constrains them to drop their gentle rain at Khivela.

The contrast is especially evident to the headmen living near Tzaneen. They secretly ally themselves with Pheduli; they spread rumours of a mighty army marching upon the capital. At length their strategy succeeds. Maḍaji flees to the forest, unsuspectingly entrusting his defence to the traitors; and when they report defeat and persuade him to rally his forces in the north, he is trapped into crossing the Maḍazwi River. It is a river which, even to-day, kings cross at the price of their crown; it drains the source of their power to rule. Maḍaji thus forfeits his right to the throne, and Pheduli, safely installed, becomes the mighty Transformer of the Clouds.

Faith in the sanctity of a system which may exclude the elder in favour of the younger son is restored; man-made rules, which usurp the function of the spirit presiding over the choice of a successor, are discredited. There is no room in this pageant (nor is there in tradition) for the defection, probably at this time, of a considerable section of the tribe, who later become the people of Mamaila.

The Fourth Pageant (*c.* 1750–1800). Pheduli's grave stands beside those of his forefathers. The scene discloses Khiali, the fair-faced king, reclining in a seat hewn out of the rock on the summit of a mountain amid immense walls of stone. In the spirit in which the scene is portrayed, with its mounds of masonry and its structures of stone, the impression conveyed is one of Zimbabwic splendour. (The ruins are still there, phallic stones projecting from rough stone walls some 8 ft. high, [172] and the sculptured seat is merely two rocks in their natural position. But it is with the spirit, not the reality of the scene that we are concerned.)

Khiali does not notice those faint figures of foreigners crowding into the background. They are the Sotho invaders of the lowveld, pressing over the mountains in the south, clambering down the escarpment in the west, and in far-off Phalaborwa settling in an unfavourable environment, whence some would soon leave to encroach upon Vulovedu. On

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173 his magnificent material foundations Khiali is concerned to build a
643 strong spiritual edifice. His predecessors were content to entrust the welfare of the divine prince, he who should ascend the throne, to the care of the gods. But he, Khiali, by strengthening the hands of the gods, would secure for ever the succession of the sacred heir.

As Khiali sits there, a youth, obviously concerned to avoid detection, appears in the shadows of an opening in the fence. He slinks away when he sees others beside Khiali in the courtyard. A moment later he reappears, only to be driven back by Khiali, showering curses upon his head. But later we see Khiali and the youth whispering together in the king's private hut; the king is secretly teaching him the use of the rain charms. The youth is Mugɔdɔ the Outcast, youngest son of Khiali His father stints him of everything, makes him dwell far from the capital, treats him like a thief, and refuses him entry into his village except when he comes alone and unobserved by a secret pathway through the undergrowth. These things he does to deceive the people and safeguard Mugɔdɔ's title to the throne. But they also develop a supersensitiveness in the Outcast.

Thwarted in his youth, Mugɔdɔ suffers irreparable damage to his self-respect; he is obsessed by suspicions; he imagines that every man's hand is against him. His councillors are adulterers and sorcerers, corrupting his wives, plotting to usurp his position. Scandal and dissension sap the strength of the kingdom. His elder brother, Khashani, rises against him; he is driven off, but the tribe splits into two; and more than a century later, in the second cycle, a descendant of Khashani challenges Mujaji with a foreign creed. Mugɔdɔ answers his detractors with wholesale executions, but he is concerned to vindicate himself rather than to regain order in the land. In a civil strife between two of his headmen, he makes no move until he feels himself insulted by 'the rusty arrows fit for the rubbish heap' that cause the blood of a kinsman to flow. The crowning catastrophe that embitters his soul is the conduct of his wayward sons. They enter the huts of his younger wives; they slaughter his cattle to gain popularity at their father's expense; they send him the dregs after draining the tributary beer.

And Mugɔdɔ's reign ends in chaos and confusion. Royal kinsmen massacre one another; internecine strife is followed by unparalleled famine; ravenous wild beasts terrorize the villages; Malegudu, one of Mugɔdɔ's sons, gains control for a time, but he has eventually to flee before Mujaji, his sister, and is assassinated in Vendaland; Khiebe, another son, seeks refuge in Thɔɔlbland, where he dies an unnatural death; Sephumulo, a powerful noble, unable to stomach subjection to Mujaji, who is gaining the ascendancy, severs his allegiance and establishes the twin tribes of Rakwadu and Sekhɔpɔ. And as these disasters befall the tribe, the first cycle completes its course.

THE CYCLE OF THE QUEENS

The Fifth Pageant (*c.* 1800). As the second cycle opens, the disasters which appear to be the Nemesis upon the vice of an uncertain succession

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(for it was Khiali's attempt to readjust the machinery of succession which maladjusted Mugɔdɔ for the task of a king) are reconstructed to form a chain of triumph for Mujaji. The most dramatic moments are not the disasters, but two interconnected events: Mugɔdɔ's prophecy and Mugɔdɔ's sin. 173 43

At the end of the civil strife, into which the insult of the rusty arrows goads Mugɔdɔ to throw his decisive weight, he orders the war horns to be sounded; and as he begins a solitary, spectacular dance (*ku pehela*), his people, prostrating themselves, solemnly intone his praises: 'Mugɔdɔ of the neck-with-great-folds-of-fat, wherein do rest both goods and men, who hurls his challenge with the rain-horn; Mugɔdɔ of Pheduli, Transformer of the Clouds, he kills as he lists and spares whom he likes.' Pointing in the four directions, he raises his voice in prophecy: 'I am going away to creep into the horn of a cow (i.e. to die). I do not like to sleep in the open, vainly counting the stars. I go to unloose the black ants in the east. They will bite you and kill you, but in the end you will overcome them. Thereafter I shall unleash the red ants in the west; you will fight them, but you will fight them in vain. Further, I say this country will be ruled by a frontal skirt.'

It is Mugɔdɔ's farewell message just before he dies. But the prophecy epitomizes the three great moments in the cycle of queens: the accession of a woman, the raids of Dguni hordes (black ants), and the conquest by the European (red ants).

The Sixth Pageant (*c.* 1800). Mugɔdɔ is the instrument of an inexorable fate. His faith in his fellow men, in his councillors, even in his sons, has been shattered. He muses that women also are faithless. But their faith, however unfaithful, keeps them falsely true; they intrigue against him as their husband, but they are loyal to him as their king. Above all, their mystery is allied to a power, not to blast the tribe to fragments, but to subdue men and turn their passions to the service of the state. That is the vision given to Mugɔdɔ, and the guarantee of its divine origin is the far-off past in which Dnugudini originated the tribe. That past also suggests how the vision can be realized. And in the scene before us these mighty issues are handled with a simplicity and a directness which it is impossible to reproduce.

Mugɔdɔ betakes himself to his favourite daughter at Maulwi, sacred reminder of the mountain in Rhodesia. Simply he tells her of his purpose, but she doubts its divine source: 'It cannot be, my father,' she says; 'these things are too difficult.' Mugɔdɔ goes again to her, but she remains mystified that a sin that defiles can be a rite that sanctifies.

Then Mugɔdɔ goes to Lekhwareni, the despised place of stones and of slothful people (for, according to their praise song, they burn their nails roasting the maize that they should have stamped). There lives Mujaji, daughter of his wife, Mamujaji. To her also he confides his vision; he tells her she will be queen if, though celibate, she will bear the heir to the throne. He is not speaking of a virgin birth, for she understands that he, her father, will be the father of her issue. 'You are all-wise, O father,' she replies. 'I am the servant of your will.' A secret hut

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is built; an inquisitive intruder, the favourite wife of Mugɔdɔ, suffers the extreme penalty; and in due course a son, not a daughter, is born.

But Fate tricks Mugɔdɔ in vain. The son is strangled and a little later there is a daughter. She is to become Mujaji II.

The Seventh Pageant (*c.* 1850). Mujaji I has already been on her resplendent throne for half a century; she has turned the chaos of her predecessor's reign to peace and prosperity; and, surrounded by restrictions which forced her into seclusion and fostered the idea of her sagacity and immortality, she has won the fame and attraction which drew so many foreigners to her capital. She is 'the white-faced Mankhadeni, radiant as the setting sun'. 'Huckster in her hut', perched like an eagle's eyrie on the fringe of a forest, she dispenses as she wishes the life-giving rain. 'She casts away some; others she shares with the vultures.'

Hosts of foreign ambassadors and potentates gather at her court. Some bring cattle, others their daughters or sisters; these are the gifts with which they show their homage or supplicate for rain. In the company we see messengers from Manukuza, dread monarch of Gasaland, supplicating with mighty gifts from their master; ambassadors of Zwide, challenger of Chaka himself, seeking to ward off the chastisement of locusts and drought, but smitten to death for his presumption in coming so near Ulovedu; and also an envoy from Moshesh in far-off Basutoland. Less pretentious are the men from Maleɔxɔ, whose Lovedu wife had taught him the elements of the magic of rain-making; from Vendaland, where they call Mujaji 'the wife who brings them water to wash their face'; from Phalaborwa, upon whose internal struggles Mujaji arbitrates. From Chopiland and Ulunyai, from the Lirwa and Tswana, from the very ends of the world, there are suppliants. Sekwati, the great Pedi king, is seeking a matrimonial alliance, hence that herd of cattle in the courtyard; Mali of the Khaha and Magaepia of the Letswalo, queens crowned in their own countries in imitation of the immortal Mujaji, come to be strengthened and fitted for their task. But the mightiest tribute of all is the gift from the Zulu king, who, disappointed by the failure of his mission to the great Swazi rain-maker, supplicates the rain-maker of rain-makers.[1]

The pageant is incomplete without its background, the armed hordes of Chaka and Moselekatse, of Soshangane and Mantatisi, of Thulare and Mafefe, laying waste and massacring, and in the wake of the trail of desolation, the smaller tribes and those miserable remnants, the guerrilla bands of cannibals, completing the destruction. They all are mightier than Mujaji, who is unarmed yet invincible. And, as the pageant passes by, we see innumerable refugees flocking from all points of the compass to seek sanctuary in the inviolable land.

The Eighth Pageant (1894). The sceptre, secretly entrusted to Mujaji II on her accession forty years and more before this pageant passes, is

[1] A Zulu author, M. J. Mpanza, in his *UGugobadele* (1930), p. 53, confirms this. He says that if there was excessive drought, the Zulu king would send black cattle to the Swazi king with a request for rain; and, if there was still no rain, he would send to Mujaji.

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the symbol of forces that swayed a bygone world. People are uncertain of their bearings in the new world, their sense of security has been shaken. The black ants from Swaziland have left a scar, though they were chastened when the legions of Ludongo were defeated. Now the red ants are brought upon the scene as the aftermath of the exploits of Albasini, self-appointed chief of the Magwamba (Shangana-Tongs) and Native Commissioner of the Boer Republic. The sceptre only weakly shows the force of spiritual power. The tribute Mujaji sends to Albasini, it is true, smites him with drought; upon General Joubert, curious to behold the royal majesty, a far-off sister of the queen, who was also her 'wife', is palmed off as the mysterious 'She-who-must-be-obeyed'; the Transformer of the Clouds still is the 'huckster in her hut'.

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But to the workers and warriors of the 'red ants', the sceptre is like a broken reed rather than a magic wand. Some of them with impunity appropriate the country, enlisting in their service the denizens of the soil; others are collecting taxes, exacting tribute and redrawing age-old boundary lines; still others invade the sacred places, even desecrating the drums at Maulwi. The princes still come, but they supplicate surreptitiously.

The temporary triumphs cannot offset the disastrous defeats, and Mujaji, bewildered by the turn of events, does not know how to adjust her weapons and her diplomacy to the needs of the new situation. She circumvents the curiosity of Joubert, but she fails to save her subjects from serfdom. When the grave of Khashani, the Christian kinsman whom she martyred, becomes the rallying point of a disloyal creed, when the conspiracy to expel the European intruder ends in the disaster of the deportation of her neighbours, she loses her faith in the gods of her ancestors and adjures her followers to trust the apostle of a creed that was uprooting these gods. Pathetically she presses the poison cup to her lips, conforming to the letter, not to the spirit, of the ritual end ordained by her ancestors. In a world indifferent to the eternal verities, that cup is like an empty sham and that end like a vain sacrifice.

The pageant passes on. A cheerless panorama unfolds before us as Mujaji III ascends the throne. To submission is added humiliation. When the white man, coming to arrange for the recognition of the new queen, sees old Mathogani, who had impersonated Mujaji II, the proceedings are stopped. The Lovedu are made to pay for their presumption by being denied a ruler until the old woman dies. They retaliate by dubbing her the 'Chief of the white men' and by accelerating her end.

But it is a fruitless revenge. They are faced with the problem of reconciling the claims of two incongruous worlds: is the authority of the queen to be derived from the alien conqueror and his ceremonies or from the spirit of the deceased and the rite of the door? The reality of the old rite is the sham of the new order; it is a mere coincidence upon which no title can be based. But also in all spheres of culture and of life these dualistic forces clash with one another; they are in a death grapple which lasts throughout the reign of Mujaji III.

The conflict is epitomized in the conflict between Shalala and the royal house. The commoner, using the weapons of the European lawyer,

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173 ranges himself against royalty, who invoke the powers of their ancestors
613 When Magoma, daughter of the queen, illicitly allies herself to the commoner and anarchy threatens disruption of the tribe, the royal house reluctantly invites intervention of the white man, submitting, however, only the superficial issues. Ostensibly Shalala suffers defeat, but in reality the struggle continues; and in this conflict, as in the wider conflict of the warring worlds, we are left in doubt where the victory lies.

FROM THE PAGEANTS TO THE PEOPLE

173 Only a few of the great figures of the royal family paraded before us in these pageants. We must regard them as expressions of some of the themes which the outlook of the society has emphasized. The twice-invoked incest theme is brought into relation with revolutionary national changes, like a transition rite in the life of an individual. Incest precedes and validates first the birth of the tribe, then the accession of a woman and her elevation to a mystical pedestal. Is it a case of the greater the sin the greater the saint, of the polluted and the sacred converging at infinity? We cannot say for certain. We saw the Lovedu pictured as a Prospero teaching the Calibans of Khiga. But primitive and unorganized though these Khiga were, they undoubtedly knew fire, and the use of fire against a fireless foe who has become a friend is unnecessarily treacherous, though it is, for the end in view, dramatically and, we may suppose, ritually effective. When internal dissension arises, the conflict is posed as one between the chief son and the 'chosen' son. The victory of the 'chosen' son vindicates the divine right of the rain-priest against mere legal precedence. This theme is once more dramatically thrown into relief by the device of naming the chief son 'the Filler' and the 'chosen' son 'the Drainer of the Rivers'. The contrasts are handled with consummate skill. Notice also the psychological insight that marks the manner in which we are led up to the climax of the change from kings to queens. The Outcast thwarted in his youth is over-sensitive and suspicious; he seeks compensation in revenge; and he is the paranoic who utters the fatal prophecy. The prophecy is not merely a vain delusion; it has a purpose and was put into the mouth of the Outcast after the event; and as such it is a magnificent piece of stagecraft. Yet it is not considered to be equal to the task of sufficiently magnifying the mysticism of Mujaji I; that task is finally achieved by a repetition of the incest theme. Those were dangerous times; drastic handling of their dramatic moments was called for. The culminating point of Mujaji's power stands out prominently amid the surrounding turmoil. It also challenges it. The drama suddenly ends; it has run its course. In the sequel, the problem of the death-grapple of dualistic worlds has developed too suddenly, too disturbingly, for the powers of the tribal historian.

These are some of the conceptions handled in the pageants. They reflect ultimate values, the philosophy of the society. They are on a different plane from the ordinary lives and interests of the people. To re-orientate ourselves, we must bear in mind three things: firstly, the royal pageants are but one of a large series, for besides the nuclear ruling

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group there are many other groups, each with its own historical background, subtly linked up though it be with the royal background; secondly, great as the glory of the queens is, we must not fail to see their people in their true perspective against the masses of foreign tribes and against the stature of the European Colossus; and, thirdly, however greatly men rely for their sense of security upon ultimate values, their lives are immediately and predominantly concerned with very simple matters, with tilling the soil and caring for their cattle, with getting and preparing food, with securing shelter and warmth, with gossip at beer drinks and with petty domestic squabbles. 173

The Lovedu to-day are predominant in an area of some 5,000 square miles, the area of the Lovedu lowveld which is bounded by the Game Reserve, the escarpment, the Klein Letaba and the Olifants Rivers. On all sides of this area there are mightier peoples. Shangana-Tonga to the east. Pedi to the south, Venda to the north and several highveld tribes to the west—all these overshadow the people of Mujaji in numbers, in organization, and in power. But within the Lovedu lowveld, if we count all branches of the Lovedu, the subjects under them (about 50,000) outnumber the rest of the Sotho-speaking tribes put together (some 40,000). There are in addition many people (perhaps 25,000) under Shangana-Tonga chiefs, and in the eyes of the European one of them has far greater stature than Mujaji. 131 161

The Lovedu live in a location marked out in the early 1890's, immediately after the advent of European settlers and the conflicts that resulted. The original location, just short of seventy square miles, was enlarged during the 1930's by the purchase of tribal farms, and now the whole reserve is about 150 square miles in extent. This falls far short of the 600 square miles within which Mujaji used to exercise effective jurisdiction. She held the area between the Moketsi, the Great Letaba and the Mulodozi Rivers, from where the latter joins the Great Letaba at its northernmost bend, and from there westwards to the Moketsi; beyond it for another 400 square miles, but rather indefinitely towards the north, north-east, and east, where the population was sparse, Mujaji's writ ran, through uncertainly and spasmodically. 173

The population of the reserve we estimate at 33,000, which is considerably in excess of the official census figure for 1936.[1] The average 161

[1] Official census figures for 1936 are available, not for the Lovedu reserve, but only for two separate units of areas: (*a*) the Lovedu location and (*b*) an area to the north of it, about half of which falls within the Lovedu reserve. For (*a*) the figures are 11,636 and for (*b*) 7,205. If we assume that half of the population of (*b*) falls within the Lovedu reserve, its total population would be 15,238, or only about 46 per cent of our estimate of 33,000. We arrive at our figure from three sources: (1) Kraal-to-kraal countings in three sample districts with a total area of 14·5 square miles and a total population of 3,500. These districts represent different localities, some valley, some hill, and constitute a fair sample. On the basis of the average density of population in them, the total figure for the Lovedu reserve of 150 square miles should be 150 ÷ 14·5 × 3,500, or 36,207. (2) The proportion of people who, according to Native accounts, our own impressions, and independent European eye-witnesses, escaped official enumeration. Despite instructions that the people of each district should collect in their respective districts, the enumerators, finding the districts inaccessible by road

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density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Ṭonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Rɔka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhɔpɔ, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigɔa, the Dgɔna and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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entering from the first quarter of the eighteenth century until to-day, 563
and are all segments of other tribes, themselves composed of very diverse elements. To-day the task of unravelling the confusion and complexity is beyond the wit of man. It is a complexity which everywhere antedates the nineteenth-century disturbances, probably even the movements and unrest recorded by the Portuguese for the sixteenth century. Not all the groups are equally closely linked with the royal nucleus. The most alien are the Shangana-Tonga. This is because intermarriage with them is frowned upon and because, in the incorporation of a foreign group into the tribe, the most effective instrument is the alignments effected by the bride-price of the marriage system. The process of incorporation is dealt with elsewhere. It depends upon the obligation of the immigrant group to send one of its daughters as a wife to the queen. These are handed out to nobles of the nuclear group and thereby the whole complicated machinery of intermarrying lineages is set into motion. Thus, through the links created by giving brides and in return receiving cattle, loyalties are built up in the foreign groups and they become closely knit into the texture of the tribe and of its social structure, the centre of which from this point of view is the nuclear ruling group.

We have to remember, in considering the pageants of the past, that 173
each of the constituent groups also has a background of history. There 563
are scores of subsidiary pageants, some almost as impressive as the royal pageant. Neither the historical background nor all that it implies as to the meaning of the present culture can be properly interpreted without taking into account the subsidiary pageants. Some of them are almost self-contained side-shows, some have become submerged in the main pageant; but all have contributed something to the total culture of the Lovedu. It is always instructive to observe what the contribution has been and how it has been reshaped to harmonize with the predominant conceptions in the society. The selection of traits that are congenial, the rejection of elements that do not fit, the manner in which the assimilation has altered the details as well as the meaning of borrowed institutions, all throw light upon the values and working of the society. But in this book we are concerned only with the final result; and for that reason also we have omitted the histories and pageants of the constituent groups.

So far we have referred to the background of the royal group and to the great diversity of peoples that make up the Lovedu. It is time that, instead of viewing the tribe in broad perspective, we should turn to the ordinary mundane activities of the people. They do not live by the spirit of the past alone, and we cannot remain on the hilltops looking at them from afar. We must descend into their villages, attend their beer drinks, take a hand in the stamping and cooking, listen to the scandal at beer drinks and join them in their recreation. The contrast between the rarefied atmosphere of their philosophical contemplation, as it emerges in the pageants, and their everyday avocations, as we shall see them when we move in their midst, is very great. But so is the contrast between our philosophy and our everyday life.

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I. THE LOVEDU LANDSCAPE

(a) THE HILL OF CYCADS

(b) FIELDS AND VILLAGES ON THE FOOTHILLS

[facing p. 16]

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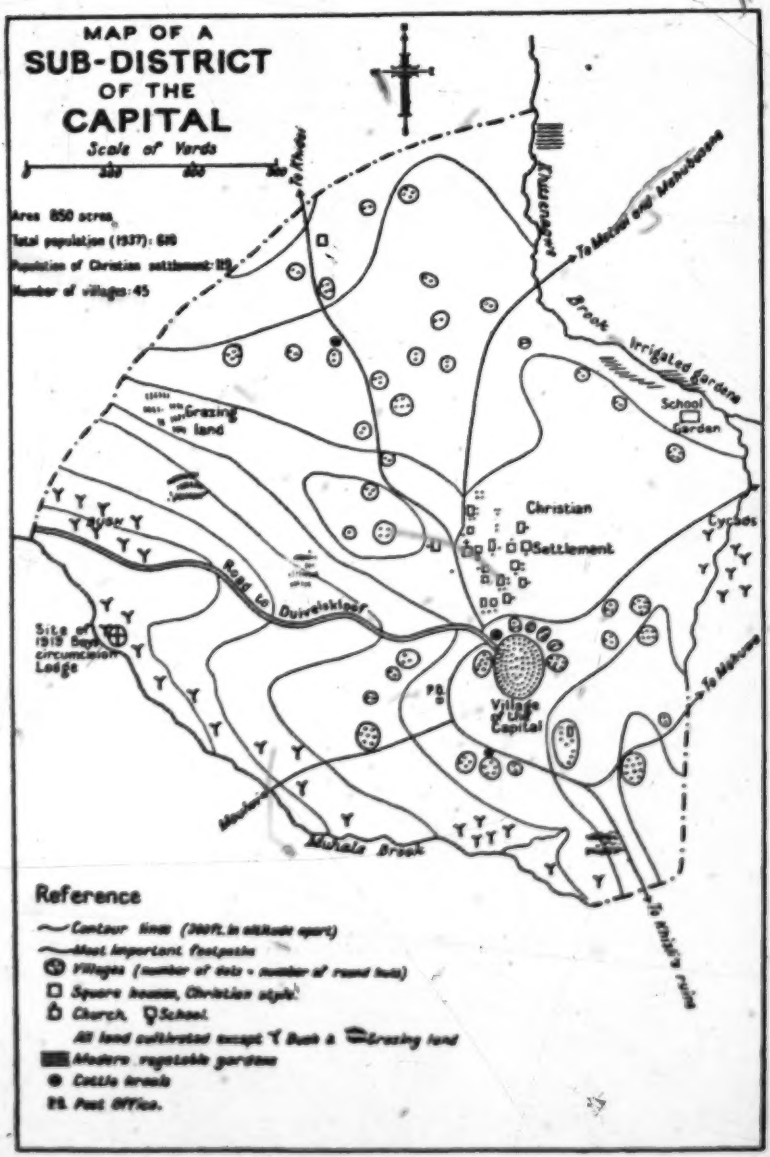

[p.16]

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II. A GLIMPSE OF VILLAGE LIFE

(*a*) COURTYARD SCENE IN MARCH

(*b*) STAMPING MEALIES

[facing p. 17]

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CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

As you drive along the winding road on a visit to Mujaji's reserve, you find yourself in a narrow valley between the two ranges of Vulovedu mountains, where flows the Mulodozi River, fed by countless streams from the bush-covered slopes above. It is the month of March. The mealies in the fields, visible on all sides through the bushy vegetation, stand dark green and high, appearing to grow right to the very doorsteps of the villages you pass. At first and to the untrained eye the country seems relatively empty, so well do the dwellings merge into the general view. On looking more closely, however, you see cluster after cluster of conical, thatched roofs peeping out from the bush on the hillsides, some of them perched on ledges like eagles' eyries. For the reserve is in reality very thickly populated. The villages are small, five to fifteen huts being the average size; a few large villages of from forty to eighty huts represent the old order of things, just as those of only two huts do the new. But the Lovedu village was never very large and never could compare, either in size or arrangement, with the great towns of the Tswana and of some Sotho. 361

As you go down a steep dip to cross a stream, a sullen-looking woman balancing a wide-mouthed basket on her head, her legs heavy with leg rings which reach almost up to the knee, suspiciously turns her back on you. She wears a cloth of red salampore behind and before, knotted on the shoulders; while from her neck dangles the ubiquitous snuff box on a necklet of plaited string, black with dirt, but holding three or four treasured heirlooms, large deep-blue or white beads and perhaps some small blue, red, and yellow ones of the kind that were brought from Rhodesia long before the European had come. A little further on you hear a shout, '*Makhawa, Makhawa*' (Europeans, Europeans), as a group of herdboys runs towards the road. The younger ones among them, mere toddlers playing outside their village, scurry away crying to their mothers, and scatter the chickens from the ash-heap as they do so. A herdboy, wearing nothing but his loin covering and an old tattered coat which was once his father's, shouts 'More Bass,' European words he has picked up from his elders; but the rest run joyfully after the car, rending the air with their shrieks. 482 301 291 276

The road begins to ascend steeply up the hill to the capital, but here, if you wish to visit headman Raselaka, you must get out and walk. As you go in single file along the narrow footpath, bounded on either side by creeper-covered bush or long grass higher than your shoulders, you become aware of a strong smell somewhat reminiscent of turpentine. In a few moments you discover its cause—the ripening fruits of the 487 137

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137 morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is
[272] made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga*
[533] *dzwala ga fəlɔja, ga vucla vuphabalemi*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise
431 song of a district in Ulovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach
[364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiḫulelemi*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiḫulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhwaya*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

621 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any
789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lentḫoa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the
[417 protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or
824 *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *pipiguani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [824]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*ku dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khɔrɔ*, an open [361]
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dosa*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khɔrɔ*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called *madwa* and, though the smell *may be* unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khɔrɔ* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khɔrɔ* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khɔrɔ*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khɔrɔ*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khɔrɔ* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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447 fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Raselaka complains that
231 herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11
[512] o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday, especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle in Raselaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Loveduland give hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent. of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but
[262] also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

361 You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khɔrɔ* to the huts, you hear Raselaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the royal kraal, they would surround the *khɔrɔ*, but here there are too few for that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden,
251 while at the back is the *marala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies are stored after reaping, till dry enough for decobbing. But they are empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly
[273] made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and
[262] sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins, the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-pots, while a heap of golden, plumlike *morula* fruits with a cloud of midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

252 As you look along the space between the two rows of huts, a pleasant and busy scene meets the eyes. It is ten o'clock and cooking operations are at their height. Some are cooking outside in the courtyard; others prefer to cook in the kitchen hut. An old woman is spreading out her newly lifted monkey nuts, together with a few cobs of mealies which had fallen to the ground, to be sun-dried in her courtyard. Some freshly stamped mealie meal on mats and in baskets is also set out in the sun.
251 On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance. This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and preserved for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other purposes; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

351 Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

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the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapidated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 825
It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to 515
urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance; on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives; further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut. To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Letavula, with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart [595]
from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342
and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khoro* and have a wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round. The former have their backs to the *khoro*, a framework of reeds as a door, and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleeping hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised [352]
platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [353]
mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg. The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted basket (*khirudzana*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart [373]
suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth, plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals, between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Letavula, newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too cold in winter.

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cold in winter. The veranda of the sleeping hut is used for storage. Here are pots of all sizes, many with lids glued down with dung, calabashes, sacks of corn on stands, medicinal roots, perhaps an old plough, a small grain basket on an inverted tripod of sticks, and a bag of reed pipes for dancing.

The contrast between sleeping and cooking huts is marked: whereas the former is relatively empty, cool and clean, the kitchen hut is generally rather untidy and, when a fire is burning, full of smoke. This is the domain of the housewife. Here are her cooking utensils—pots, baskets, wooden dishes, dishes of white enamel. At first the smoke deters you from entering, but the woman and her children sitting there appear to be quite at ease, so you summon up courage and go in. You splutter at first and your eyes water, but soon you grow accustomed to the atmosphere. You glance up at the unplastered roof and find it black from the smoke of many years. It is the home of countless cockroaches. Stuck in it are ears of corn and mealie cobs kept for seed, and many other articles, such as a cupping horn, some medicinal roots, some old arrows, and axe and spear of Sotho-worked iron kept as religious objects. On a platform of wood, out of the reach of white termites, are several bags of nuts and mealies, while a handbroom of asparagus fern lying near the hearth in the centre comes in useful from time to time for sweeping all the dirt into the fireplace. In this hut women sit at night; grandmothers sleep here with the children; here children are born and here they are often fed; here people lie when ill and here too they die.

A chair, native-made but after the European fashion, with seat of strips of thong, has been placed for you in a shady spot in the chief wife's courtyard. To be perched so high above ground when every one else sits on the floor is distinctly uncomfortable and out of place, but, in deference to the hospitality of your host in according you the honour of a chair, you feel you must occupy it. Four or five small, pot-bellied urchins with dirty noses range themselves near you to watch more closely the features and clothes of the European. One softly points out your peculiar nose to a companion, another comments on your shoes; altogether they find you and your ways absorbing. One small child holds aloof, screaming with fear when the rest try to force him to come near. With her back to the sun, a woman kneels beside a large pot of boiling water, deftly twirling a wooden twirler between her palms. Every now and then she stops to add a little of the fine, white mealie meal beside her by means of a ladle of calabash, for this is the first stage in the making of *sumsa*, cakes of thick meal, their staple food. The twirling prevents the formation of lumps. When the mixture becomes too thick for the twirler, a large, flat, wooden spoon is used with both hands. An aged and wrinkled old woman, mother-in-law of the one who is cooking, arrives from her garden with a basket on her head filled with the young leaves and male flowers of the pumpkin and three or four fresh cobs of mealies. The leaves and flowers are for relish for the meal; the cobs of maize she roasts in the fire for her grandchildren. She sits down, feet straight before her, and begins slowly to pull off the rough outer covering from the stalk of each leaf; it is then broken into two or three pieces and placed in a small, wide-mouthed pot.

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from 252
two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in those earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner. While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves roast mealies or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen enters with a large gourd of water on her 576
head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Mukhadi wee*,' calls out her mother. '*Mulemya*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase 563
by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Mukhadi goes into the huts and collects 415
five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used [273]
for making light beer (*mabudu*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the [264]
sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two- 853
months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by washing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth, she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and gurglings are of no avail till Granny has decided it has had enough. This novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held 854
over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap, special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that at any moment the *child may slip out of the woman's hands*; but she is skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward occurs. After being air-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline, an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys 855
arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neighbours could be seen; their own were nowhere to be found. Your hostess is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with legs tied together.

The woman of the *muaba* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning 264
to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of slovenliness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food; porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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264 woman has finished dishing up, she very often wipes out the pot with her fingers before setting it aside, for utensils are washed just before they are needed—not after use. To prepare the relish a little water is placed in
252 a wide-mouthed cooking dish, the pumpkin leaves and flowers are added and then put on the fire. Within a few minutes the spinach is sufficiently cooked. A handful of salt is put in, the ground monkey nuts are added, the mixture stirred once or twice, when it is ready to be dished up into small black earthen basins.

264 Serving food to guests is a ceremonious affair. The sleeping or reception hut is carefully swept out; the food is placed in it, often before the dust has properly settled, a mat is unrolled and the guests are called to eat. To your surprise, you discover that the host does not dine with honoured guests. A wooden dish of food has been placed in a double basket with a lid. Beside it stands the relish. Mukhadi approaches on her knees with a white enamel basin of water for the guests to wash their hands, then crawls away again, leaving the water to be used again after the meal. Before beginning to eat, the youngest of the visitors claps his hands saying, '*Ndau*.' The rest reply, '*Morena*,' and the meal is begun. Each one, using his fingers, breaks a piece of a mealie meal cake, dips it in the dish of relish and eats it. There is no salt in the porridge, to make up for which the relish is very salt indeed. All eat from one bowl but there is nothing unhygienic in this. When finished you again wash your hands. Light beer, if there is any, may round off the meal.

There is no communal meal and no proper mealtime. Each wife places food for the husband in the reception hut of his chief wife and here he comes to eat any time he wishes. Later the remains will be fetched back to the hut whence it came. Food is not sent from one hut to another, except when special luxury dishes are made, known in general as *madzaga* and usually prepared outside of cooking hours. These are always shared. The younger children sit down to eat with the mother in the courtyard, but the herdboys, in a hurry to take out the cattle, seize several cakes, place some relish on them, and walk off. Metiane, aged four, does not want vegetable relish. He has seen meat prepared in the courtyard of his
861 friend Nagambi and so he refuses spinach. When his mother tries to coax him, he merely sets up a dismal howl; but he is neither severely scolded nor beaten as a European child in such a situation might be. Instead they try to pacify him, till at last the mother of Nagambi, seeing the fuss, brings him a small piece of meat, telling him to be quiet.

512 The cooking done, a general migration takes place, and the village, a hive of industry in the morning, becomes almost if not quite deserted. During the agricultural season one seldom finds people at home in the afternoons. They are all out in the fields. One woman, securing the reed door of her kitchen by means of a wooden stamper balanced against it on the outside, takes a hoe and is off to mound her *nyugo* beans. Another is still busy with her weeding. A third, taking a calabash of food with her, goes to join her daughter, who left shortly after sunrise, to make *morula* cider under the trees in their field. It is a process involving considerable labour. Mamadomi is not going to the fields to-day. She wants to smear a fresh coating of dung over her courtyard and to go on with a basket she

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to 512
fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe [784]
for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of 252
three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *hu thovola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for [23]
feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mabudu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the maize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *vuthithi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *vuswa*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*hu sefa*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge [73]
of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for 871
their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seize hold 857
of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in [854]
no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mothers or to catch *mahowu* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Smeathm*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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857 of *lejaje* (*Mariscus sp.*) or *lejektjekt* (*Cyperus immensus*), rush-grasses which the ants seize with their antennae. The girls who have been stamping now set out with some friends from a neighbouring village, all armed
[561] with axes, to collect firewood. The girls of this company are age-mates;
[832] they share their labours, confide their love affairs, bathe together, and, in the late afternoon, when they go to the bush, they sit together elongating their *labia minora* (*hu kwava*). Meanwhile the village lies basking and dreaming in the afternoon sun; except for the pecking fowls there is hardly a stir. '*Ku gae*' ('Where is it—beer'), says Raselaka to his son Sekware, as he returns with some poles on his shoulder for repairing his
574 wife's granary. 'There is beer of *lejema* [work-party] over at Mudziri's,'
273 is the reply; and the men, accompanied by the visitors, set out for the beer drink, knowing they will be allowed to partake even though they have done no work.

The hum of voices as you near a certain kraal leaves you in no doubt that this must be Mudziri's village. A fair crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the woman who is holding the *lejema* and a typical beer-drinking scene meets the eye. The centre of the picture is a large pot of beer placed in a rounded depression made for it in the courtyard. Beside it stands a flat winnowing basket containing long-handled calabash cups from which the beer is drunk. Beside the pot sits a man who serves the beer, using a beer-cup as ladle; he gives each cup to a young man of about twenty, who hands it round. The guests have ranged themselves on either side of the beer pot, women on one side, men on the other. As each calabash is emptied, it is brought back by the young man who is doing the waiting, to be filled. There is no hurry. Each one drinks at his leisure and conversation flows freely. Every one knows he will be given in his turn and, if one man is handed a second cup, he will pass it on to any one who has not yet been served, till all have had four or five. It is a pleasant social gathering and all the latest gossip is discussed. Small children toddle about in between the drinkers and may even be given a
651 little of the beer. Ominously Pheduli remarks, 'Madume has seen police
625 near Medingen. There appear to be four of them. What can they be wanting?' 'Oh,' replies Dwagu, 'they are no doubt raiding for tax defaulters!' There is general uneasiness, for about a fifth of the gathering are in arrears. Muhale is six years in arrears and, as he never goes to town to work, he has not once been caught. 'They won't catch me napping in my home to-night,' volunteers Mathakha. 'I shall go into the bush again. Are they Shangana-Tonga or Sotho, those police Madume saw?' a very relevant question, because the Shangana-Tonga, more likely than not recruited from outside the reserve, will not know these hiding places in the forests and caves. Here Pikela describes how his friend Setimela, who had himself always been in default and knew all the best hiding places, had joined the police the previous year. Consequently, at the very next raid the police made a most successful scoop, catching ninety-six defaulters, whom they marched to Duivelskloof.

574 The beer-pot is almost empty and people are merely sitting talking
273 when the host calls Raselaka and his European guest aside into his reception hut, together with a few other intimates. A woman brings in a small

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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Raselaka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Raselaka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*ku nosa*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Raselaka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the last dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lɔsha* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaau*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khɔrɔ* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Prkɛla, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khirula* beer to their *tsɛsi* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*ku pɛhela*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mushiji khi le; gi y'ɔ shwa ga nosa*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10*s*. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsɛsi*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

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482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263] this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' (*'U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinwyana a ja ditholo a fa vanimana'*). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lenai la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled njugo beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khovi*, the three men of the village are sitting by their 521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandaloes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khovi*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies

to roast

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to roast. 'Let's ask riddles,' intervenes Khiebe. 'Here's one: Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree (*thuiii*), the witches are dancing on the thorns.' 'Stupid,' scornfully rejoins Mudumi. 'We all know that one. Hailstones, of course, for they bounce as they fall on the grass.' After pondering a moment he challenges: '*Thuiii*, the ox of my father has entered the pool, I remain holding its tail.' Roars of derision issue from the rest, 'A porridge-twirler,' they answer almost all together. The spiked head of a twirler is like the horns of an ox; it is thrust into the pot of water, while one holds it by its handle. 'Here's something you don't know,' comes from Mudumpani. '*Thuiii*, the nest of the water bird hangs down over the pool.' The company is silent, then there are some guesses, but it is beyond them, and they give it up. 'The eyelashes, of course,' says Mudumpani, 'because they hang over one's eyes.' Once the ball starts rolling, riddles follow one another in rapid succession. 'The babbling of a brook' turns out to be a calabash cup, for down its long handle beer gurgles as you drink; 'They always stand looking at each other' are the doorposts of a hut; and 'The chief entering the crimson (muddy) pool' is sunset. It is impossible to capture the poetry of these riddles; you cannot render their alliteration or play upon words in English. But it is clear that these youngsters are well versed in them. The time when riddles are most popular is, however, when a wedding party is present and the young people have to entertain them in their hut. On such an occasion riddles provide a mild form of competition between the two parties, that of the bride and that of the groom.

The men have retired to their huts, whence they will not reappear. The women have eaten the evening meal informally round the fires and are just chatting. In a hut three girls are sitting by candlelight, one of them, who has been to school, writing a love-letter for her friend to her lover in town. 'Why are you throwing me over?' she asks. 'Why don't you write? Please send me a nice cloth and a blanket, but not one like that which you gave your wife!' In another hut some children have persuaded Mamujaji, an elderly woman, to tell them tales. She begins, '*Dgano-Dgano* (a story, a story).' They reply, '*Dgano*.' 'Once upon a time,' she continues, but before she gets further they again interject, '*Dgano*.' Then she goes on, 'There lived a boy who had sores all over his body.' '*Dgano*,' they repeat whenever the speaker hesitates or takes breath. 'One day when the girls went to fetch grass. . . .' This is the beginning of a story about a bird who gives away the girls who kill the boy. A marked characteristic is the frequent occurrence of a song and refrain, during the telling of the tale, in this case, '*Phogu, Phogu yu Durwa*, &c. ('Bird, bird of the south'), so that what with the interjections and singing of the chorus of the refrain, the listeners appear to take as active a part in the story as the narrator herself. At the end of each tale there is a long-drawn-out '*Dgaaaaa*' and all spit into the fire. In the small villages of to-day story-telling has almost completely died out. Where there are only one or two present a story loses most of its charm, and there are many young men and women who know practically no stories, more particularly among Christians, whose parents prefer them to learn their lessons rather than tell them stories.

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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On [883] moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khoro* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels [786] and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however, 241 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in 221 much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides the seasons into three: *khilemo*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *lefavula*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *maria*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

241 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February, 221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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food as often as not being brought to them there. Sometimes the women take with them cobs of mealies preserved by being cooked and dried in the summer months, which they have softened by boiling again before use. In stony places and along steep hillsides, where ploughing is impossible, hoeing is to-day still done by hand. Here one can generally see mealie meal spread out to dry near at hand, out of reach of the fowls and goats that would play havoc with it at home, where there is no one to watch it. For it is chiefly the women that hoe while the men plough. Bushes or branches that have grown out from tree stumps in the fields are cut in readiness for planting, and a typical feature of this time of the year is the small fires in the fields every day towards sunset, when dry mealie stalks that have been collected in heaps are burned. Relishes have been reduced to a minimum, blackjacks (*Bidens pilosa*), *thetha* (*Amaranthus Thunbergii*) and *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*) being the mainstay, and cooking is done only once a day. There are no nuts or mealies to roast or eat casually, and in years of scarcity this is the time when the pinch of hunger is felt. At night people retire early to bed, tired from the hard work of planting and, later, weeding during the day. Dancing is rare; there is no time for social activities, all energy being directed towards getting the crops planted. Beer parties there are, chiefly work parties for weeding, but they are not as frequent now as in winter. As yet few cases of malaria will have come to light; it is rather the season of dysentery and of cuts and bruises received in hoeing. As the season advances, the first termites make their appearance to relieve the monotony of relish of blackjack leaves, the grass grows longer and weeding becomes imperative.

As a relief to the dullness of the planting season comes the *morula* season, which marks the first two months of 'summer' (February and March) and which from the point of view of seasonal activities can be looked upon as a distinctive period. Everything is green; the grass stands high and weeding is the order of the day, for rain is plentiful. Masses of golden *morula* fruits are falling to the ground. Green mealies from the first-planted fields are beginning to be eaten, spinach of male pumpkin flowers and, later, leaves, make porridge cakes more interesting; and there are sugar-cane and dishes of unripe monkey nuts. People have looked forward eagerly to this time. They are tired of their work and, though much weeding and mounding of *njago* beans has still to be done, the exultation grows as the cider begins to appear. To those whose granaries are empty, the *morula* season brings a blessed relief from the pangs of hunger, and they drink it as if it were the elixir of life. Much of the day is spent in the fields where the cider is prepared, and from under the trees there is a mighty hubbub of voices. At nightfall, when they return as from a bacchanalian festival, there are opportunities for romantic intrigues, the result rather of exhilaration than of the reputed aphrodisiac effects of the cider. Soon the air is rent by songs and drumming of the possessed, who at this season receive medicine to eat with the *morula* and other green foods of summer. And as the *morula* season draws to a close, the green foods of summer become more plentiful and the beginning of reaping activities ushers in the rich abundance of late summer.

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III. ARTS AND CRAFTS

(a) CARVING A FOREHEAD-ROPE

(b) FASHIONING A SKIN SKIRT

[facing p. 32]

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164 Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which
221 are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things
[262] cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudanzdi*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ku rula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green
[251] mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for
[252] winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *mushhonu* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and
217 sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass,
221 which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first
461 finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or
[273] repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption
535 and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gwha*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law.
881 Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on
857 the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

221 In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's
461 seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *mukhalakwe* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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IV. CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE

(a) WORK-PARTY ON-COMING MEALIES

(b) WORK-PARTY CARRYING HOME THE MEALIE CROP

[Facing p. 33]

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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer 221
herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at 466
home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many
visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing
contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period 262
of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried 244
relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and *makoru* ants, for even blackjacks are
scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when Euro- [177]
pean vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, especially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. Those, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes.

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet 178
been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence 166
of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of three different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

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CHAPTER III

BASES OF SUBSISTENCE

The agricultural complex of activities—culture-change adjustments, and problems of malnutrition, education, and division of labour in agriculture—the place in the society, and present-day problems, of animal husbandry—modern threats to the interest in the vegetation as a basis of subsistence.

241 231 222 324 [262] THE Lovedu are great agriculturalists and poor pastoralists. They have a vast knowledge of the vegetation, which constitutes the best example of a science among them. It is a science closely related to their everyday lives and upon which they rely, even more than upon their cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls, for their subsistence. They eat the fruits and roots of the plants, depend for their relishes upon leaves and soft stems, and in dozens of other ways nourish themselves upon the natural products of the soil. Not agriculture and animal husbandry alone, but these, together with wild fruits, woods, and other products of nature, are the bases of subsistence.

These bases are all fundamental, but they have different value in different aspects of the culture. Agriculture is most important as a source of the substantial foods; natural fruits provide relishes and variety, and as a means of nutrition are much more prominent than domestic animals. Cattle and goats are primarily not food at all; their great role lies in supporting the social structure. In considering the sources of the primary needs of man, we should get a wholly distorted picture if we omitted the natural vegetation, the use of which as food, in economic pursuits, and in medicine is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu culture. Tillage and animal husbandry presume an extensive practical knowledge of soils, crops, and grasses; but this body of knowledge takes second place beside the imposing science at the basis of handicrafts, natural foods—indeed, the whole medical, nutritional, and economic structure of the society.

000 Nature is not merely a physical fact; it is a living reality, an integral part of the culture. Environment is not something apart from man and his needs; it is the medium in which he lives and breathes. And it is their direct reliance on nature that makes the Lovedu so strikingly [24] different from us, just as their everyday knowledge of the names, qualities, and uses of trees, bushes, and all kinds of plants so greatly overshadows the corresponding knowledge of ordinary men among us. We, who live in a world in which nature satisfies our primary needs in a roundabout manner, cannot easily realise how different conditions are in a world where the satisfaction is direct. We are often inclined to picture primitive man as engrossed in ritual pageant unrelated to, and unserviceable for, the major ends of human existence. It is very necessary to correct this view. It is often thought that sex, magic, and witchcraft absorb most of the time, activities, and interests of primitive man. But, at all events among the Lovedu, more time and energy is spent, more interest centred,

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on getting food, shelter, and the material comforts—in short, on a pragmatic adjustment to nature by the application of empirical knowledge—than on any other aspect of their culture.

The agricultural complex of activities is the end to which the major portion of the people's resources in land, labour, power, capital, and economic energies are directed. For success, practical knowledge of the environment is of the first importance. A feeling of security is attained in agricultural activities, not so much by magical as by empirical means. Skill, experience, close observation, hard work—these are the primary requisites. The struggle to make the soil yield up its fruit is not conceived to be waged or determined by mysterious forces. This does not mean that a European will be impressed by their methods of tillage. Their conditions of life, their technology, their control over nature are different from ours. The manner in which people invest their energies and draw out their rewards does not conform to our ideas of efficiency. We deplore the poor tillage, wonder at the wastefulness during periods of plenty, inveigh against thoughtless improvidence. Lack of intelligence, we say, is the reason for their lack of systematic planning against recurrent famine. But we forget, among other things, that practices based on shifting cultivation, though unsuitable in the new, crowded environment, are still alive; that the problems of storage against the ravages of termites and weevils have not been solved and, with the materials at the disposal of the Native, cannot be solved even by our experts; and that, in the absence of organised exchange and marketing facilities, there is no incentive to produce more than for the annual needs of the household plus the surplus for beer-making necessary to maintain social relations and one's reputation for generosity. Practices which ramify into the cultural structure cannot be changed, costly new materials for combating pests cannot be acquired, nor can a whole superstructure of economic distribution be built up at a moment's notice. While the old values that gave men confidence and sustained the society continue to survive as they do, it is they which will regulate the application of knowledge and resources. A man may wish to increase his food supply, but not at the price of giving up too many of the things valued in the society; a surplus beyond a certain limit means nothing and suggestions for an improvement in methods may thus fall on deaf ears.

We can here refer only cursorily to a few aspects of Lovedu agriculture. There are, firstly, the various crops. In modern times, mealies are considered the most important and are the staple crop on the hills, where they also have the first claim on the best soils. It is eleusine, however, the oldest of the Lovedu grains, that is given to the gods. But no one, so say the old men, must neglect kaffir corn (*Sorghum caffrorum*) and millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*), for upon them greater reliance can be placed in times of drought. In the valleys, despite their vulnerability to the ravages of birds, more of these latter two crops are planted than mealies, largely because they do not answer on the hills. Cereals are cultivated by both men and women; and, in addition, every woman plants also njugo beans (*Voandzeia subterranea*), peanuts (*Arachis hypogea*), pumpkins, native beans (*Vigna sinensis*) and mung beans

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241 (*Phaseolus aureus*). Several varieties of sugar-cane (sweet sorghums) are planted on the boundaries of fields or between the other crops.

Njago beans are ancient groundnuts which require a good deal of attention by way of mounding, restrictive taboos and careful pulling up, although they are very welcome as a change of diet. In this respect they [177] resemble peanuts, which were popularised by the Shangana-Tonga not so long ago. These nuts sometimes answer well where other crops have failed; in certain years they may flourish while the cereals wither in the sun. Then you may hear people say, but it is only by way of joking among the Lovedu, that the Shangana-Tonga witches have called the cereals to undergo circumcision (*ku tha*). Some people in the valleys are half-inclined to believe the claims that the Shangana-Tonga make for their witches, because it is undoubtedly uncanny that, when the nuts succeed the cereals fail, and vice versa. But usually the claim is ascribed to the desire of these outcast people to assert their importance—the Lovedu know nothing of inferiority complexes, but they are shrewd judges of human nature.

Sesamum used to be popular in the valleys and is said to be an old crop of the Roka. But peanuts have ousted this wholesome, albeit very troublesome, crop. You will be told that the reason lies in the growing laziness of people; this is a reason given for the neglect of many other old crops, but in truth we have here merely a shift in the application of the available resources. A delightful commentary on some of the values of the society, though we must warn the reader not to judge them from our standpoint, is the name *lewuya-eadimo*, 'sesamum of the gods'. It is [782] a wild variety, unsuitable for human consumption, but good enough for the gods. It is not given to the gods, yet it reminds one of the sprouted eleusine merely mixed with water that is offered to the gods with the words, 'This is not water. Truly it is beer.'

261 There are other crops and the variety furnishes a well-balanced diet. But that is not considered to be the virtue of variety. A food is good if it fills. That is why they prefer their hard cakes of porridge to our watery oatmeal. They are inured to that feeling of fullness since the day of their birth, when Grandmother rammed porridge down their throats. But there is comfortable fullness and uncomfortable fullness—that after a good porridge meal and that after eating too much *njago* bean. The stomach is not insensible to certain distinctions, though they are not our distinctions. Filling is not the only virtue of a food. Some foods relieve the monotony of the round of porridge and blackjacks, and some are [146] tasty dishes or rare delicacies. But no one thinks of the virtues of a balanced diet, for nutritive and protective qualities of foods are not recognised. The old diet, simple though it might be from our point of view, was sufficiently varied to maintain people in good health; but it is not realised that, precisely because it was so simple, even a small change might eliminate essential ingredients. That change has not yet come among the Lovedu, but it is near at hand. Subsidiary crops are becoming less popular. You still see cowpeas, mung beans, water melons, even *karas*, sweet potatoes, and native beans. Yet, on the whole, what is most impressive is the growing reliance upon cereals and pumpkins, and the

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neglect of many of the old crops. The balance may be restored by European vegetables, such as tomatoes, cabbage, onions, and carrots. They are planted in irrigated gardens; these, however, are not numerous and could never supply the needs of the whole population. The parsimonious peasant, well-filled with porridge, is hardly likely to spend much time on what are looked upon as luxuries rather than as necessities. 241

People know that to have many crops in the same field places a great strain on the soil and lowers the productivity of each crop. Yet as a measure of economy, dictated by conditions, every one to-day plants side by side as many different crops as possible. Eleusine is an exception and mealies are spared the worst mixtures, though it is rare indeed that in between the mealies you will not find pumpkins and nuts. Millet and kaffir corn, however, stand alongside sweet sorghums—in the old days planted only on the boundaries of fields—beans and groundnuts, pumpkins, and calabashes. There is no more virgin soil on which the old incipient ideas of rotation of crops can be practised. If by chance new soil is turned, its rich content of ash will no longer be placed at the service of eleusine, as was the old rule; mealies, which followed eleusine as a second crop, are now so much more important that the old priority of eleusine gives way to a mixed crop of mealies and eleusine, though mealies alone are preferred. When mealies, after two or three years, begin to answer badly, millet is planted, in accordance with the old rotation. To-day there is some idea that beans revitalize the soil. 241 242

But we must not exaggerate the scientific value of these principles. Rotation was essentially a method of draining from the soil, with more and more hardy crops, the last ounce of energy; a crop was not thought to recondition the soil. On soil that is too poor or unsuitable for any of the cereals, groundnuts are often successful; but usually it is left to lie fallow for many years. In the old days it might have been wholly abandoned; but to-day lands that have lain fallow for thirty years and more are being recultivated, at least if they are not along the steep or stony slopes of hills where ploughing is difficult. The shifting cultivation of the past is no longer possible; there are less men available for clearing, which, moreover, has for long been discouraged by the tribe itself and to-day is forbidden by Governmental regulation. Plough culture also has introduced new practices. These and other changes have had far-reaching results. Time and space for single-crop gardens are lacking. It is convenient and the most economic utilization of the available resources to put into the soil behind the plough a mixture of all kinds of seeds. Some of them will be smothered by the others and that will be a calamity if the staple crops suffer unduly; for that reason the problem now is to determine, with reference to soil and weather conditions, which crops will significantly lessen the productivity of those to which priority is accorded. Everything that requires to be planted separately is as far as possible left aside. Crops specially planted by women tend to fall behind in the race. Women do most of the hoeing to-day, and their labour, valuable as it is on the steep slopes and among the stones, cannot keep pace with the plough. Moreover, men make the modern gardens by the sides of streams, and the mung beans, groundnuts, and native potatoes, which the women 241 178

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241 planned, disappear before the advance of European vegetables. This is
178 as yet not a great change, because there are very few of these gardens, and it is far beyond present resources to construct irrigation furrows.

The balance is also upset by other tendencies. Agriculture is still a vital interest, but others are beginning to compete with it, and the various cultural devices by which interests were massed behind the various stages of agriculture are no longer as effective as formerly. Mobilization of energies by the seasonal calendar and their concentration at the strategic points of time and place are only partially effective. The unfolding of nature, the increasing signs of the coming spring, the more and more auspicious banking up of the thunder-clouds used to be like the culmination of intensive propaganda playing upon the emotions of the people. As the first rains fell and the scent of the veld rose to men's nostrils, they seemed to liberate internal secretions which drove men to action; and the example of the first workers in the fields made the impulse irresistible. But to-day, though much of this is in evidence and one still sees an impulsive restlessness canalized into productive activity, the reactions are, according to Native accounts, much weaker. Neither internal secretions, if such there are, nor suggestion in a tense situation have their old overpowering effect.

[461] Translation of the impulses aroused into useful action is to some extent inhibited by enervating listlessness, at least among a proportion of the people. They are people puzzled by the changes around them or caught in the vicious circle of malnutrition and weakened incentives. They seek solutions in smaller exertions, lotus-like inactivity, and excessive beer-drinking, and in the hierarchy of ideals, these values are beginning to become unduly prominent. It would be disastrous if they created a cultural pattern, as the tendency suggests, in which agricultural work is mere drudgery and people concentrate upon easy crops, thus over-simplifying a wholesome simplicity in food and, as a cumulative result,
[446 not fulfilling, but draining the joys of life. Even to-day, weakened by
164 unbalanced nutrition, many more people succumb to tuberculosis,
79 bilharzia, tape-worm, even dysentery and malaria; as disease spreads and shakes the sense of security, sorcery and witchcraft become more common interpretations, and men must rely upon magic to restore their confidence. It is in agricultural practices that some of the greatest changes have occurred in the society. But, as will be seen, the changes are not of a simple nature.

These are the tendencies; but we must remember that the foundations of the society are deeply laid and the tensions are evident only in the upper superstructure. The people have a remarkable capacity for making adjustments, at least when no profound social arrangements are affected. They have adopted new crops, changed from hoe to plough cultivation, and adjusted themselves from unlimited to limited land. Unfortunately, they do not as yet have faith in manure. They have seen, they say, that manure raises an excess of weeds and that for *mugo* beans it is useless, even dangerous. One cannot appeal to the value of medicine, because only witches 'doctor' their fields, not indeed to fertilize them, but to steal the crops of their neighbours. Garden magic is never

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legitimate, for men rely upon their labours and place their faith in the rain, the making of which is the prerogative of the queen. 241 178

Failure of one's crops is attributed, not to witchcraft, but in a bad year to the heat of the sun and in normal seasons to indolence or bad soil. In the last resort, however, when every one suffers equally, or when there is a major drought, the calamity is regarded as a punishment by the gods, who 'hold the arms of the queen', or by the queen herself, who is displeased in her heart. Diseases and pests are not magical visitations. Though called 'the witch of the mealies' because it saps their strength, witchweed (*Wormskioldia longipedunculata*) is neither sent by witches nor combated by supernatural means. Destructive insects and parasites, such as stalkborers, weevils, and caterpillars, are regarded, not as being 'sent', but as perfectly natural results of untimely planting or unseasonal rain. Birds, monkeys, rats, and mice are, generally speaking, combated by the practical means at the disposal of man, such as trapping or scaring. Numerous other precautions are taken: one does not plant millet unless one's neighbours do likewise, because when there are many fields, all, not merely one, will be at the mercy of predatory birds; people favour bird-proof corns, though they are harder to thresh; late-maturing crops, whatever their productivity, are discarded in favour of those ripening early, because they cannot be reaped before the cattle start their unrestricted grazing; and a much-favoured peanut, which is also easy to reap, is liable to sprout unless special precautions are taken. In short, the problems of agriculture are tackled in a practical manner. 241 [731]

This does not mean that a practical demonstration of the superiority of new methods will always have the desired effect. Agricultural demonstrators have made very little impression. It is often thought that this is due to the improvidence, lack of ambition, and innate conservatism of the 'savage'. A farmer will tell you that, after years of experience on his farm, his Native labourers go home to practise their primitive, wasteful methods. The trouble is not savage incapacity, but the incongruity of our ways, our technology, and our ideals with theirs. The demonstrator is like a teacher speaking a foreign language and working with material and concepts which do not exist in the society. He often is wholly ignorant of the background of belief. His education makes him unduly scornful of savage superstitions, instead of using them to advantage. In agriculture, among the Lovedu, there is one practice we might call superstition. It is *ku upa*, a method of safeguarding crops with medicine against the depredations of birds and monkeys. It is quite harmless, absorbs little of the time or energy of the few children who scatter the medicine, and does not preclude the use of other, more empirical methods. There is no need to waste eloquence upon eradicating a practice which strengthens the interest of the children in agriculture, causes no slackening in their scaring activities from the platforms erected in the fields, and, in the last resort, is an effective psychological device; for it equalizes the struggle of man against nature and maintains at the requisite intensity the confidence which enables him to strive hopefully against his difficulties. 241 177 [789]

Practical knowledge is undoubtedly the weapon with which demonstrators should combat progressive degeneration in agriculture; but it is

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241 177 not practical knowledge applied from our point of view; it must be from their point of view. Instruction must be articulated with their practices and techniques; it must take into account their arrangements and their rhythm of life. The knowledge imparted must be applicable to their conditions and be linked with the instruments at their disposal. For the dietician to extol the virtues of a new crop, for the doctor to show that bacteria more readily enter where resistance is lowered by deficiencies in food, even for the agricultural demonstrator using his superior implements to demonstrate the practicability of the crop—all this is very nearly fruitless. These things will have their value when they can be fitted into the Native's world of thought and technology. In the meanwhile, the execution of our plans, sound though they be in theory, is merely causing irritation and resistance.

241 476 178 All the old Lovedu cultivation was on the hills or along their slopes and, generally speaking, close relatives, not necessarily relatives through males, had all or some of their fields in large blocks (*demo*). Unlike the Tswana custom, these blocks stood in no relation to the social organization; the land was not pointed out by the chief and its size was not predetermined, but depended upon the energy of the individual cultivators. The *demo* was a matter of convenience and utility: the concentration facilitated co-operation in clearing the fields, economized the labour necessary for protecting the gardens, and made mutual assistance in hoeing and weeding much easier. No doubt the arrangements also mobilized incentives and added to the joys of life. There is to-day nothing left of these blocks. The old ones have inevitably fallen into the hands of more and more scattered people and no new ones can be created because large blocks of land are no longer available. The tendency towards dispersal and fragmentation was still further emphasized when Shangana-Tonga cultivation proved the fertility of the valleys. To-day a man must take land where he can find it, and though the Lovedu still live on the hills, they have their lands scattered all over the country. Indeed, since it is easier to plough on level ground, the hills are liable to be neglected, though wisdom dictates that it is best to have fields in two different environments. The result is that a man's fields are widely separated, sometimes being as far as ten miles apart.

241 462 The old division of labour in agriculture between the sexes was not uneven; both men and women hoed, weeded, and reaped. Only men cleared the forest, but against that only women cultivated certain crops, such as groundnuts. The old pattern is still more or less maintained, at least in principle. But cultivation by the plough has changed matters. Men look upon hoeing as the work of women, although the old ideal so much survives that they despise the Shangana-Tonga because their menfolk neither hoed nor weeded in the past. To-day hoeing and weeding among the Lovedu fall largely upon the women, and ploughing almost exclusively upon the men. This is not a fair division of labour; it might be fairer if the other activities of men, such as hunting and public life, had not become greatly attenuated. For the women are always busy, and their work is more monotonous than that of the men, who, despite the labour migration to the towns, have much more leisure than women.

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More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do. 241 462

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new alinements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions: it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet. 241 134 178 [476]

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is 241 311 [K]

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241 annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according
[31] to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material
241 factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient
464 as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such ex-
241 pedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the
476 essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

231 Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd
[422] and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *mayunalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the
[262 Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food
782] only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or
[554] even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

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with an emotion which, though wholly unlike our humanitarian attitude, finds expression in exaggerated praises. These can be understood only in relation to their immense importance in the social organization. 231

Lovedu cattle are a blend, it is said, of four different strains: the large, humped Lovedu with backward-curving horns, the small, sturdy long-horned Rhodesian, the small Swazi with incurving horns, and the recent rather nondescript European breeds. In the present environment the mixture has led to inferior scrub cattle, resistent to tick-borne diseases and hardened by the stony hills. There are more cattle to-day than formerly and the distribution is far more equal, but no one believes that dipping has contributed to this result; on the contrary, dipping is regarded as a device to keep down their numbers, to subject the Native to irritating interference, behind which there are sinister motives. Recent attempts by the Administration to improve the breed by introducing thoroughbred Afrikander bulls failed because of these suspicions; the bulls were neglected and no camp was provided for them, and eventually they had to be removed. Cattle of individual owners are listed on so-called cattle lists, which primarily serve as a check upon the efficiency of the dipping; but the lists do not reflect real ownership, for they contain the cattle in a man's kraal, most of which may be merely in his care (*lu fua*). These lists have considerably altered the incidents of the *lu fua* contract and other aspects of Native life: they are often illegitimately used as evidence of ownership; orders of Native courts involving payments of cattle are sometimes nullified by the refusal of the owner of the list to authorize the transfer of cattle from his list to that of another; dipping and grazing fees imposed in some parts induce men, on the one hand, to distribute their cattle among different owners so as to keep down the number on any single list and, on the other, to make a charge, unauthorized by custom, for caring for the cattle of others. In short, European intervention has produced as serious changes in pastoral as in agricultural activities. Yet fundamentally the changes have left untouched the real significance and role of cattle in the society. 231 177 232

Cattle are not subject to as many taboos as elsewhere in Southern Africa. Women do not usually herd cattle, but the reason given is that not long ago the dangers from raids and wild animals necessitated herding by armed men; it was regarded as a purely practical measure. Girls or women may herd when the boys are in the circumcision school, and sometimes to-day young girls who have no brothers are seen looking after the cattle. What women may do or may not do varies almost from one kraal to another. Sometimes women of any age may go into the kraals; sometimes the doctor has protected the kraal in such a way that certain classes of women (not necessarily young women) are excluded. There is a fairly uniform fear that the blood of women or a woman who has had an abortion might cause the cattle harm. But the measures to combat these dangers vary very considerably. Kraals are doctored rather than cattle; and they are protected against various dangers, one of them being the danger of women. But elaborate magical practices, elsewhere associated with increasing the fertility of the cattle or safeguarding them 231 784-789

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231 against misfortune and disease, are not necessary when a new kraal is
784 built or when the medicated pegs are hammered around the fence as a
789 protection against witches. Some confine their doctoring to the kraals; others, in addition, give the cattle medicine. Bulls are never magically rendered more virile, nor are cows made more attractive by such means. There are to-day hardly any special cattle doctors, and very few cattle diseases are known or subjected to treatment. This is not the result of the breakdown of the cattle cult; it is evidence of the weakness of the cult among the Lovedu. If one were to detail all the magical practices that are to be found, the volume of which would be doubly formidable owing to their diversity, an overwhelming impression might be given; but in true perspective, regarding them against the total background they are almost too insignificant to be noticed.

231 Far more important from every point of view is the adjustment that
232 Natives are making to modern conditions. On this point we can offer
177 merely a few very general suggestions. Foremost is the problem of better co-operation between the Natives and the Administration. The objections to dipping are a symptom of misunderstanding one another's point of view. The Natives regard the restrictions as a punitive and arbitrary imposition. It is useless merely to urge that, by destroying the ticks that cause cattle diseases, dipping promotes both the increase and the welfare of the cattle. No one believes what is regarded as demonstrably false. Any one can see that cattle often die when they come back from the dip; that the rate of calving has decreased, that there are now no milch cows, that stock have degenerated, and so on. These evils are attributed to dipping, not to the hard driving to the dip, poor grazing, and inadequate care. What is more, it is believed that Europeans do not dip and that tribes that are sufficiently cunning escape the dipping regulations. Not a few advance the theory that dipping is a punishment for attachment to and preservation of old customs—surely an ironical comment upon the execution of a policy that aims at segregation and development on the lines of racial genius. The psychological aspects of these problems are no less important than their other aspects; and they are far more difficult and require delicate handling. It is easy to envisage the immediate effects, for instance, of limitation of stock, such as the starvation that will result from insufficient cultivation and the overburdening of the women with agricultural work; but when it is realized that the cattle are barely sufficient to maintain the *mayenolo* exchanges upon which the social organization rests, one cannot venture to predict what the ultimate effect of limitation will be.

231 Goats are the animals *par excellence* of ritual and religious importance.
431 They also feature prominently in exchanges which promote social inter-relations, such as marriage exchanges and the goodwill gifts between relatives-in-law. Second only to beer in re-establishing relations that have become strained, they are used very largely in the procedure of reconciliation, of righting wrongs by begging pardon, and in the payment of judgement debts. When a distinguished guest visits you, you honour him by killing a goat for him; when you bring beer to your *nafakulu*, the people to whom the daughters of your lineage are married, or even to a

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for mealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Tongs and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tongs, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Muridiridi (*Ehabergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muridiso-oyalus (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Murilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *murilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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824 protective medicines (*dipiabe*) of the village. The fruits are eaten by herd-boys, January to March. The first appearance of its flowers (October) indicates the time when chickens must not be hatched or bought, because of the danger of sand fleas (*nodzedze*). There are, incidentally, many other plants which indicate the approach of the seasons or the correct time for certain activities, e.g. when *musoso* (*Terminalia sericea*) blossoms, edible termites get their wings and children go out to catch them.

Mavini (*Colocasia antiquorum*). Planted at home—in the old days also [262] in river gardens—to provide relish from August to November. The leaves take only a few minutes to cook, compared with an hour or more for many other relishes. The bulb is cooked separately, like sweet potatoes.

Mavhiyani (*Lannea edulis*). A soft wood used for milk pails and bowls. [262] The fruit, which is eaten by children and adults, ripens in November-December. The wood is not suitable for hut rafters, as it is attacked by [263] weevils, but the bark serves as a rough, unworked string for tying together the poles of such structures as pig pens. Water in which the leaves are crushed is used as an eye lotion.

Mavola (*Parinarium curatellifolium*). The fruit, called *grysappel* (grey [262 apple) in Afrikaans, is liked and of very great value in times of starvation. 731] It is said to have saved the people in the years 1894-6, when drought, locusts, and cattle diseases overwhelmed the country. At such times the fruit is prepared, like *marula*, in the form of a cider (*vurebe*), which is yellowish and sweet. It also has economic uses.

824 We have in our list over a hundred different kinds of wild edible fruits 262 and berries, many of them, it is true, eaten chiefly by herdboys. But numerous wild fruits are relished by adults, such as wild figs (of which there are seven different kinds), *mukhomu* (*Burchenia discolor*), of which a tasty, if heavy, cake is made, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), *mujarwa* (*Pouzolzia hypoleuca*), *muenthu* (*Syzygium cordatum*), *muchi* (*Anona senegalensis*), and many others. The *marula* is, as we have seen, an important national beverage with valuable anti-scorbutic properties. There are also wild bananas (*mavea*), long ago brought from the north, but now practically eradicated by animals. Not much reliance is placed upon cultivated fruits, but there are oranges, some pawpaws, and mangoes, planted by the early Christians; these have not subsequently been added to to any extent and they are very much neglected.

For relishes, without which porridge cannot be eaten, people rely largely upon nature. Apart from the leaves of pumpkins and beans, which are available from February to June, they use a great variety of wild spinaches, chief among which are blackjack (*Bidens pilosa*), *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*), and *thethi* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*). In our list we have forty-five greens or relishes. But not only plants provide relishes. In September and in the winter months, when greens are scarce, *mukwa* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swarize*), fatty black male termites, are a great standby. The female of the same species (*dinyuwo*), which swarm from December to March, the rainy season, are so important in the national diet that they must be ritually 'bitten' (*ku luma*) and sent to the queen from every district. They are roasted, winnowed, and eaten as

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relish, the winnowing being mixed with salt and pressed into a cake used as spinach or eaten alone. Children eat *dinqwa makhwa* (flying ants) and grasshoppers; *mnida*, a large red grasshopper and a few other kinds of grasshoppers, as well as swarming locusts, form part of the diet of adults. Indeed, during a famine in the 1890's, Mujaji, it is said, sent locusts, not to plague, but to succour her subjects, the Shangana-Tonga. Honey—not only of the honey bee but also of other insects, such as the *mugo*—adds, though only occasionally, to the variety of the foods directly supplied by nature.

For nutritional purposes, a considerable body of knowledge of the vegetation is necessary. This body of knowledge expands to a veritable science when we consider its application to the arts and crafts. It is used continuously in all daily activities, such as building, fencing, renewing hoe handles, yokes, and storehouses, extracting oil or fat, and so on. In the old days it was not merely woodwork that was important; iron-making was one of the great industries. To-day, though many implements of Native ironwork are still to be found, the industry has disappeared, partly because the sources of the ore have been appropriated by Europeans and partly because of the cheapness of European-made iron objects. The smith was a specialist, but also an agriculturist and a student of the vegetation. In his industry he used, not only special ores, but also special woods. Similarly, for each of the crafts—hut-building, fencing, making stamping blocks, sledges, hoe handles, milk pails, spoons, platters, winnowing baskets, drums, and many others—different qualities in the wood are regarded as important. There are half a dozen different kinds of plants that yield fibre from which string can be made, each involving a somewhat different process. The value of certain grasses for thatching and making mats, baskets, and beer-sieves is ritualized in the taboo on cutting grass before the queen eats the first fruits; *i.e.* thatching grass must be left untouched until it is quite ripe in May and June. The elaborate working up of skin, though now restricted to the purpose of making skin cradles and a few women's skirts, involves considerable skill as well as knowledge of the value of oils and repellents to drive off destructive insects and even dogs. Pottery is still a live industry involving a knowledge of the qualities of clays, and what we call 'herbalism', the use of the medicinal qualities of plants, is not confined to doctors, but is to a large extent common knowledge.

A whole volume could be written on the interest of the average man or woman in the flora alone. He knows a great deal about almost every plant. Even a herdboy, as we found in discussing our list of names of plants, could mention one or two practical uses of more than half of them. Young men could add several medical or magical uses, while old men could bring the names into relation with a bewildering number of ritual, religious, and other occasions, and many had specialised knowledge, according to the nature of their occupations or interests. Speaking generally, and in terms of what is commonly known, we find that of the 300 plants we have listed, 200 have mainly economic uses. They are daily applied to such activities as building huts, thatching, making spoons. Some 20 are specially useful for making string; another 20 for

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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 230 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopoeia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most
789 practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical
824 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his
757 faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason
[753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are
[755] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have
192 arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognize the similarity of plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants might receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadua* of the plateau (*kha naha*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadua* of stony places (*kha mukhwarwi*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *muduwo*, *muduwati*, *muduwatibi*, and *muduwolinga*, all containing the root *dur-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugwi*, *mubwidi*, and *mubokola thudu* are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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good reasons for the different names; the anatomical similarities are known, but the uses and other aspects are more important and determine the name. Anatomical differences, clearly recognized, do not stand in the way of designating very different epiphytic plants which secrete 'birdlime' (*vulebo*) by the one name, *khilebo*. What determines nomenclature are not only striking physical features, such as peculiar leaves and seeds, but also a significant relationship with natural phenomena or, most usually, an important use. The variety of unconnected principles used upsets the symmetry, from our point of view, of the classification. But it must not lead us to think that there has been no close observation of the forms and venation of leaves, the taste and smell of the wood, and so on. The details of the flower, except for colour, general shape and size, are regarded as unimportant for purposes of identification. Yet they can name the poorest specimens and wonder why we want flowers and fruit before we can name a plant. The use of many cross classifications is not a burden to the memory, because the names link the plants to their practical uses.

The subject is much too large for adequate treatment here. Yet a few examples, illustrating the general outlook, might be of value. Because of its broad, flat leaves, *Imulata glomerata* is called *xvc ya ɖou* (the ear of an elephant). The flower of *Wormskioldia longipedunculata*, which is small and crimson and peers through the grass, suggests the name *leiɔ la dau* (the eye of a lion). The baobab is *khivuyu*, something inordinately fat and squat; the root *vu-* also occurs in the names of those fat caterpillars that attack mealies, of the hippopotamus, and of the enormous termite queen. Apt as well as picturesque are such names as *khiveds kha muri* (the liver of the tree), for all fungi; *leada la khithii* (the egg of the sunbird), for a variety of the groundnut; *Voandzeia subterranea*, *moykhakhilemo* (scent of spring) for *Phyllanthus reticulatus*, the flowers of which fragrantly herald the spring, and many others. One might think that those who named the plants were poets. Perhaps they were, because there is no lack of exquisite poetry in the beautiful praise songs that are the real literature of the people.

But their interests are many-sided and they do not scorn to have more mundane names. Here are a few that bear upon economic uses. For weaving (*hu loha*) baskets they use the *muloha* plant, *Acacia ataxacantha*; *mulcde-muloha-ɸhɔɸɔ*, our *Sida cordifolia*, is pliable (*hu leda*), like other *mulcde* plants, all of which are of the genus *Triumfetta*, and for that reason specially suitable for weaving beer sieves (*hu loha ɸhɔɸɔ*). *Mukhaɸisa*, our *Indigofera eriocarpa*, is their herdboys' milk-curdler (*hu khaɸisa*, to cause milk to curdle). The sap of *muilantshe*, which we call *Asclepias stellifera*, they use to repel flies (*hu ila ntshe*) from the open wounds of cattle. With the branches of *Vasimana-va-a khaɖa*, a stinging weed which we appropriately dignify with the name *Achyranthus aspera*, youngsters (*vasimana*) playfully fight one another.

Consider also, lest we think that the genius for giving apt names has been lost, the following few recently introduced plants. The pineapple, because of its prickly, xerophytic bracts, gets the same name as the aloes, *khiɸuzi*. The scent of the khaki weed calls to mind hemp, *baja*, and so is

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824 192 called the small hemp, *khibujabujani*. The large pods of *legumani*, a peanut of the *musaimisha* variety, are likened to leggings, for which they use a corruption of the Afrikaans word *kawasters*. *Khiphawa-mini* in scientific nomenclature is *Amaranthus spinosus* but, for all that, it pricks the 'missus' (*ku phawa mini*). We link the sunflower with the sun, but they call it *mawutshakhuhu*, fattener of the fowls, because the unaccountable European, instead of leaving fowls to their own devices, fattens them (*ku wutsha*) with its seeds. It would be tedious to give more of these interesting names. Suffice it to say that, upon whatever principle they are given, they furnish examples of close observation, of humour and poetry, and of practical sense.

824 461 In the command that the Lovedu have over the material supplied by vegetation, knowledge of the suitability of the plant to be used is by far the most impressive aspect. By contrast, preparation of the material, by seasoning or otherwise, and skilful or artistic manipulation to produce the required result lag far behind. Utility rather than artistic beauty is the main consideration; a carelessly made article, generally speaking, serves its purpose as well as one well executed. There is not much specialization and a high standard of workmanship is not aimed at; most men know what wood to select and how to make a great variety of ordinary household articles. Special skill is needed for making wooden dishes, drums, and milk pails. The most skilled work is perhaps the making of baskets (*zwiruduana*), which is done by men. This is not the place to describe the technique of the arts and crafts; all we need insist upon is the widespread knowledge of the virtues and defects of the plants that can be used.

824 178 Modern conditions have brought about a serious decline in craftsmanship and in familiarity with the vegetation. Schoolboys no longer have the extensive opportunities of learning veld-lore which herding provided. Herding is to them hardly an institutionalized induction into nature study; instead of being a part of life itself, it assumes the aspect of distasteful labour. The introduction of European articles also lessens the interest in the qualities of the vegetation. Yet these influences are in their infancy. They have made some impression upon the material elements of the culture, but they have tended to impoverish rather than to replace the old. You see petrol tins side by side with water pots, ugly sacks ousting the picturesque granaries, patched pieces of boxwood replacing reed doors, cast-off European clothes instead of graceful coverings of skin, machine-made blankets beside hand-woven grass mats, and axes and knives, no longer from the smithy, but only from the stores.

178 313 More serious is the threat to the traditional outlook. Christianity stresses the virtue of being different from the pagan, but the status of Europeanized Natives is precarious both in and outside the tribe, and there is no co-ordinated view of life that can successfully combat the subtle economic onslaught of European culture. And, since 1938, the legislative prohibition of cutting down trees, except after permission having been obtained and a fee paid, threatens a change of which the results cannot be foreseen. Many trees, and among them some essential for the crafts, may not be cut down at all. The inconvenience of walking

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twenty miles or more, quite apart from the fee, when wood is required for so small an article as a hoe handle, a spoon or a basket, encourages general evasion of the law. Destruction of forests is never wanton; it was necessary to relieve the pressure on the land, and to supply the needs of shelter and warmth. The arts and crafts did not lead to any significant encroachment. Blue-gum plantations can meet some needs, but not any of the specialised needs, and sun-dried bricks, already much in evidence, can extensively replace poles in building. But if we are anxious to lessen the sense of frustration, which the clash of Western culture makes inevitable, we should encourage, not destroy, the arts and crafts. Reclamation of the reserves is essential, both in our interests and in order to implement a policy of segregation, but if it is at the price of those things that give meaning to life, it might well ruin the spiritual foundation of the segregational structure.

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CHAPTER IV

CO-OPERATION AND EXCHANGE

Arrangements of and changes in the work-party, partnerships, and solitary occupations—relative roles of economic and goodwill exchanges—beer, dances and bride-price as vehicles of reciprocal exchanges—aversion from business.

181 To convert to his use the material resources upon which man relies for subsistence, some organization of labour is necessary; man must co-ordinate his energies with those of his fellow man. He must co-operate with some and he may consider himself as a competitor of others. The Lovedu is an individualist, but life is hardly regarded as a competitive struggle, even in respect of the things that are limited in supply. Men aim, not so much at achievement and riches, as at maturity and self-sufficiency. There is no single scale of attainments by which men measure themselves against one another. Moderate success is credited to industry, but immoderate success may be suspect; he who reaps much more than his neighbours is in danger of being looked upon as an enemy in league with anti-social forces. The Lovedu do not display either their emotions or their possessions; ostentation is appropriate only to states of exhilaration. Self-expression finds its legitimate scope, not in worsting a rival, but in a gradually expanding responsibility and prestige. The society has a hierarchical framework so constricted that rank and age interpose themselves between possible competitors. This does not mean that there is no competition, but the great emphasis is upon co-operation.

476 The two methods by which men pool their resources in order to provide for their primary needs are working together in mutual helpfulness and exchanging the products of their labour. Co-operative working together arises chiefly in agricultural and building activities, where its main purpose is easily intelligible; exchanges are not felt to bear such a direct relation to the differentiated needs and activities of men. Yet fundamentally co-operation and exchange are part of the same system of values. Mutual helpfulness is highly esteemed and aggressive exploitation deeply despised. In the co-operative situation these values are intrinsically present; but the exchange situation must be reconstituted to bring it into harmony with them. The problem in co-operative situations is to harmonize with them the individualism of the peasant; the problem of exchange situations is to eliminate the idea of a commercial transaction; and in both types of situations this is done by the stress upon reciprocity. The purely economic aspect tends to become wholly obscured, except in modern forms of co-operation and exchange. In them the helper becomes a servant and exchanges become 'bizmis' (business). Service and 'bizmis' are tolerated only so far as they conform to the old pattern and values.

476 571 The *lejema*, which is the most distinctive form of co-operative work, consists of a more or less casual group of workers. Neighbours, relatives,

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and friends—indeed anyone—may join the group and help in the task, usually agricultural, which is being performed. But the group that collects for the occasion is not wholly fortuitous; relatives and neighbours always predominate. There is no elaborate pre-arrangement. The *lejoma*-giver usually announces his *lejoma* beforehand and invites some people to come. Women, who brew the beer, usually organise more than men, some of whom rely on those they can collect on their way down to the field that is to be hoed or weeded or reaped. People who are invited are not bound to give an excuse for not coming; it is far more usual to promise to come and not to come than to give an excuse which, whatever it is, can hardly be valid in a society where people are not considered to be bound by time or by their previous engagements. Moreover, the beer for the *lejoma* may not yet have matured on the day fixed by the *lejoma*-giver. People may have come from long distances, but they will not be annoyed; there is sure to be a beer party in progress quite near. On the other hand, the *lejoma*-giver will not complain if those who promised to come do not put in an appearance, for he knows that since 'the far-off well causes thirst', it is better to drink by the way. 476 571

Often, though the beer may be ready, no work is possible on the day. The weather may be unpropitious, some important event may require rearrangement of the activities of the day, or sometimes work may be taboo because of a death or hail or the first rain after a period of drought. In these circumstances, the beer must nevertheless be consumed; it is not something that can await the convenience of man. And to those who partake, it is announced that the *lejoma* has been converted into a *phuduo*—that is to say, the drinkers are not mere drinkers, but a potential labour force that may be expected to do a day's work at some future date. The arrangement is so vague that we cannot fit it into any of our conceptions, such as a promise to perform or a right to demand the labour. The *lejoma*-giver may, if he has a good supply of corn, give beer again when he calls those who previously drank of the *phuduo*. A *phuduo* is essentially a pre-arranged *lejoma* which has miscarried; but it may be fortuitous—for instance, when one has to kill a pig against which neighbours have complained. A social occasion at which one gives beer cannot be converted into a *phuduo*. Sometimes, when supplies are low or for other reasons no beer can be provided, a man invites a group of people to work for him in anticipation of a beer party, also called a *phuduo*, at a future date. But only very special circumstances justify these departures from the *lejoma*. [784]

According to our standards, activities at a *lejoma* appear to be very haphazard and unorganized. Each member of the group contributes to one end, the execution of the task which is to benefit the *lejoma*-giver; but the effort of each worker is not individually assessed; some may turn up when the work begins, others join in much later, even perhaps just before the workers prepare to go home. The work proceeds in a leisurely manner, without undue exertion; no special achievement is expected from any one and the organization is such that the most inexperienced and dilatory can keep pace with the most efficient. Efficiency is as little a matter for comment as inefficiency. There is no rivalry, no spirit of 476 571 461

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576 calculation, no supervision. The adjustments in the situation rely upon
571 no pre-organization; there is practically no leadership or direction; and
461 yet an effective interaction is attained. The total pattern is a part of the social system; it is not as if two or more people have casually encountered one another and have by trial and error to discover how to co-operate [584] effectively in performing the task. Christians, whose standards of organization, performance, and efficiency are derived from those of the white man, attempt to submit the workers to discipline. They sometimes constitute themselves as foremen, they attempt to apply the available energy systematically, they have a system of rewards and penalties. The result is, not co-operation, but service; there are few, if any, songs and the occasion is no longer a gala social event.

The workers at a *lejema* usually adjourn after one and a half or two hours to refresh themselves at about 11 a.m., when a pot of beer, euphemistically called 'the knife-sharpener', is brought to the field. The interval is of indefinite duration and is so much out of harmony with modern ideas, that 'the knife-sharpener' is often regarded with disfavour; instead of sharpening, it blunts the edge of activity in the modern situation, in which the *lejema*-giver thinks of himself as an employer and the workers are concerned to avoid being exploited. Neither employer nor employee is equipped by his background of culture and training to achieve success in these new roles; and the result is that tensions arise. Fortunately, however, the *lejema* is still overwhelmingly a collective social event. There is as yet no need to buoy up labour with dignity and moral worth; it is sufficient to submerge it in the sociability of beer. For the real nature of the *lejema* appears when the workers go to the home of the *lejema*-giver. The situation there instantly dispels any preconception [579] we may have of special rewards for the workers. There are visitors, dubbed *vahobedi* (solicitants) and as such are distinguished from the *vashumi* (workers). In our society they would be called 'gate-crashers' or 'beggars', but they are not in needy circumstances and do not ask for favours; they are entitled to join in. Individually they not only imbibe calabash for calabash with the workers, but far outnumber them, not unusually by as much as four or five to one.

[735] To judge the situation correctly, we must remember that begging, one of the traits of the Lovedu we might regard as most irritating, is not socially disapproved. He who has and does not give is the offender, not he who asks for what he needs. The case is different, however, when the beggar is a loafer and sponger, roaming about in search of beer without doing any work; and if, as is not unlikely, he is disliked, his presence during the exhilaration caused by the beer is liable to cause a breach of the peace and he might be turned away. Generally speaking, *vashumi* are not given special beer; the beer is not a reward for their services, but a feast transforming work into recreation and reflecting the emphasis upon liberality. To-day the *vahobedi* are sometimes looked upon as parasitic beggars, and measures are taken to reconstitute the *lejema* so as to make it a more economical method of co-operation. Fundamentally, all the arduous work is still done by *lejema*, though every one knows that, for, say, 4s. worth of salt, more workers could be obtained and better

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work accomplished than if one had beer made at the cost of 10s. worth of corn, not to mention the time, labour, and firewood that is consumed in preparing the beer. The motive is, however, not economic but social. *Majoma* are used, not for long and difficult tasks only, but also for light work, which a man can easily do himself without help. The aim in these cases is not so much to complete the work quickly—time is rarely a matter of importance—as to be credited with generous impulses and to have a pleasant social event. Christians, with their more Europeanized outlook, averse from the waste entailed, and fearing excommunication by the Church, which prohibits beer, nevertheless find it hard not to conform to this custom.

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Another form of co-operation is the *khilche* (*jche*, a hoe). Uncommon to-day in its original form, it has its essentials preserved in ploughing partnerships, the so-called 'stock fair' in towns and particularly in the collective agricultural work of young girls. The co-operating group, defined by convenience and proximity of domicile, is largely a local one and consists mainly of close relatives, both on the mother's and on the father's side. The group is still comparatively stable, as it was in the old days, when it had its basis in common interests and common needs. Its members collectively reaped or weeded or hoed one another's fields, completing one field and then going to the next, and each arranged about his own food. Kin or neighbours had their lands closer together and less split up than to-day; they started their various tasks at much the same time; there was safety in concentration, and economy in co-operation. The great distinction between *khilche* and *lejema* was and still is that no beer is provided; but, as in the *lejema*, the *khilche* partnership lessened the monotony of arduous work and mobilized energies and incentives. As the group was smaller and more closely khit, relied more tangibly upon reciprocity and had more elements of continuity, the stimulus of beer was not necessary to hold it together. Each partner remained an individualist, for the crops were not shared; but each realized the value of mutual helpfulness and the necessity of minimizing the self in relation to the ends of others.

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To-day the conditions of the operation of the *khilche* no longer exist in their old form. Fields have become split up; the old dangers are no more; the plough has vastly decreased man's dependence upon the help of his kin or his neighbour. Though it was perhaps the most potent agent of destruction of the old *khilche*, the plough has become the centre of the new. The household, which is the economic unit, hardly ever has ploughs, animals, and workers all available at the same time; only 30 per cent. of such units possess ploughs and only 15 per cent. have cattle or donkeys. Thus cultivation calls for some form of co-operation, and the form which was familiar was the *khilche*. There are new elements in the situation, but their co-ordination was effected by drawing upon pre-existing patterns of co-operation. Typically the *khilche* in ploughing consists of four partners, representing four economic units: one supplies the animals, a second the plough, the third some of the workers, and the fourth the herdboy, who looks after the cattle during the year and might wield the whip or place behind the plough. The emphasis

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476 is upon the sharing of tools rather than upon that sharing of services
571 which characterized the old *khilche*. But in the old institution hoes were
241 borrowed from one another and the differentiation of to-day was not unknown, though it took a different form. The organization implies a person-to-person adjustment rather than institutionalized leadership, except that he who provides the animals sometimes tends to dictate whose lands have first to be ploughed. No payment passes, however unequal the contributions or needs of the partners, and sometimes an old widow is a partner who can contribute nothing at all. The essence of the whole institution is a complete disregard of the exact equivalences of the contributions or of the services.

476 This form of co-operation, in which mutual helpfulness and reciprocity
571 and not economic advantage are stressed, finds expression in many activities. Among Christians there are potters who club together; usually they are kin who live in the same settlement. The only work they share is the excavation of the clay; each works quite independently of the other, though advice is exchanged. Men often build *ga khilche* instead of *ga lejema*, but in this case the association is a very loose one, consisting merely of the available friends or relatives in or near the village; and though some small gift is given by the owner of the hut built, the main feature of the co-operation is a sense of mutuality and reciprocity. The conception of mutual helpfulness recedes before that of profit when, as is becoming more common, the person for whom the work is done pays a reward in money. Curious anomalies occur, because sometimes less, sometimes more, consideration is given to the exact money equivalence of the services rendered. Where a man considers that he is paying wages for services, he usually models his behaviour upon his conception of the European employer and the whole pattern of reciprocity falls to the ground. But this model is very unpopular, though for the employer it has distinct advantages; as he contracts for the labour, he can requisition it when he wants it and can control its execution. He is no longer an equal partner, but a foreman.

One development of the *khilche* which is seen in townships is the 'stock fair'. It is practicable only where each of the partners periodically receives cash wages. Every month one of the partners, taken in rotation, is entitled to a fixed amount from each of the others, the purpose being to make available to every one in turn a fairly large sum of money. Though the partners wear some distinctive dress, the association is very unstable and many as a result suffer loss. The 'stock fair', far though it be removed from the *khilche*, is thus based on a generalization from past experience in which social ends are attained by the application of rule-of-thumb principles, with little resort to trial and error and little dependence on organizing ability or on individual leadership.

357 With the various forms of co-operation, we may briefly contrast solitary occupations and services. It is somewhat unusual for any one alone to undertake a large task, and among heathens it is rarer still for an
357 individual to hire out his services. There is no real domestic service;
736 even in the royal household, *vulada* is very different from service in our sense of the term. The *mulada*, usually an orphan, is the ward of his

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the 357
family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a 736
derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *mwyuolo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

Rather like the *maladi* was the *muruisa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other 735
animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was 178
given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu fufa* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or 437
woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'.

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services 464
or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. 426
But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilche* arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or cattle of others. The standard payment is 10s. per acre ploughed. The [465]
advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined 855
custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the 431
mother's brother, cares for (*hu lela*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maladi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration 231
passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufisua*, uses the 465
cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

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231 young goat, 'the payment of the herding', to-day, even if the goats have
465 not prospered, because herdboys are no longer willing to work for nothing. Moreover, the *mafiusa* of cattle is nowadays asked to help the owner with his ploughing and he often (illegally, by traditional standards) charges herding and grazing fees. This charge is levied on the model of European farmers and is exacted even in areas within the reserve, where grazing fees are unknown. *Hu fise* differs from *hu dizja* (to cause to graze), an arrangement whereby one man allows another's cattle to run with his own, usually because he has no herdboy; for this no consideration passes.

461 Service, just like the various forms of co-operation, thus hardly ever implies subservience. Where it does, as in the old *hu pala* or in the various modern forms of service, its incidents are regarded as derogatory, because they are incongruent with the emphasis on reciprocity. Even
567 *vathobya* (slavery), which arises from captivity and was practically unknown, implies no real bondage. There is to-day still one 'slave', an old Shangana-Tonga woman captured, not by the Lovedu, but by the Shangana-Tonga, who sent her as tribute for rain to Mujaji. The institution of slavery is unknown among the Lovedu; so she, just like other wives of the queen, was handed over to one of the nobles, who accepted her as a daughter. As we have mentioned, there is a tendency to adopt European patterns of labour, both in the more or less solitary and in the co-operative activities.

166 The most important change is the migration to towns and farms in
464 search of cash wages. The cash amount that enters the tribe, as compared with the total income of an average family, is small, not more than 7 per cent. The effects of the migration itself are proportionately small. It is not so much the absence in town of the men nor even the ideas that they bring back with them that are of the first importance. More men, not less, are idle to-day, and more crops, not less, are reaped than in the old days. Moreover, what the men have learnt in the towns is on the whole so different from the practice at home that it has to be laid aside. The greatest changes are not the direct introductions by these men, but the indirect reactions to the rule and the economy of the white man. Many of these reactions are unintelligible in relation to local conditions; they have spread from the highveld. We are concerned at present only with changes in the outlook towards economic arrangements. At first sight they appear to be very great, but the longer one looks the more superficial they appear and the firmer the old foundations stand out. The Christians
[189] are a notable exception, not because they migrate more to the towns (on the whole the difference is negligible), but because, orientating themselves from an anti-tribal angle, they have eagerly accepted whatever differentiates them from their heathen brothers. They are competitive and money-conscious; they exploit their brothers.

For purposes of comparison, we may briefly consider two areas: A, with a population of 822, and B, with a population of 610. The census in A was taken in April, 1936, of B in April, 1937, the seasons 1936 and 1937 not being significantly different. A is 40 per cent. Christian and on the whole Christian standards of living prevail; B is 16 per cent. Christian

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and heathen standards prevail. The main differences between A and B are that in A tribal life is at a minimum and economic obligations are slightly heavier than in B upon both Christians and pagans; and in B, where tribal life is at a maximum, Christians have far better opportunities of economically exploiting their heathen neighbours. The extent of the migration to towns turns out to be a function mainly of economic considerations, but social factors play an important differentiating role, as the following figures will illustrate. The figures refer to males only, as there were no females absent in towns, and they are expressed as the approximate percentage of males absent for each of the age groups that are enumerated.

PERCENTAGE OF MALES WORKING IN TOWNS DURING APRIL (A, 1936; B, 1937)

	Pagans and Christians			Pagans		Christians	
Age Group	A & B	A	B	A	B	A	B
6–14	2	2	1	3	0	0	5
15–19	25	31	11	42	13	16	8
6–19	10	14	4	17	4	7	6
20–25	60	55	68	47	71	58	17
26–49	43	53	33	51	33	55	33
20–49	50	54	40	49	44	56	29
50–	1	2	0	0	0	5	0
All ages, 6 upwards	25	28	21	27	22	31	18

As one would expect, the total exodus in A exceeds that in B, but while the proportion of Christians who migrate is comparatively large in A, it is small in B. On the whole the Christians rely for cash income chiefly upon wages earned in town in A, but not in B, where there are far better opportunities of trade. There are, however, striking differences in the relative numbers of Christians and pagans who migrate in the two areas, especially for the age groups 6–19 and 20–25. This is not the place to give a full explanation: it will be sufficient to note the significance of the fact that for the first-mentioned age group four times larger a percentage of pagans migrate in A than in B, though for Christians there is no marked difference, and, on the other hand, the corresponding percentages in the second-mentioned age group are so strikingly different as to suggest the operation of entirely different factors. Whereas in A it is the pagans, in B it is the Christians who start migrating at an early age. There are many complicated factors that account for these differences, but mainly they are due to the less realistic adjustment of adolescents among pagans in A and among Christians in B, for among them there is little scope for recreational and other activities; and upon young men the burden of providing for the older men, whose social duties and inclinations keep them at home, falls heavily, especially among pagans in B, where tribal life is still in full force. Above all, the figures indicate that the more closely we examine the situation, the more necessary does it

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166 become to interpret economic forces as operating, not *in vacuo*, but against
444 the whole background of social life.

182 It is likewise not economic forces alone, but the diffusion of a new
151 outlook that has caused the major changes in the old co-operative system. Individual achievement was of little account; no one was penalized because he attained only a very indifferent standard of efficiency or industry; people were devoted to a non-material ideal. A man's whole upbringing and training conditioned him to the ideal of reciprocity and helpfulness. Yet in the modern world, where personal achievement is important and rivalries must necessarily arise, the life-adjustment value of this ideal is doubtful. To some extent, the individual adapts himself by accepting European standards when he is in town and relaxing from the strain when he has returned home. He comes back mentally tired, and it is recognized that he is entitled to take a long holiday, even though there is pressing work to be done. His failures in town are attributed, not to causes within himself, but to the operation of external forces. His dismissal is ascribed to the jealousy and witchcraft of a competitor for the same position, and the success of his rival to magic. Rivalry is an unfamiliar situation in economic activities at home, and the competitive, individualistic struggle in the towns is never phrased as being between members of the tribe; the magic that is used to oust him from competitive positions or to cause an employer to favour another is always magic used
[789] by members of another tribe, such as the Zulu or Xhosa. The Lovedu traditionally regard luck magic with some suspicion, at least as applied in economic situations. But it has become increasingly necessary in order to re-establish their sense of security; a whole new technique of charms, burning medicines to attract custom, chewing roots to give confidence (what the European might call 'effrontery'), and the like has developed. Many invoke, as before a dangerous enterprise in the old days, the blessing of the gods. Even within the tribal economy itself the spread of ideas of competition has been accompanied by the extension of magic and sorcery to new spheres of activity.

476 That this answer to contact with the new economy may not always
182 suffice, we see among many neighbouring tribes—for instance, the people of Sekhopo, 'brothers' of the Lovedu. Among them beer, the quintessence of situations of reciprocity and co-operation, is converted into an article of sale. Beer is provided, even at *majema*, as wages, and hence only to the workers; visitors may join the beer-party, but must pay for each calabash they have. This commercialization is deplored by the Lovedu; it is regarded in the same light as charging strangers for board and lodging, a practice that prevails among highveld tribes; and it is almost as bad as what the Lovedu imagine to be the European custom of making relatives who come on a holiday pay their hosts. 'Our hotels are our relatives', said a Lovedu man to us; but while he was prepared to justify the commercial pattern in which salt, meat, tobacco, European vegetables, even money, oust beer in the *lejema*, the sale of beer seemed to him intolerable. This view fairly reflects the general opinion, as well as the attempt to harmonize the two patterns, among the Lovedu. Rewards are sometimes given to individual *lejema* workers, who are

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paid in salt and the other commodities mentioned. But the practice is, except for payment in meat, largely confined to Christians. As far as it exists, it completely alters the old long-run reciprocity pattern. There is no social feast. Collective replaces co-operative activity; for personal profit, not sociability, is the prime motive; the social gala is converted into a labour situation, and the interests of employer and employee begin to diverge. Room for roundabout recipocity is narrowed; instead of the indefinite mutuality upon which a man who helps others to-day may rely in the future, he receives an immediate and individual reward; faith in long-range equivalence of services and obligations gives way to a desire for direct personal satisfaction. 476 182

To the new situation, in which the *lejema*-giver corrects and directs and the worker obeys and submits, imperfect adjustments have been made. Direction, hitherto unknown in the economic relations of equals, degenerates to exploitation; the answer to unwilling submission is resentment; and the employer is regarded as a renegade and cheat. He is known to buy a bag of salt for 7*s.*—and to distribute it so that each worker receives only one-sixth of the accepted value (1*l.*) of a day's work. The conflict, in which the worker retaliates by calling the employer 'unscrupulous', is only beginning. It may resolve itself by new adjustments, even though an aggravating feature is the fact that it is the Christian who is the budding capitalist and the pagan who is the dependent labourer. From the point of view of progress in agriculture, the danger is that employers are usually progressive, and progress thus comes to stand for anti-social methods. This hampers the work of agricultural demonstrators. It is clear that lasting solutions, even of apparently simple agricultural problems, not to speak of the complicated problems of administration or of wider spheres of culture contact, can be attained only by studying both the forms of the old institutions and psychological reactions among the people to the changes. 476 466 182 [835] [241]

Turning to exchanges in the society—that is, purchases and sales, whether cash or kind is transferred—we may consider external and internal trade from the standpoint of whether it falls within a money, money-barter, barter, or gift-barter economy. We use these terms to designate the distinctions mentioned below. *External trade* refers to transactions with people belonging to groups outside or alien to the tribe, such as stores, farmers, and individuals of other tribes. *Internal trade* is largely local, but it may be interlocal when it occurs across the boundaries of the reserve, but between members of the tribe. *Gift barter* is reciprocal gift exchange. There is no exact economic equivalence. Mutuality, goodwill, and reciprocity are the primary considerations, but it is not the same as a gift, for a gift implies no return gift, but merely one-sided donations, such as presents to children. Out-and-out gift is *mpho* (from *hu fa*) and, while such gifts imply indirect mutuality, there is no expectation of a return gift. For our present purposes and in the table given below, they are left out of consideration; it would, for instance, be impracticable to distinguish between feeding one's household and giving them presents. From gift barter must be distinguished *pure barter*, in which the aim is an interchange of goods of equivalent value 437

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437 rather than of goodwill; the goods exchanged are primary and the relations between the parties, though not unimportant, are secondary. In *money barter* it is not the objective value of the goods exchanged against one another, but their value as compared with certain common measures that is in the forefront—for instance, such measures as hoes or goats or certain denominations of money. When a man says he has bought 1*l.* worth of maize, he may mean, not that he has paid cash, but that he has bought a 4-gallon tinful (which is regarded as the equivalent of 1*l.* worth) and has paid some goods which are considered to have the value of 1*l.* What he has in mind is the common standard, which some think of as 1*l.*, while others regard it as a tinful of maize. Finally, in *money exchange*, goods are exchanged for money, not against other goods; yet for our purposes, not all money transactions are included in money exchange, but only those payments in money which are business transactions. Many money exchanges fall under gift barter. For instance, A brings beer to her son-in-law, who, not having the two goats that he should return, hands over £1 to A; he is not paying for the beer, but he is exchanging his goodwill.

437 The following table approximately reflects the volume of exchanges
438 during the course of a normal year in an average family of five (two
439 adults and three children). It would be impracticable to give the source
431 of our figures, except for the general remark that they have been worked out from mass statistics of a population of about 2,000 people, supplemented by budgets and personal observations, and are expressed in £ *s. d.*

	External Trade						Internal Trade											
Medium of payment	Money			Money barter			Total			Money			Money barter			Barter			Gift barter			Total		
	£	s.	d.	s.	d.		£	s.	d.	s.	d.		s.	d.		s.	d.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Cash	1	2	3	—			1	2	3	5	0		—			—			8	3		13	3	
Agricultural produce and beer			6	2	0			2	6	1	9		1	6		7	0		1	1	6	1	11	9
Livestock, &c.			6	—					6	4	0		2	0		4	6		2	19	6	3	10	0
Total	1	3	3	2	0		1	5	3	10	9		3	6		11	6		4	9	3	5	15	0

437 It will be seen that money exchange accounts for £1 14*s.*, or 24 per
602 cent. of the total exchanges, money barter for 5*s.* 6*d.*, or under 4 per cent.,
431 barter for 11*s.* 6*d.*, or just under 8 per cent., and gift barter for £4 9*s.* 3*d.*, or just under 64 per cent. By far the largest single exchange is bride-price (*mayvualo*), which falls under gift barter. The proportion of

[See p. 61, Cat. 116 for definition of external and internal trade.—Analyst.]

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goodwill or reciprocal exchanges would be considerably enlarged if we 437
included unilateral gifts (*upho*), such as delicacies given by the mother's 602
mother to a grandchild, goats to important visitors, money or clothes to 431
wives or in-laws, soap and cloth to lovers or concubines, and so [illegible] We
have excluded them, but they all arise out of institutionalized situations; to lavish donations or gifts of goodwill upon anyone but relatives is very unusual. So much is needed to maintain reciprocity between relatives that this kind of generosity to strangers is mere lack of balance. The society specially insists that people should direct their energies towards building up firm friendship between those kin whose relationship to one another is subject to strains. There are endless sources of quarrel between [604]
relatives-in-law; hence sons-in-law must always help parents-in-law, while the latter must perpetually be bringing beer to their sons-in-law. The gifts that pass, by anticipation smooth out the differences or relieve the strains arising from structural arrangements; mainly they are not what we would call 'friendship gifts'. The clue to a man's behaviour is not to be found chiefly in personality choices; there are no defined occasions, such as marriages or Christmas among us, when friends can show their goodwill or when the whole world is supposed to be well-disposed. Kinship is the scheme in which reciprocity is most appropriate, at least in exchange transactions.

Among the gift-barter exchanges the most distinctive are certain 431
institutionalized gifts, such as *khirula* beer, the *gusha*, and *manyunolo*. Essentially they do not belong to a trading context at all; they are not economically motivated and do not result from any objective diversification of needs; yet the attitudes appropriate to them are reflected back upon the trading situation. *Khirula* (*ku rula*, to lift off the head) is beer carried to a relative or occasionally a friend, the most impressive occasion being when relatives-in-law bring beer to the *tsezi*, son-in-law. As many as twelve calabashes (35–40 gallons), equivalent to one head of cattle, may be carried. One calabash is usually consumed on the way, a second is given to the carriers on their arrival, and the rest is partaken of by any one, including the carriers, who attend the beer-drink. The recipient is expected to return a gift, generally two goats, one slaughtered immediately for the carriers as relish, the second taken home by them and often called 'the walking stick of the in-laws'. The situation is one of good fellowship and friendliness; there are no displays of suspicion and no mutual recriminations as in some other tribes; the givers and the receivers meet one another with joyful shouts and leave one another mutually exhilarated.

There are no special occasions to which *khirula* beer is appropriate, though it is usually stated to be brought for some, usually a fictitious, reason, such as 'to cause us to see the young grandchild', who, in fact, has been seen often before. An old man sometimes asks a distant relative or even a non-relative who has just returned from town for a jacket or pair of trousers perhaps. Some time later his wives brew beer and he 'gives' the beer to the young man, praising him for his generosity and announcing to all that he was indebted to the young man. This is the beginning of a never-ending series of exchanges, for the young man must

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431 some day reciprocate and the old man again 'thanks' him with beer given in his honour. And this is an essential aspect of these gift exchanges. The most striking illustration is in respect of *mayuualo* (bride-price). The *tsui*, it is said, never completes *mayuualo* payments (*mayuualo a u ftie*); even in his old age he must still respond to the call for assistance from his relatives-in-law; and they in turn never cease bringing him beer. But whatever he gives falls into the *mayuualo* and must be returned should the marriage be dissolved; the chain linking the parties into relations of reciprocity has snapped.

574 The *gosha*, essentially a dance performed by the young men of one or
535 more areas, provides the setting of an interesting interchange of goodwill
471 and of commodities. The main object is undoubtedly recreational, and the main participators are not kin, but members of a territorial unit. The district head is not necessarily involved, except as far as he must know what goes on in his district. The old Lovedu word *lacho*, a musical [59] entertainment, emphasizes its salient features: youths, blowing on reed flutes, dance round in a circle to the accompaniment of four drums beaten by girls. There is much preliminary practising under the leadership of the dance-master (*malaguani*), but in the actual performances leadership is not marked and changes continually as one performer after the other takes his stand in the centre of the ring of dancers. The artistic aspect, the making of the sets of reeds, their tone compass, the rhythmic counterpoints and the various melodic and harmonic sequences of sound may be dismissed in a sentence: close by, one is reminded of the pealing of bells thrown into ever new combinations by complex steps and movements; at a distance one listens as if to an *ensemble* of brass instruments strongly supported by drums. We are concerned with the socio-economic aspects only.

171 A slight comparison with the Venda *matangwa*, a word also used by the Lovedu (*matagwa*), is instructive. A Venda creditor wishing to collect a debt calls the dancers, gives them some work (such as the building of a hut or the repairing of a fence), and sends them to the recalcitrant debtor. There they stay feeding at the expense of the debtor and of his neighbours until the debtor pays. But the beast that the debtor pays is slaughtered and consumed by the performers, the creditor receiving only a small part. Apart from using the *matangwa* to enforce payment by debtors, the Venda also send such dancers to express sympathy when there has been a death and in that case there is a return visit to get back the beast slaughtered. It has also other uses not relevant to our present purpose.

574 Among the Lovedu the *gosha* is somewhat different. Private individuals
535 send it to friends or relatives to express sympathy or to notify a death as
431 well as to celebrate the occasion of the latter's marriage or setting up a new home; and there are special rules for each kind of *gosha*. The *gosha* of condolence, for instance, lasts one day, drums are not allowed if the deceased is of a foreign tribe, and refusal of the entertainment is impossible. Generally speaking, a *gosha* entails special food and lodging arrangements, food for the visitors being collected from households in the district which also provides sleeping quarters. The old rules designed

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to prevent promiscuity among young boys and girls are no longer in evidence, and complications are liable to arise where there is a *gsha*. The economic aspect of the *gsha*, except where it originates in a visit of condolence or is sent to supplicate for rain, is that the host, whether he himself originally invited the dancers or not, may send back a 'revenge' *gsha* to get back the beast he killed for the performers. He gets back very little, only the *mumowo*, perhaps a leg of the beast, and the performers do not work for him to compensate him for what they have eaten. The *gsha* is not conceived of as a debt-collecting institution, it never originates in a debt, and once it is set into motion, its real function is to maintain reciprocal relations. A man may start the chain of reciprocity by inviting a *gsha* from elsewhere; on the other hand, a party of dancers out for merriment sometimes descend upon any one they like, but he may refuse the entertainment as too costly or for other reasons. To notify the host that a *gsha* is coming is usual; but a man whose *gsha* has been accepted by another may stop (*ku thiea*) the latter from returning the compliment (and getting back his beast) by sending *khirula* beer; he will do so, for instance, when he has no beast to kill or is reluctant to part with one. 574 535 431

The *gsha* may be a cumbrous instrument to effect exchanges of commodities, but it throws the social concomitants of these exchanges boldly into relief, magnifying them to such an extent that the gift exchange is completely obscured. This is in accordance with Lovedu conceptions, for they have a great dislike of anything that is clearly and primarily a commercial transaction. The *gsha* stresses the interchange of goodwill; the guests, drawn perhaps from three or four areas, come to display their skill for the delectation of their hosts; and the latter, hurriedly collecting their dancers, come forth with their drummers and *ensemble* of flute-players to challenge their guests. First the one party, then the next give their performances; it is a social gala occasion and the competition is carried on in the friendliest spirit. The spectators are the judges: an old man passing gives his verdict, perhaps after having heard only one set of performers; an old woman, after a dance of ecstasy (*ku pebela*), sets the crown, be it merely a leg-ring or necklace, upon the head of her favourite performer; and when the next party dances, the verdicts are reversed and the honours paid anew. In the end neither party is victor or vanquished. The object has been self-expression, without stress upon individual performance, and entertainment in which the competitive element is present merely to heighten the enjoyment. The boys and girls of the competing areas intermingle and there are many lovers' intrigues; the girls give their favourites cloths to wear as if they were knights; it is truly an occasion for the renewal of the ties of friendship, ties between relatives and ties between districts. The reciprocity is generally at long range, for distant districts are brought into relationship. Resting upon a relationship between two individuals, it draws into its sphere, through the dancing, food, and sleeping arrangements, whole territorial units. [332]

The most impressive of all the gift exchanges, however, involves the two groups of people between whom, by reason of a marriage, brides are exchanged against cattle (*munywalo*). This exchange is as far 431 583

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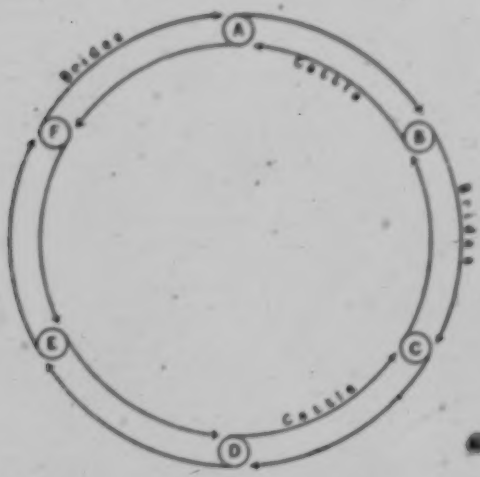
431 from a commercial transaction as is an engagement ring among us from
583 buying a bride. It constitutes almost 54 per cent. of the total gift-barter economy, but also over 34 per cent. of the total exchanges in the tribe. In order to understand the Lovedu *manyualo* ring—we might almost borrow the name *kula* ring from Melanesia—we have to imagine a number of groups of people arranged in a circle. We have described the institution elsewhere[1] and merely repeat here what is necessary to understand its working. Each group consists of patrilineal relatives and, in the very simplest configuration, each is doubly linked to two other groups. Thus A is linked to both B and F: to B it owes brides and from



B it receives cattle; from F it receives brides and to F it owes cattle. B is cattle-obligated to A; A is bride-obligated to B. In the figure, brides pass clockwise round an outer circle and cattle move anti-clockwise along an inner concentric circle; the two circles cut through the groups A, B, C, D, E, and F, which are all both cattle-linked and bride-linked. In real life there are no concentric circles and so simple an arrangement is never found; even the general configuration of the groups is obscured by a hundred complications. A polygynist—and about one-third of the
[595] men have more than one wife—does not take all his wives from the same group. A man who uses his sister's marriage cattle must return a daughter to be the daughter-in-law of the sister or, in other words, the wife of the man's son; if he had used the cattle of two sisters whose husbands belong to different groups, his sons marry into these different groups. Endless new linkages and complications arise in this and in other ways. Essentially, however, the exchange pattern remains: one kind of valuable (cattle)

[1] Chap. ix. See also J. D. Krige, 'The Significance of Cattle Exchange in Lovedu Social Structure' *Africa*, vol. xii, no. 4.

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travels in one direction, another (brides) in the opposite direction. Usually so many groups are involved that the circular reciprocity cannot be seen. But what is clear is that each man has a link (we may say a partner) in each direction; on the one hand, a cattle-linked sister, to whose son he must give his daughter if he is offered *munywalo*; on the other hand, his wife's cattle-linked brother, from whom his wife may demand a daughter-in-law.

The partners are primarily cattle-linked brothers and sisters, but secondarily also the lineage of the brother and the lineage into which the sister has married; for the primary obligations readily extend to descendants and even collaterals in the groups concerned. But the partnership is not conceived as part of an economic scheme. Partners do not bargain for advantages: the transaction is institutionalized, and the values and equivalences are fixed. There is no need to use love-charms, magically to dispose one's partner to favour one's suit; the structure of the society stresses the need for reciprocity and harmonious exchanges. There is no way of manipulating the exchange to one's personal benefit or of making it serve a commercial purpose. If a man has more daughters than sons, he will not be enriched; nor will he be impoverished if he has more sons than daughters. In the first instance, the cattle coming in must be used to 'build houses' where the sons of the daughters may find wives, and in the second a variety of arrangements within the group and between it and other groups that are cattle-obligated to it meets the situation. The system of exchanges, like the working of the social structure itself, relies upon reciprocity and not upon commercial incentives and motives.

In such a society it is not surprising that the Lovedu, unlike the Shangana-Tonga in their midst, have no aptitude for barter and that frankly commercial exchanges are insignificant. Where the scale of values against which people exchange commodities is familiar and standardized, money barter is looked upon much as is barter; but where it is not, as in the case of the 6*d*. tins used for exchanging salt, money barter is as suspect as money exchange. The comparatively large proportion of money exchange (24 per cent.) is due not to inclination, but to necessity. People must buy cloths, dress material, and men's wear from the stores. One of the main causes of tension and even divorce between spouses is the burden of dressing a wife. Likewise, only money can buy the poles and planks, the nails and wire, that are needed for building; even for grass, headmen are beginning to exact a fee. It is true that European contact has touched but lightly the equipment of the Lovedu home and articles of Western manufacture are relatively scarce; nevertheless, people have to buy petrol tins, axes, basins, lanterns, and blankets, not to mention soap and matches; and towards the end of the season much of the maize improvidently sold to stores has to be bought back. Perhaps the most important purchases with money are agricultural implements, sacks, and donkeys. There is a very distinct aversion from all transactions of a commercial nature; and the aversion is minimized only where the trading situation has been institutionalized.

Trade is, however, of no great consequence: it is not the basis of

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437 wealth; and the rewards of the society do not go to those who can manipulate the trading situation. Land cannot be traded, and cattle, the only other recognizable form of wealth, are completely absorbed in the *munywalo* exchanges. For the rest, the economic unit is as nearly as possible self-sufficient. There are occasional shortages, but usually they affect everybody more or less equally. The volume of internal trade, apart from gift exchange, was and still is insignificant. There are no markets, and skilled workers do not usually produce articles in anticipation of the needs of others. Hoes were, and pots still are, exchanged for agricultural products. The small interchange of agricultural products in normal times never unduly benefited one man at the expense of another. Animals constantly died, but only those people who had little consideration for their relatives—for elaborate rules exist as to the distribution of the various parts of an animal—thought of selling the meat. In abnormal times people sold and still sell cattle: the instinct of self-preservation overrides the sentiments against tampering with one of the main pillars of the social structure.

The Lovedu are in this respect wholly unlike their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga, who undertook commercial journeys and had companies of carriers with elaborate organization and sharing of profits. The earliest Europeans constantly mention the begging propensities and topsy-turvy economic conceptions of the Lovedu. And even now it is useless to attempt to buy a valuable thing from them. You may succeed in getting it by begging or appealing to sentiment or showing how much you need it. With a Shangana-Tonga you may bargain; with a Lovedu bargaining arouses suspicion, the suspicion that you are making a profit out of his ignorance, and it is considered better to give than to sell. Begging is not
735 socially disapproved; it is contrasted, not with self-reliance, but with theft; and a man, it is said, should always ask for, not steal, the things of another. Begging is really the counterpart of mutual helpfulness, of the feeling of dependence on one another. Where such sentiments have a right of existence, even in royalty itself, the only consideration that evokes a sympathetic response in the trading situation is the need of the person who wishes to transact the exchange. A man does not sell for his personal gain and the price is not a matter of great moment; either goods have their fixed price or they have no price at all. The situation is always an embarrassing one. The Lovedu, in short, have no commercial instincts; they have been conditioned to mutual helpfulness and non-competitive trading.

437 They distinguish sharply between trade carried on in the traditional
577 manner and what they call 'bizmis' (business), which generally involves
795 money transactions and is associated with subterfuge and personal gain. 'Bizmis' is beyond the pale of decency; it is specially debased in the hands of those upstarts who hold initiation schools for their own personal profit. The most depraved people are the few Christians, who, in league with Europeans or on their own account, constitute themselves as middlemen and exploit their fellow men. They are *dibava*, deceivers and breakers of promises, comparable only with prostitutes who 'are eaten on the road'. The Christian Church, with its fees and collections, falls,

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to the Lovedu manner of thinking, within the 'bizmis' scheme: one buys baptism and confirmation; at communion one pays for the flesh and blood of Christ. How different is the institution of *munywalo*. No wonder the work of the Church is infinitely difficult.

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CHAPTER V

FAMILY TIES

Personal relations within the polygynous household—the sister as the centre of the social system—behaviour patterns and avoidances between potential and actual relatives-in-law and their modification by personality and adjustment—the position of orphans.

621 At every turn we seem to be stumbling upon the kin. It cannot be otherwise, because they are very important in the everyday life and contacts of the Lovedu man or woman. The village is a group of relatives, chiefly on the father's side, but sometimes including one or two people from the side of the mother or wife, and even the district consists largely of kin. The modern tendency towards smaller and smaller villages has, in contrast to what one might have expected, hardly acted as a counteracting force, for so often a cluster of small villages, each with no more than two or three huts, turns out on closer inspection to represent what once was a single village. They have moved apart in space, but the ties are still recognized, sometimes even to the extent of acknowledging one man as their 'village' head. In our discussion of the district as a political unit, we refer to the manner in which kin and locality coincide. Suffice it here to say that in one district, with a large element of foreigners, 56 per cent. of the people are relatives of the district head. Of these, 36 per cent. are close relatives—that is, brothers, sisters, uncles—who would be recognized in modern European society, and 20 per cent. classificatory relations.[1] In many areas the percentage of relatives to the headman is much higher.

602 The Lovedu thus grows up in a circle of kin. As a child, his playmates are relatives; his boyish fights, loves, and hatreds involve his kin; and he grows old along with them. But blood-relationship does not act alone in binding people together. It does not determine the nature and strength of the contacts, the degrees of reciprocity that are to prevail. Here it is that other elements in the social structure step in, strengthening one type of link, perhaps at the expense of another just as close in degree, binding ever more closely certain of the kin and allowing others to drift apart. By means of complicated rights and duties between the individuals, these other elements tend, in different societies, to mould social relationships into different patterns, so that a father in one society has functions very different from those of a father in another, and a maternal uncle, in one society a man with authority over you, in another is perhaps a kind elderly playmate.

595 An important moulding force in Lovedu family relationships is polygyny. Each wife has her own household, her own fields and grain stores, but polygyny cannot stop at making plural wives independent in these ways; it must create special interrelations within its structure,

[1] The classificatory system of relationship, in which the terms 'brother' and 'sister' are extended to children of father's brothers and mother's sisters as well as other more distant relatives, and in which one has many 'fathers' and 'mothers', is too well known to require attention here.

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between husband and wives, between children of different wives, and 595
between fellow wives. Polygyny, reinforced by the segregation of the sexes in everyday life and interests, renders the personal bond between husband and wife much less intimate than is the European ideal. Men are unwilling to spend much time in the company of women, and women prefer the company of their own sex. The polygynist must be most circumspect in his relations with his wives. He must treat them all with strict impartiality. Should he wish to give one a present, all must receive similar gifts. If he spends more time with one than another, this may be the cause of serious domestic discord. He must always be weighing and balancing lest preference shown to one should lead to trouble and unpleasantness. With such considerations uppermost, there is little chance of the development of companionship and communion between husband and wife, although there may be a high degree of co-operation and sympathy. It is generally only in his old age, when his wives have their own daughters-in-law and are already grandmothers, that a man allows himself the privilege of attaching himself openly to one of his wives, the one who has always treated him well. At this stage there is but little jealousy between the fellow wives, and a polygynous husband and one of his wives may sometimes in old age become a regular Darby and Joan. Where a man has one wife only and stays in his own small 593
village without male companionship at home, their relationship becomes noticeably closer. This gain in intimacy is counterbalanced by a loss of independence on the part of the wife. Since there is now no need carefully to distinguish what belongs to the wife, the husband tends to take over most of the control, and the monogamous marriage of Christians, with its greater community of property between husband and wife, has thus its disadvantages as well as its merits.

A wife is expected to obey her husband, who may beat her if she does not; yet he may not interfere in her domestic arrangements. When a woman is busy (and she alone is the judge in this matter), her husband may have to wait till well after midday before receiving his first meal. She uses her own discretion in exchanging the produce of her fields, although she will generally not sell at a store without consulting her husband. Wife-beating is not uncommon, but it takes place usually when a man is drunk or suspects his wife of unfaithfulness. For an angry woman to attack her husband is not unusual and once considerable amusement was caused at a district head's court we attended when a man complained of being beaten by his wife.

It is the duty of a husband to make or buy clothes for his wife, build and repair her huts, provide her every year with storage receptacles and an enclosure for her harvest, and nowadays also to plough for her. Most men have one field of their own which they cultivate and, though they may ask their wives to help them with weeding and reaping, the produce is their own, used for beer-making or, in bad years, distributed among their wives. If his wife or any of his children is ill, a man must be unfailing in his efforts to find medicines or doctors that will provide a cure.

The position of a wife in her husband's home changes with the changing 596

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596 years. For the first few years of her married life she is strictly controlled by her mother-in-law, has a great deal of work to do, and finds little time to attend dances and beer-drinks. Nowhere was the position of a bride more forcefully brought to our notice than in the case of Anna. We met Anna first as an unmarried girl in her own home, a noisy, untidy, empty-headed girl never stirring a finger to help her brother's wife, who, though hampered by a peevish child of two, did all the housework. A year later when we met her again, this time as a bride of six months' standing, we could hardly believe the transformation that had taken place. Here was Anna, quietly doing all the work, waiting on us as guests, smearing the courtyard in the intervals between her other duties, and generally comporting herself in a manner which a year previously we should have thought impossible. Strictly speaking, there is no limit to the length of time a wife should cook for her mother-in-law. If she has married an only or the youngest son, she will continue doing so all her life; otherwise she is generally given her own hearth when the next brother marries and a new bride enters the household. If a bride does not get on well with her mother-in-law, she may, even if there is no other bride, be given her own hearth after a year or so, but in a family where all work harmoniously together, two daughters-in-law may be seen cooking in common for their husband's mother. Every woman can, however, look forward to an old age when she, too, will have her daughter-in-law to relieve her of the hard work she is unable to do.

593 595 A married woman moves about freely and goes to beer-drinks when she likes, but she would not go on a visit to her own people without consulting her husband or her mother-in-law. She may, if she is a doctor, own considerable property of her own in goats and cattle and, when her daughter gets married, she has a great deal to say in the disposal of the bride-price. Normally, the cattle coming in for a girl are used to obtain a wife for her uterine brother. If, however, there are more girls than boys, it is seldom that the mother will consent to its being used by the son of a fellow wife. In such a case it is usually given to the mother's brother, who, by using it, establishes a 'house' where the son of his niece will find a wife. Should the husband himself wish to obtain another wife with the cattle he will first have to come to an agreement with his wife, otherwise there may be a lot of trouble. Since a wife so obtained will have to cook for the wife whose daughter's cattle were used to obtain her, ill-feeling would lead to considerable disharmony and might end in breaking up the new marriage by causing the bride to run away.

595 The term for fellow wives, *vahadigani*, which the Lovedu translate as 'people who roast one another', is said to denote the state of tension and sometimes conflict that one finds between them. So bad does this become occasionally that one may find different wives of the same man living in different villages. Fellow wives may be jealous, yet they help one another in beer-making, lend each other utensils, work at each other's work-parties; and it is seldom that a woman gives her own child a tit-bit without also giving to other children that may be present. The chief wife, always the mother's brother's daughter, has no control over other wives. Where the chief wife is married only late in life, she is in

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practice often of less importance than the wife married first, and there is 595
sometimes quite a conflict between the principles of age and legality.

Various factors, such as the household arrangements of the 595
polygynous system, tend to make the tie between a mother and her 593
own children, and more especially between mother and son, very strong and lasting. It is often possible to distinguish between the brothers in a polygynous household by the degree of resemblance in general nature and character to their mother. Children share any stigma that may be attached to their mother, and according as a man likes a wife so he likes her children. There is thus a high degree of solidarity between uterine brothers and sisters, who always like each other more than siblings by other wives. The attachment between Lovedu mother and child [853
rests upon the firm foundations of a suckling period of several years, 854]
during which the child spends much of its time snugly strapped to her back. It is in many ways also an easier relationship than that among Europeans, with fewer prohibitions, fewer punishments and fewer of the petty grounds of conflict associated with such refinements as keeping hands or clothes clean.

The Lovedu girl is much with her mother, but she leaves home to get 593
married soon after puberty and it is the boy in whose later life the mother plays the greatest role. During his boyhood the mother is the champion of her son. If he has been bullied by another, it is she who will take up the cudgels for him, and many of the worst quarrels between women arise in defence of their children. A boy of fifteen was pulling about and beating a boy of ten because he had not gone out to herd. Two men, in passing, called on him to desist, but to no avail till one of them said to a child standing near, 'Run and tell his mother Dwagu is killing her child.' The mother arrived and harangued Dwagu, who left off, but stoutly defended himself against her scolding tongue, and there the matter ended. When a young man marries, his mother is the dominating figure in his household. She controls his relations with his wife, telling him how to conduct himself while she is pregnant or during the suckling period, giving permission (indirectly through other old women) for their [833]
first sexual intercourse. When Masilu, a young man from town, came home ill, it was his mother who took him to a doctor. Ramano, after eight years absence in town, came home because his mother called him back; and Madume, a married man with two children, succeeded in avoiding a dangerous ritual office largely because his mother did not want him to undertake it. Even though he may be head of the village with authority over all its inmates, a man will still be constantly appealing to his mother's greater age and experience for guidance in matters that fall outside his own experience, more especially if his father is dead. Yet the mother, who so greatly controls her son, will never dare to have dealings with a stranger in the absence of the men nor presume to show him over the village. The son is the natural guardian of his mother. Should it be decided that she should move away from her husband's village, even if the cause be witchcraft, her sons will accompany her. Upon the youngest son, more particularly, falls the duty of caring for his parents in their old age.

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593 Within this general pattern, however, there can be infinite variations. Mulata beats his mother whenever he loses his temper and on one occasion severely wounded her with an axe. He is admittedly a bad lot and the talk of the neighbourhood, but such things do occur. Batamedi, who moved away from his brother's village and, as the youngest son, took his mother with him, did not provide her with blankets for the winter nor interfere when his wife shamefully neglected the old woman by visiting for months at her own home. So his mother betook herself back to her elder son, where she was accustomed to receiving better treatment.

603 The husband's mother, the grandmother of his children, is then an
854 important person, an essential member of the individual household. She has much to do with the children; she it is who, for the first few months, feeds and baths the new baby. Having little to do, she tends the child while its mother is busy, and very often the young baby spends as much time strapped to its grandmother's back as to its mother's. Being old, the grandmother is mild in her treatment of the children, her policy being to pacify and placate rather than to force.

593 It is not easy to define the relationship between father and children. Because he spends most of his time with the men, there is little personal contact between father and young children, who in their turn are mostly in the company of those of their own age. A Lovedu child who lives in a large kraal may not see his father for days or speak to him for weeks. A girl has little to do with her father, but the boy finds that his father admonishes him or shows displeasure when he cries and on occasion inculcates manly values. The father keeps his distance, yet he becomes the personification of manly ideals, and a boy tries to be like his father. The father has authority, but his authority is never oppressive like that of European fathers, whose children live in much closer contact with them. If a boy has done wrong or let the cattle stray, he will avoid his father by not making an appearance at home till after dark. Dumedi spent two nights curled up in a sledge, afraid to appear at home lest his father should beat him for letting the goats stray. Fathers who wish to punish their sons are very often forced to resort to the plan of appearing at the entrance of the boys' sleeping hut long before dawn, there to round them up and beat them soundly before they have a chance of disappearing for
595 the day! The father represents the polygynous family. Through him brothers by different mothers are linked and, not more than a few years back, fathers used sometimes to call their sons to sit with them at night. Then they would exhort the sons not to quarrel among themselves, to live together in peace, to be mutually helpful, and to behave as men. To-day, however, with the long absence of men in towns, this active education on the part of the father is rapidly disappearing.

Brothers by the same father, though not as closely linked as uterine brothers, nevertheless have certain responsibilities towards one another. They stand by each other in disputes and act in unison against outsiders. In claiming back bride-price for a deserting wife, a man will never act alone; he and his brothers will go together, showing a united front. If a man has to pay a fine and has no goat, his brothers will be expected to help him. When he dies, it is his brothers who will care for his widow

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and children. Sometimes, in the absence of his brother in town, a man may be consulted by his brother's wife, but he has no real right over her. For a man to beat his brother's wife or order her about, as is said to be the case among Pondo, is quite unheard of. There is nothing special in the relationship between sisters, except that they may marry the same husband, for, quite apart from considerations of the sororate, it is thought at all times good to marry sisters, who will be less liable to make quarrelsome fellow-wives than unrelated girls. Obligations towards classificatory sisters and brothers, children of the mother's sister or father's brother, are not the same as those to brothers by the same father, and the tie is not nearly so close. 595

Lovedu society is characterized by a very special relationship between brother and sister, a relationship that is given shape to and maintained by the Lovedu pattern of bride-price involving marriage with the mother's brother's daughter and supplemented by the role of women in the religious system. With this are also bound up the close links between two groups of people, the *vamakhulu* and *vaguhulu*—a man's own people and those of his mother or wife. The linking of uterine brothers and sisters in pairs, in order that the brother may obtain a wife with the cattle received for the sister, creates this special relationship between them and obliges the man to send his daughter to marry at his sister's place. No man will accept a suitor for his daughter until he has ascertained whether his linked sister wants the girl or not, for though in general it is the sister's son who marries the girl, it is the sister who receives a bride to stamp for her and lessen the labours of her old age. The sister has, in fact, a legal right to the girl. If the girl were to run away or be married to some one else, the court would support the father's sister's claim to the girl or the return of the cattle her brother used. Legally, it is even possible for the sister to dissolve the marriage of her brother by demanding back these cattle, but in practice this is rarely found. It is a common custom for a bridal party to call in at the village of the sister, by means of whose cattle the bride has been obtained, 'to show her the girl who is to bear a bride for her son'. A goat will then be slaughtered by her husband for the bridal party to show their pleasure in the marriage. A value that is constantly being expressed in Lovedu society is that it is fitting and desirable for a girl to 'cook for' her father's sister. 593 604 582

The house of the brother is thought to have been created by the sister whose cattle made the marriage possible. That is why, when he builds a new village, it is the sister who has to draw the magic circle of protection which renders it safe from witches. When the sister visits her old home, it is in the house of this wife that she will 'put her things' and make herself at home and, when she is called to beer, she will be given a special pot in the house of this wife. The sister even wields a certain amount of authority in the house of her brother, as was well illustrated at a gathering we attended where the man of the house was quarrelling with his wife about an uninvited guest. In the midst of the uproar a voice was heard: 'This is my village which I have built. I will have no unseemly behaviour here.' It was the sister rebuking her brother, who subsided immediately and went on with the ceremonial as if nothing had happened. So strong 593 [789]

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593 is the interest of a sister in the house established by her cattle that she may on occasion even exercise some control in her brother's choice of a wife. Dwagu wanted to marry Mabula, who was already married. His sister's husband then said, 'We shall not allow you to use my cattle to marry that woman. She will bring nothing but trouble.' If the wife obtained by means of the sister's cattle is badly treated by her husband, she may run to his sister, who will intervene on her behalf, or even in extreme cases arrange for her to live permanently away from her husband, who could then never claim a return of the bride-price from his wife's parents. Muhale, whom we knew well, had, under the influence of his second wife, chased away his chief wife, who ran to his sister. She advised the wife to make some pardon beer and take it as a peace-offering, but when he refused this his sister arranged for the woman to live with a widow in the village next door to her. Now, when Muhale's second wife quarrels and refuses to cook for him, he takes refuge with the wife he chased away till the storm is over!

The influence of a sister is reinforced by her religious position. At [782] the annual harvest offering to the gods, it is always the eldest sister in the family who has to officiate. She is the one best able to intercede with the spirits. Any displeasure or secret grievance against her brother on [753] her part may have the effect of stirring up the spirits to cause illness in his household, especially among his children (certain other relatives also have this power, but one hears most often of the sister). Hence it is said, 'The sister should roast pips; if she roasts the village [is angry] it will go up in flames' (*khadi e hadiga dithaga; ya hadiga mutse u ya swa*). Sometimes a sister may threaten her brother, saying, 'If I complain, nothing [428] will be good in your village.' On the death of the father, it is the eldest sister who, together with the father's brother, divides out the inheritance, and, at the only installation of a district head that we were able to witness, the emblems of office were handed over to the young heir's sister for him, though he was already in his twenties. In view of all these facts, a man's sister has great influence over him and may be called to remonstrate with him, more especially in matters affecting his own household when even his parents have been unsuccessful. But she has no right to interfere without just cause and, if she were to make needless trouble, her brother would very soon ask her to leave his village in peace.

Not all sisters play the role that has been ascribed in general terms to a man's sister. Though every sister is potentially priestess and guardian of her brother's household, in practice all these offices are seldom combined in one person. In religious ceremonies affecting the family as a whole, the eldest daughter of the chief wife would officiate; in case of illness, a man's uterine sister might be asked to officiate. If the sister whose cattle has been used is younger than her brother, she may have little influence as compared with her elder sister; furthermore, where the sister is a woman of [illegible] personality, her influence may be negligible. It is a man's uterine sisters that play the biggest part in his life, for in this, 605 as in everything, the individual family is always asserting itself as against 595 the larger, polygynous family group. A classificatory sister, one by the mother's sister or father's brother, or one by a wife of the father other

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than the chief wife, plays little part in a man's life; she is merely a female 605
relative to whom a certain amount of respect and attachment is due. 595
Often a woman's son marries daughters of several of her brothers. It is, however, only to the daughter of that brother who used her cattle that she has a right—has, as the Lovedu put it, an 'entrance' to his village.

In view of the position of sisters and brothers later in life, one would 593
not expect great familiarity or freedom between them during their childhood. Brother and sister may talk freely to each other, but if they rollick together their parents will stop them. Hence the riddle, 'What is 524
it that is at hand and yet beyond reach?' (*Kha ntsita khi e ma?*) The answer, 'The breast of my sister,' refers to the playful catching hold of the breasts of girls by young boys, which is taboo in case of a sister. In strong contrast to the free, yet proper, relationship between brother and sister stands the joking relationship between cross-cousins. Derived from the brother-sister relationship is that of the father's sister, who is accorded honour and respect by the children of the house she has established. The term *khadi* is used loosely to denote either father's sister or eldest sister, for it is the eldest sister who will take over the religious functions of the father's sister after her death.

A well-marked characteristic of Lovedu society, one that clearly 602
distinguishes it from the strictly patrilineal Zulu, Xhosa, and Pondo, is 604
the importance of the mother's side of the family. Nothing of interest or importance takes place without their presence; even at the annual harvest beer offerings given to the gods on the father's side, relatives on the mother's side, who are not concerned in the religious aspect of the ceremony, will be present for the beer and social amenities. Important in maintaining close links between a man and his mother's relatives are the bonds of interdependence between the families of a brother, and the sister whose cattle he used. The sister's son is a potential son-in-law, who will be accorded great honour in the household of his mother's brother. A man's mother may also be the *khadi* who has to go and make offerings in the mother's brother's household, and in her absence her son might officiate for her. Later, when a man is engaged to his mother's brother's daughter, there will be gifts of beer from the girl's family. They are thus bound together by a variety of links.

But the greatest of all bonds between a man and his mother's side of 602
the family is conceived by the Lovedu to be one of love. There is a saying, usually quoted by women, '*Wa mma u sme; wa rare gi mabakataka,*' which, freely translated, means, 'Love lies on the mother's side of the family; ownership on the father's'. One's relationship with the mother's side of the family is modelled on that towards a mother and is much influenced by the petting and spoiling received at the hands of the maternal grandmother, with whom most children spend a few years of their life, generally soon after the birth of a younger brother or sister. Every child recalls with delight the good time he had when at his mother's brother's village with his mother's mother; how she treated him to tit-bits, how she scolded or beat only her son's children if her grandchildren quarrelled and fought. For, it is said, a woman loves her daughter's children (who only come on visits) far more than those of her

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602 son (whom she has always with her). The mother's side of the family, no doubt because of this love, are thought to be peculiarly suited to the [736] rearing of a child whose mother has died. Such a child is, in Lovedu society, never left in the hands of a fellow wife of its mother, but goes to its mother's mother, if she is alive, or its mother's brother or even a mother's sister—any one, in fact, an the mother's side who is kind-hearted enough to wish to rear an orphan.

604 In constrast to Shangana-Tonga, there is in Lovedu society no joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother. Your mother's brother may be kind to you, but you have to show him respect: if he asks you to go on a message or to help him in the fields you cannot refuse; while, if he needs you, you may be sent to herd for him or help nurse his small children. Moreover, he may one day be your father-in-605 law and his wife your mother-in-law. The people whom one is privileged to tease to one's heart's content, and with whom one may exchange ribald jokes, are one's cross-cousins, the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister or their children, cross-cousins once-removed, a generation below. When very young, a child may be conditioned to this type of easy relationship by being given a stick and told, 'Go and beat your cross-cousin. Show him your cousinhood,' whereupon he is expected playfully to beat his cousin. If the cousin cries, they will pacify him, saying, 'Gracious! How can you cry? Don't you know it's your cousin? You too can beat him some other time.' Or they will give him a stick and say, 'Go and avenge yourself.' Whenever one finds people behaving uproariously in each other's company or calling out vulgar jokes, one can be quite sure they are cross-cousins. Cross-cousins marry each [582] other; but while cases of a man marrying his father's sister's daughter sometimes occur, specially in the royal family, they are regarded as not quite regular and mother's brother's daughter marriage is by far the most usual. When a man tries to make love to his father's sister's daughter, she may tease him, saying, 'Away with you. We marry you, not you us. We are the husbands who find wives in your family.' The joking relation-[584] ship between a man and his cousin gives place, immediately marriage negotiations are begun, to one of strict avoidance between prospective bride and groom and a certain amount of respect even between the boys in the two families. Men say they can often tell by the attitude of their cross-cousin that there is an understanding between him and their sister even before negotiations have begun.

602 Relatives-in-law are quite as important as relatives by blood. Where marriage with the mother's brother's daughter has taken place, the marriage strengthens an existing blood link, giving far greater meaning and intimacy to the bond. The importance of relatives-in-law lies in the fact that there is conceived to be a lasting bond between the two families for generations to come, since where a man has married there his son will find a wife. The bond is kept alive by various social usages, not least among which is the beer that is always passing (about once a year, unless the harvest is bad) from the village of the wife's family to that of their son-in-law. Moreover, a man's relatives-in-law become to his children the mother's side of the family, which plays so important a part

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in their lives and, where a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, his relatives-in-law are his mother's people. The term *tsɛxi* (bridegroom) has in Lovedu society a very special connotation. The *tsɛxi* is greatly honoured by his wife's people. He is given the best of everything. When he visits, he is brought a rush mat to sit upon and beer in a special small calabash or pot as his own. Christians invite the 'bridegroom' or his people to all meat feasts connected with confirmation, baptism, and other ceremonies (heathens have practically no meat feasts), while a mother-in-law never visits at her son-in-law's place without bringing some gift. One day, when Mudiga's wife was on the point of leaving on a visit with beer she had specially brewed to take with her, a *tsɛxi* (her husband's sister's husband) unexpectedly turned up. So, much to her disgust, her visit had to be put off, 'for one cannot take beer from a *tsɛxi*'. The honour accorded a *tsɛxi* is given also to his brothers, own and classificatory, when they visit his relatives-in-law. 602

While a bridegroom is accorded great honour by his relatives-in-law, he has many obligations towards them. When they bring beer, he must slaughter a goat for them and wish them godspeed with another 10*s*. after the feast. If they ask him to help them plough or weed, he must do so. Batamedi, for instance, every year ploughs the field of his wife's grandmother—but they will always entertain him with beer for his trouble. If they have to pay a heavy fine, but have not the wherewithal, they will approach the 'bridegroom', and, if they need more cattle or goats for the marriage of their son, it is again to the daughter's husband that they look for help. A friend of ours, a Christian, is even paying for the schooling of his wife's brother. Hence it is that, in spite of the fact that bride-price is more or less fixed within certain limits, it is always said 'bride-price never ends', for a bridegroom can never refuse to help his wife's relatives. He may not even suggest that they are demanding too much, for this would be a breach of good manners reparable only by the handing over of a pardon goat. His only policy is to remain respectful, promise to 'look for' what they require, then later to send a message that he has been unsuccessful, even if he has many goats and they know it. [576]

The Lovedu do not have that strict system of lasting avoidances between certain relatives-in-law that is to be found among Nguni, where it involves the use of separate paths by the married women of the village and even proscribes the use of words with syllables contained in the names of the husband or his relatives. Avoidances associated with marriage are, among the Lovedu, found also on other occasions. When a girl comes from her puberty ceremony or a boy from circumcision, he will respectfully greet all his relatives and neither rise nor speak till they *nosa* him by giving him a small gift (6*d*. or soap or a leg or arm ring). Similarly, when a woman has a new baby, she will cover its face from inmates of the village till they *nosa* her to see it. Similar avoidances, ended by means of a gift, are associated with marriage. 602 431

As soon as a marriage has been agreed upon, prospective bride and groom avoid each other. They may not be together nor speak to each other and, if by chance they should meet, the bride will cover her face with one of the cloths she wears and turn half aside. Often several 584 431

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584 courting visits are paid by the boy without seeing the girl at all. He is
431 entertained by the bridesmaids. After a few such visits, the boy will give 10*s*. or £1 to 'see the girl', to remove this taboo. The bride and her sisters similarly avoid all brothers of the groom till they *nosa* her by means of a small gift after the marriage. One often sees such boys teasing these girls to try to get an answer to some question, but they keep resolutely silent. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system, there are areas such as the queen's district, where most of the inhabitants are related in some way. Here many men and women cannot speak to each other because the men cannot afford to *nosa* all the brides of the family. After some years the women will tire of the avoidance and begin to speak to these men.

585 On arrival at the village of the husband, a bride avoids every one (by
431 not speaking) till given a small gift. Her mother-in-law gives her a gift
606 during the first week while she is still secluded, but the father-in-law usually waits longer. On the arrival of any visitor, the bride will lie down on her side in respectful salutation till given some small gift. As soon as a boy begins to avoid his prospective bride, he avoids also her mother. They may not be together in the same hut, the mother may not serve food to the boy, and, should they happen to come near each other, the woman will avert or partially cover her head. But whereas avoidance between groom and bride ends before marriage, that between a man and his mother-in-law ends usually about a year after the marriage, when the woman is given 10*s*. or a blanket. Andreas gave 15*s*. after the birth of his first child. Nevertheless, a man will always take care never to talk loudly or angrily in the company of his mother-in-law. If he does, she will walk away and if a man were to have words with his mother-in-law or scold her in a bout of drunkenness, he would have to pay a pardon goat to her family.

607 The most lasting form of avoidance is that between a man and his wife's brother's wife, especially the one who has been obtained with the cattle he handed over for his wife and who will bear the future wife of his son. Frieda always covers her face when meeting her husband's sister's husband. If he is in a hut, she may not enter it. Beyond exchanging greetings, she does not sit with him or talk directly to him and she may not herself serve him with food. The uterine sister of the husband of
[835] Madinji married Nagambi and so, according to all the rules, she should avoid him; but in reality she is his lover. He, Madinji, is known to be the father of one of her, Nagambi's, children, yet they are not socially ostracized nor have their actions been publicly condemned.

835 That this sort of breach of accepted standards is neither directly punished nor actively disapproved, unless forcibly brought before the public eye in a case, is in keeping with the haphazard nature of Lovedu social arrangements. Letavula, who, on the death of his parents, came to live with his grandfather (mother's mother's brother), has had four children by the wife of his mother's brother, the son of his grandfather, though he himself is a married man. We were at first inclined to attribute this state of affairs partly to culture contact conditions, which have kept the woman's husband in town, though not determining her choice of

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lovers. But we have revised our opinion, for many irregularities cannot 835
be related to disturbances caused by culture contact and appear always to have existed. We came across other examples of intercourse with the wife's brother's wife, while a friend of ours, an important *induna*, was even publicly accused at a beer-drink of having had a child by incestuous relations with the wife of his father's younger brother, a woman much older than himself. But nothing further was done in the matter. Sometimes, however, such cases do appear before the courts. One of the most dramatic cases we ever heard was one in which a man was accused by the husband of his 'daughter' (the daughter of his own elder brother) of having a liaison with her. The affair was taken to a smeller-out, who decided he was guilty, but the case dragged on and we never saw the end of it. There has been, within the knowledge of informants, a case of incest between uterine brother and sister, and we were told also of a case in which a married man was brought to court by his own mother, who accused him of incest with her. He was tied in court, an unheard-of humiliation, and public indignation made his position so intolerable that on the pretext of wishing to go and relieve himself, he asked to be unloosened and then tried to cut his throat. This put an end to the case. He did not die, but since that time 'his head has not been right'. He still lives in his mother's village.

The different social duties and obligations between relatives must be 602
thought of more as group links than purely individual ties, important in social structure rather than in the purely personal relationship between people. They are not always translated into behaviour: important as are the social obligations that mark off a father's sister from, say, a mother's brother's wife, it would be impossible to detect any differences in individual behaviour towards these two relatives. Similarly, a man respects both his father's brothers and his mother's brothers and the fact that decides him to go to his mother's brother for advice may be no reflection of any intimacy in their personal relationships. The social obligations towards a father's sister would and should be carried out just the same whether she is a stern, formidable woman or whether she is soft-hearted and motherly in her attitude towards her brother's relatives. Nevertheless, character and personality do enter into personal relationships between different relatives, so much so that the socially enjoined relationship at times breaks down altogether. Sons do not always respect and care for their fathers in their old age, and in a district head's court we once saw a young man fined one head of cattle and a goat and severely reprimanded for having beaten his father in a quarrel. Nor do all grandmothers pet and spoil their daughters' children. Mukhadi, a selfish, quarrelsome woman, made no effort to adopt her deceased daughter's children, who, in spite of accepted social standards, had to remain on in their father's village in the care of their father's mother.

All the obligations and duties associated with different relatives are, in the Native mind, subject to the qualification, 'if we agree'. Normally, one should and does agree with one's father's sister or with one's wife's relations; but if one does not, then obviously one will neither visit nor send beer, and sooner or later there will be an open quarrel. If a sister

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602 were to go to court for a return of the cattle her brother used or if a brother were to accuse his cattle-linked sister of witchcraft, they could no longer be on friendly terms; it would then be said, '*vushaka vu fila*', their relationship is dead. But since life in Lovedu society can hardly be lived without the social usages and mutual obligations associated with kin, a man will always find some one among his large number of sisters to take her place. The manner in which close alliances with relatives is built up is shown in the case of Eliah and Thagu. Eliah has moved into an area ten miles from his nearest relations. Thagu, who lives in a large kraal near him, has a sister who married a far-off father's brother of Eliah. Eliah, therefore, stands in the relationship of a remote *tsezi*—that is, son-in-law—to Thagu, for, since Thagu's daughters should marry sons of their father's sister (i.e. sons of Eliah's father's brother and therefore his brothers), these daughters regard the whole of that family and therefore Eliah and his sons to as possible husbands. Therefore, when the last child of Eliah was born, Thagu sent beer 'to see the child', as Eliah's wife's parents would do, even though they had never known each other before. Because they live close together and get on fairly well, steps have been taken to tighten the kinship bond between them. Mabulani is another example. Mabulani's fellow wife is the one married with her husband's sister's (Munyamani's) cattle, and her daughter should therefore marry Munyamani's son. But the fellow wife is old and all her children already married. Now Mabulani, in spite of the fact that she is disliked by Munyamani for having been instrumental in alienating her fellow wife from her husband's affections, is assiduously trying to build up good relations with Munyamani's household. She sends beer and pays visits because, as it is believed, she has two daughters, one of whom she would like to be married there.

A factor that completely nullifies traditional patterns of behaviour between relatives is that of age. Obviously the respect due to a father's sister, with all the prestige of a generation older than oneself, must fall to the ground in a case where the father's sister is younger than oneself. In this manner, polygyny plays the strangest tricks with kinship relationships. Since the youngest wife of a man may be considerably junior to his eldest children, some mother's brothers and father's sisters may be very much younger than oneself. Bilowi, aged about twenty-three, and Badama, aged five, live in one village. When Badama cries or fights with Bilowi's youngest brother, she pacifies and mothers them both. Yet Bilowi is Badama's 'child', since Bilowi's father's mother and Badama's mother are fellow wives.

602 Kinship is the greatest bond between people; beside it, taken all in all,
123 any other single tie fades into insignificance. Even a fictitious bond of kinship established between ourselves and the head of an area in which we stayed served as a basis for the removal of suspicion and the building up of a better understanding between ourselves and the people with whom we came into contact. We were never admitted to the ceremonies connected with birth and early babyhood till our 'sister's' child had a baby. Then as a grandmother with a natural interest, which all could understand, in the welfare of our grandchild, we were permitted to be

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present. Here was a legitimate human interest—not merely the idle 602
curiosity of a European or the recording of customs that might end in 123
police intervention.

The kin share your joys and sorrows, give support in your hour of need and advice in the affairs of life. When you are in trouble and have to pay a fine which you do not possess, it is your brothers who will come to your aid. On the marriage of your children, your brothers are called to hear the matter and to give their advice; when there is death your kin rally to your side. A widow is never faced with destitution; her husband's [736] brother will care for her, and to-day, when, as among Christians, this sometimes entails help in training the children for a career, it is often a heavy liability. In working parties or when meal has to be stamped for beer-making, it is the relatives living near who are most relied upon for their help. A woman whose husband is in town depends on her male kin to help her in the yearly renewal of storage receptacles, hut-building and ploughing. She will, where possible, reward them with beer, but this is by no means always done. People like living near their kin. An elder and a younger brother, one living near Tzaneen, the other in Vulovedu, both died. Then the grown-up son of the younger brother called the wife and family of the elder brother to come and build near them, saying that the children of his *ramuhulu* would not know him if they lived so far away. Kinship, as we point out elsewhere, knits together the political system. But it is worth repeating that the kin are the core of the district and the bonds between districts; that, in general, the father's relatives live largely in the same district, the mother's or the wife's in some other area and visits and gifts of beer serve as an introduction to the districts in which they live; and that all the heads of districts, by virtue of having to send a daughter to 'marry' the queen, are linked to the capital by a kinship bond.

One would expect that, in a society like that of the Lovedu, with a 602
strong sense of kinship obligations, the position of orphans would not be 736
very different from that of other children. Yet the Lovedu feel the position of an orphan, any one wholly dependent on relatives for food and shelter, to be a peculiarly sad one. Hence the riddle, 'Little fountain [524] full of muck', and its answer, 'The heart of an orphan'; hence also the proverb, 'It takes a woman with a generous heart to keep an orphan well'. The smoky side of a fire is called 'the side where orphans sit', and if you sit chin in hand, people always say, 'Why are you so sad? Are you an orphan?' Even old women, those skilled and inveterate beggars, think that a sure way of enlisting your sympathy is to plead that they are orphans with no one to give them things.

It is said that orphans have to do harder work than other children and 736
have many a time to hear complaints that they eat too much. When the children of the house receive clothes as presents from relatives, the orphan gets little or nothing; and nowadays, while the children of the house may be sent to school, the orphan remains at home herding. None of our own personal contacts with orphans bore out these tales, and when we cited them as examples contradicting their statements, informants admitted that those cases did not bear out the general principle. Indeed, what impressed us most were the conscious efforts made,

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736 and the universal approval of these efforts, to be kind to orphans. The chief trouble, it would appear, comes from the other children, who tend to lay the blame for all their wrongdoings on the orphan, who has no mother to champion him; they will quarrel with and tease him, goading him into fighting till even a well-disposed mother finds him a source of trouble in her home. It is significant that in a story much liked by children it is an orphan boy who succeeds in making rain when the rest of the country has dried up, and who receives many hundreds of cattle as a reward.

The concepts associated with orphans, the sad intonation that creeps into the very pronunciation of the word *tsiwana*, indicate that, though there may be little basis in fact for the ill-treatment associated with them, just as in our own society few stepmothers really ill-treat their step-children, on the whole the Lovedu feel as we do that not even the best treatment at the hands of relatives can make up for the loss of father or mother. We well remember how, one day at a strange village, a small boy burst into tears because we asked him which of the men of the village was his father. He was an orphan.

736 That on the whole it is only the closest relatives who are willing to
643 undertake kinship obligations which offer no reciprocal advantages is shown by the fact that it is looked upon as the duty of the queen to look after orphans who have no near relations. They are brought to the royal village (as they were to a far greater extent in the last reign), where they are looked after and, in the case of boys, given cattle to obtain a bride. Similarly, when an old man or woman without near kin dies it is the queen who undertakes the responsibility and defilement of burial.

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CHAPTER VI

SOME SOCIAL GROUPINGS

Groups in the tribe—analysis of the groups of a district—character, divisions, and subdivisions of groups—the patrilineal lineage as the core of co-residence—marriage groups, age sets, and regimentation.

THE Lovedu tribe is not, in the main, a body of kinsmen tracing descent from a single far-off ancestor. The nuclear or royal group are the Lovedu proper. They are, strictly speaking, *kwevo*, though you will very rarely hear this word, because it and its praise-title are associated with *hu kwova*, to elongate the *labia minora*. Ignoring popular usage and Lovedu sensitiveness, we may still call them *kwevo*, leaving to posterity to decide whether the name will survive or be lost in oblivion. This nuclear group, the *kwevo*, constitutes no more than 10 per cent. of the tribe; or, in other words, only one person in every ten bears the nuclear group name, *kwevo*, which we must think of as a patrilineal descent name, not unlike such oft-recurring surnames as Jones or Smith among us. There are numerous other group names and people bearing different names of this kind may be regarded as having originally been unrelated. They constitute over 90 per cent. of the tribe.

It is obvious that in these circumstances very strong bonds must exist to maintain the allegiance of the non-related groups, just as, among us, a vast network of institutions, of interlinked organizational systems, ramifying throughout the society, exists side by side with common sentiments of loyalty and of solidarity. But the interlinking machinery is very different from ours, and neither nationalism nor ideology is important as unifying sentiments or principles. There are important structural links which, on the one hand, form part of the social system and on the other are intimately bound up with the political system; and in this way both kinship and *munywalo*, or bride-price, are used to strengthen the solidarity of the tribe as a unit. These links are discussed elsewhere. They make good the absence of the bonds between the nuclear ruling group and the other groups. There are, for instance, the fundamental reliance upon the rain-making powers of the queen, the periodical tribute to the queen by the districts, and the national organization of some of the 'schools'. In this chapter we are concerned to point out some of the social groupings in relation to one another and to the solidarity of the tribe. The great work they have to do in the society will be realized when we remember how complicated and all-pervasive in our society are the links which unite us to one another and to the state. The work is all the greater in a society in which the language is the language of a group larger than the tribe, the historical background and traditions are not uniform, but diverse, governmental machinery is incipient and hardly impinges upon the subject, and there cannot be said to be much organization of common interests and ideals.

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571 619 565 The first thing that strikes us is the large number of constituent groups in the tribe. Some of these groups are totemic, others are not, they come from all points of the compass. They are not clans in the accepted sense of the word and have no functions as such. They are so interwoven with the nuclear group, the Lovedu, and with one another, that it is not easy to disentangle them; they are usually interspersed with the general population, but, for one reason here and another there, they may be more or less concentrated in some part of the country. It is chiefly through the district organization that they become linked, upon the pattern of kinship, of marriage and bride-price, with the nuclear group. These groups are not arranged in any definite hierarchy of rank, though rank is of very great importance in the society. Yet there are distinctions between them: some are as honoured as the Lovedu themselves; some are regarded as rather of lower status, though intermarriage with them is not disapproved; others, mostly of non-Sotho origin, are despised and intermarriage with them is frowned upon.

[565] This does not mean that there are institutionalized classes; there are no rigid lines cutting across the society, just as there are no definite 621 functions that may be said to hold together these constituent groups. 571 Functions of a political nature are bound up with the districts, not with 613 the constituent groups as such; some religious and ritual functions are also bound up with the districts, but most of them (except those of national importance) are connected with kin groups, and this never means the whole constituent group and, indeed, usually not the lineage, but people from both sides of the family. Yet the lineage as a descent group has at least legal significance and to it are attached certain rights. On the whole, however, the lineages pale into significance beside the marriage or the bilateral kin groups. There is structural tension between the group which gives the brides and the group which gives the cattle; but one notices in ordinary life not so much the tension as the elaborate measures for maintaining good relations. Not only do the relations between these two groups obtrude themselves more prominently than those within the patrilineal lineages, but it is the main concern of judicial proceedings in the *khoro*, the most impressive feature of public life, to preserve harmony between them. There is ample reason for this emphasis because the whole social structure and, through it, the whole tribal system and the strongest bonds with the queen, depend upon the proper functioning of these groups. And these are again a part of, and supported by, the bilateral kin, who, with the cattle, the one relying on the other, constitute the ultimate basis of the social structure.

[561] 571 There are also age-groupings in the society. They have some wide integrating functions, but on the whole the organization into regiments is unimpressive and for national purposes of little value. The hierarchy of age plays a part of importance, however, as a regulative device; but it is not coincident with the hierarchy of rank and thus often occasions serious tensions in the social structure. Finally, we should remind the reader, though we cannot deal with them here, of groupings brought about by modern conditions. There is the more or less compact Christian group, with its divergent interests and loyalties, and the very scattered

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group of sophisticated men who, influenced by their experiences of European town life, have acquired values and needs disruptive of the old alinements. They have already come to our notice. But if we deal with them, we must also discuss the disturbances in the old settled spheres of men as distinguished from women. For this and for any elaboration of the manifold aspects of the various social groupings touched upon in this chapter we have no room. It will be sufficient to draw attention to a few points only. 571

Let us look briefly at the tribe as a whole. We shall obtain some impression of its constituent elements by merely listing the group names of the various district heads. For the moment it is sufficient to accept this name as a kind of distinctive designation; it may be the name of a totem or a place, of a dynasty or a tribe. Within the effective jurisdiction of the queen, which extends considerably beyond the reserve and the tribal farms, the following group names of district heads are found: thirty-four district heads bearing the name *kwɛvo Muhale*, or the name of the royal group; sixteen Elephants, mostly of very different ancestries and very divergent places of origin; nine *kwɛvo raudigwa* or *vamudiga*; fifteen *kwɛvo rathɔle* or *vamahasha*, both spoken of as 'brothers' of the royal group, and also four *kwɛvo mutshazi* or *vamavulana* not originally related but now the great maternal uncles of the queen's group; eleven Crocodiles, mostly from the west, but some with secondary designations indicating probable diverse ancestries; thirteen Venda, some with, some without totems, some from as near as Tswale, others from as far as Mpefu; five Lions whose interrelations, if they exist at all (coming as they do from such different directions and at such different times), are wholly obscure and lost in oblivion; and besides these, smaller numbers of Leba, those curious kosher-killing, exclusive wanderers with their moon ritual from the north, of Wild Dogs from the highveld, Khalaga and Dibanyika from Rhodesia, of Shangana-Ṭonga of various branches of that great group of peoples whose tenure of headship is only half recognized, of Koni who, in proportion to their numbers, hold very few districts, not to mention Ramafalo, who is a Pig of Luɔdɛ, one *kwɛvo madavele*, a few Sia of Levia, and several sub-heads under the *vamamadeba* who are descended from Mugɔdɔ, the last of the Lovedu kings. 619 571 622

It is not to be thought that the relative number of heads of this or that constituent group in any way reflects the number of people of that group in the tribe. There is, for instance, a considerable population of Porcupines, of Impalas, of Mbezi, of Goats, but there are no district heads of these groups or clusters. Nor must we conceive of these groups as entities having something more in common than their name and, where it has not been lost in oblivion, a background of history and tradition. There is no solidarity between their members. Where some of them live together in a district, it is their relationship to the head or the emphasis upon the common life of the territorial unit that holds them together rather than any conception of a link with a far-off ancestor or of a mystical bond with their totem. They are said to swear (*hu ana*) by their totem, which is sometimes called *mayano* (what is sworn by), sometimes *mutupo* (what is grouped together)—these two words are occasionally sharply

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571 622 619 distinguished, but more often, especially among the common people, they are identified or hopelessly confused. But if to swear by one's totem means something in some cases and among some groups, it usually signifies as little as when we swear by Jupiter.

571 619 Before embarking upon a further elucidation of these names, let us look more closely at an area in Vulovedu so as to obtain a better idea of the distribution and nature of these constituent groups. We select an area towards the south-west, of about four square miles, because if we go to the centre we shall obtain an exaggerated impression of the proportion of *kwevo*, the royal group, whereas in the extreme north we may well think that we are in a tribe of Shangana-Tonga.

[161] In this area, which has a population of about 830 people, there are, counting the group names of both men and women, Elephants, Cattle, Crocodiles, Leopards, Porcupines, Goats, Lions, Pigs, Duikers, Impala, Wild Dogs, Khalaga and Sia without totem, besides a fair sprinkling of Shangana-Tonga and even people using the name Zimbabwe. There are two individuals calling themselves Oorlams, one Bush and one Kapa (Cape coloured), which is most unusual and does not reflect the position in the tribe as a whole. There are, finally, some whom we must merely designate Venda because, as they say, they swear by no animal or object and they do not know to what Venda group they belong. That is not the end of the matter, for in the Elephants (*dou*) cluster there are fifteen different groups. Some of them may be remotely related, but they distinguish themselves by different secondary names and know of no common ancestry or of any links in the past; indeed, as they come from very different parts, they positively deny a common origin. For instance, there are *dou* of Khalaga, recent-comers from Rhodesia, *dou* of Tsubye, far away to the south-east near Phalaborwa, *dou* of Thobolo in the Game Reserve to the north-east, *dou* of Rabothata, the messengers, it is said, of the royal group when they migrated from Rhodesia, *dou* of Sefareni, whose nearest relatives are in Nareni (Mahlo) country. Similarly, there are ten different groups of Lions: some, like the Khiboga, were the aboriginal inhabitants, who are said to have known no fire and no political organization, and were ousted by the Lovedu; others, like those of Selowa, come from the far east with the cult of the possessed, which they might have adopted from the Ndau in Portuguese Moçambique, and still others hail from Vendaland and Vudokwa. There are likewise clusters of Crocodiles with four, of Duikers with four, of Pigs, Khalaga, Sia, Impala and Wild Dogs, each with two different secondary designations (division or group names). Among the Shangana-Tonga, though they are comparatively few in number, there are no less than four different totems and nine different other names (*shibongo*), such as Loyi, Khosa, Mavunda, Mathie and Ngoveni. Reckoning all the differently named groups as distinct, we have over sixty such groups in this area alone.

The following table gives a rough representation of the position in the area in question:

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PEOPLE IN AN AREA OF FOUR SQUARE MILES, WITH A POPULATION OF *c.* 830

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Cluster	Per cent. of Population	No of Groups	Remarks
1. Elephant	14	15	Groups very divergent as to tribe (including Sotho, Venda, Khalaga, Leba —Shangana-Ṭonga. Elephants are enumerated under 7, below), place of origin and time of immigration. Majority of groups reducible probably to common, very far back, but now forgotten ancestor. A fortuitous cluster.
2. Khalaga	14	2	No animal or object of reverence. Mostly recent-comers and directly from the north. Interrelations obscure, but some appear to be Sothoized Shangana-Ṭonga or Nyai.
3. Pig	11·8	2	One of the groups, the *kwɛvo*, is of the royal nucleus and has further subdivisions; the other is from Mamavolo, a tribe which split from the Lovedu about 250 years ago. The two groups no longer acknowledge relationship. A genetic cluster.
4. Lion	11·8	10	Groups very divergent as to tribe (Sotho, Venda, Khiɔga) and time of immigration. Some are aboriginal and were thinly scattered over a wide area, and their common ancestor, if any, has been forgotten; these aborigines cannot even remotely be linked with recent-comers from the north (Ṽirwa), from the east (Thɔvɔlɔ) and from the south (Pedi). A fortuitous cluster.
5. Porcupine	10·2	2	Said to be distinct from one another, coming at very different times from Phalavorwa and from Thavina; the connexion between them, if any, is obscure and is denied.
6. Duiker	8	4	These are all Koni and the secondary designation refers to four tribes (Khaha of Maupa, Maake, and Mamija, all of whom are Koni, and the Letswalo). A genetic cluster.
7. Shangana-Ṭonga	8·3	13	Four are totemic, totems being borrowed from the Sotho; the rest have retained their *shibɔngɔ*. Some came before the great migration, 1840–94; others as part of it. Still call themselves Ṭonga, but come from very different parts of Ṭongaland.

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Cluster	Per cent. of Population	No. of Groups	Remarks
8. Crocodile	6·9	4	Groups are reducible probably to two genetic clusters, the Kwena of Ʊudupi, who are Ngwato from Bechuanaland, and the Kwena from Khimosa in the east near the Game Reserve.
9. Mbezi	3·5	1	People from East Vendaland, who are probably Nyai. All river animals are taboo to them.
10. Cattle	3·2	1	All from Nareni originally and largely as a result of the transportation of the Letswalo in 1894. But some came later.
11. Goat	3·0	1	All Venda, i.e. of the Kwindɛ group. Have lost the Venda observance of peeling the skin off the goat's tail before killing, which is still practised by the Tswale tribe near by.
12. Impala	2·4	2	Some of them are from the north, some from the east. The Lovedu are sometimes also called *phala*, but the true significance of that is obscure. *Phala* in the east (Phalaʋorwa) are regarded as having had no fire, and were ousted by fire.
13. Sia	1·3	2	Appear to have been neighbours of the Lovedu since very early times, living to the north of them. Some come from the Mashau (Venda); others from Molepo. Affinities obscure.
14. Venda	0·4	1	Venda who cannot trace their origin or ancestry to any definite group; not all related.
15. Zimbabwe	0·3	1	People from the north; they also call themselves Khalaga. Do not know the Zimbabwe ruins.
16. Wild Dog	0·2	2	Probably these two groups are related, but the relationship is not recognized; all we can say is that they are Sotho.
17. Leopard	0·2	1	Recent-comers from the highveld (Ɖokwa).

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Cluster	Per cent of Population	No. of Groups	Remarks
18. Bush	0·2	1	Said to be Vaalpens; a mixture of Bush and Bantu. From the towns.
19. Kaps and Oorlam	0·2	1	Cape coloured. The word 'Oorlam' has a special connotation, implying sophistication. From town.
20. Springbok	0·1	1	Origin obscure; come from Phalaborwa.
Total	100·0	67	

This is the position in a single area. It is somewhat more complicated in the tribe as a whole; we certainly would not like to say how many clusters, groups, and sub-groups are to be found; and as for disentangling their origins and histories, and linking them up with common ancestors, that is a task which, if it can be successfully undertaken at all, will require infinite labour and extensive research. For our present purpose, it will be sufficient to indicate the nature of these groups. And let us first consider the nuclear group.

If you ask a Lovedu what his *mutupo* (group name) is, he might say *kwɛvo*; some, however, will say Wild Pig (*golovɛ*). But upon closer examination it will be found that *golovɛ* is really the *muyano*, though this is not a word that many of the other groups use. Certainly the name *golovɛ* includes, not only the royal group, but also groups in several other tribes: Mamaila, Sekhɔpɔ, and Rakwadu are also Pigs of Muhale. The Pigs of Luɔde, the Ramafalo, are associated with the Venda, though there are many in Ʊulovedu and since long ago some of the important national doctors assisting with the initiation 'schools' have come from this group. The Ramafalo are not regarded as being of the same group as the royal group, but they are nearer to it than the Mamavolo, Pigs of Maḍaji, who live on the highveld and with whom all, except the very oldest men and women, strenuously deny any relationship whatever. There is certainly nothing in common between the Pigs of Muhale and the Pigs of Maḍaji; even their customs and institutions differ more widely than those of the Lovedu do from such unrelated neighbours as the Khaha or the Nareni. There are quite a number of Pigs of Maḍaji, especially in the south-western districts of Ʊulovedu, and they are, of course, also scattered among many other tribes.

There are no all-pervasive bonds between these scattered *golovɛ* people; there are merely bonds within the families and lineages of which they are made up. With their relatives in Ʊulovedu, who are not Pigs at all, their bonds are much closer than with people of the group name who fall outside the kin. If, again, we consider the Pigs of Muhale, we shall find that the relationship between their branches Mamaila, Rakwadu, and Sekhɔpɔ, on the one hand, and the royal group in Ʊulovedu, on the

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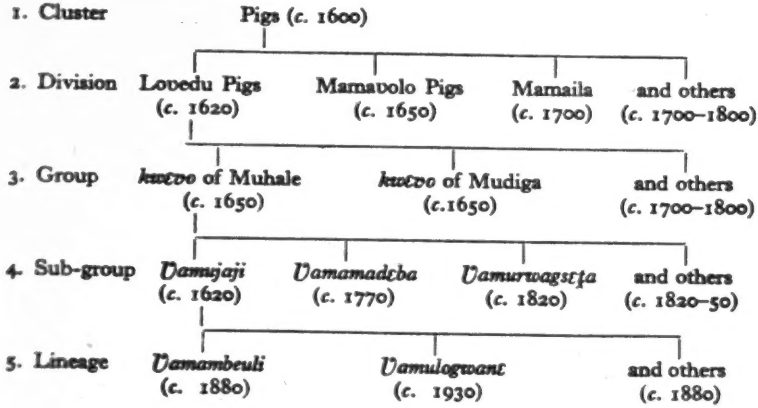
other, is hardly a close one; it is certainly not as close as that between the groups, the Mudiga, the Mahasha, and the royal family, which came into existence long before the Rakwadu and Sekhɔpo broke away. The Mudiga and the Mahasha are not clans; they have the same *mutupo* and *muyano* as the royal group, but each has his own distinctive praise (*khirɛdo*), though there are also distinctive praises of still further sub-divisions, the sub-groups, especially when a member of such sub-group is a district head.

The process of division and subdivision can be traced back to the very earliest times; but there are specific periods when the tendency towards division was specially marked, often coinciding with national crises, the parcelling out of new districts to relatives of the royal group, or the emergence of outstanding personalities. To-day in the royal family it is curious to observe how some of the sons of the queen's deceased brother say they are Mulogwane, others that they are Mujaji. They have strenuous arguments about the matter, as they are not quite sure whether the new designation is in imitation of surnames among Christians or in accordance with precedents of the past.

To sum up the position and to clarify the confusion somewhat we may state the position as follows:



There is, first, the all-inclusive group which we may call the *cluster* (1) of the Pigs. This is a genetic cluster because, although it is not generally recognized that all the Pigs are related or descendants of a single ancestor, their group histories are interconnected. Clusters are not all genetic; nor are they all totemic. In a fortuitous cluster, such as that of the Elephants or Lions, the histories cannot be linked up and no genetic relationships can be established or are recognized in any sense at all. Within the fortuitous cluster there may be smaller genetic clusters—for instance, some Lions or Elephants who have a common ancestor. The genetic cluster has large *divisions* (2), sections that broke away completely very long ago—for instance, the Lovedu Pigs or *kwɛvo* and the Mamavolo Pigs, with whom relationship is only very faintly recognized as a matter of

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history and by a few of the oldest men, and also more recent segments, such as the Mamaila Pigs and the Pigs of Sekhɔpɔ, with whom relationship is recognized fairly generally, but as a matter of form. Two individuals of such divisions cannot, however, concretely trace relationship. Within the divisions there are *groups* (3), such as the *kwɛvo* of Muhale, of Mudiga and so on, some very old, some of more recent date. These are real groups, however, in which some bonds exist, such as a common praise, and a few specially placed individuals can trace relationship to one another. These groups, again, are divided into *sub-groups* (4) of various orders and arising at various times, such as the *vamujaji*, who came into existence 100 years ago. According as we go further and further back, less and less people can trace relationship, and the sub-group imperceptibly merges into the group. On the whole, however, in spite of infinite variations, distant lineal relationship is generally recognized, but it is not given concrete expression in kinship terminology or in behaviour patterns. Finally, we have a further sub-division, which we call the *lineage* (5), between the members of which kinship terms and behaviour patterns come into play, to a greater or lesser extent according to the operation of a large number of circumstances, such as family pride, contiguous residence, agreement among one another, and so on. There are lineages in the process of being formed to-day, such as the *vamulogwane*, the children of Mulogwane, who died in 1934; but at present they are still members of a family, acting in concert in domestic situations, with which the lineage is usually not concerned at all.

Each of these, from the cluster to the lineage, as we have defined them, is functionally distinct in some ways; but they do not have distinctive generic names. We must not make the mistake of thinking that they are sharply demarcated from one another. The patrilineal alinement is secondary; it is overshadowed by the territorial alinement, which may cut across and break up the solidarity of the comparatively small and closely linked lineage. The largest group or cluster, such as the *golovɛ*, has no cohesion whatsoever. This is evident among the *golovɛ*; but it is much clearer among such clusters as the Elephants and the Lions, in which the groups bearing the names Elephant or Lion with a secondary designation may not be segments of a single original group at all. It is quite evident that a Shangana-Tonga Elephant cannot have any common ancestor with a Sotho Elephant; it is equally clear that there can hardly be any relationship between Elephants of Selowa, of Sia, and of Sefareni, for the Selowa people are from the north-east and the Sia and Sefareni, though local, have entirely different histories and ultimate origins.

The names by which people designate themselves cannot be relied upon to establish relationship. A man may designate his group or ancestry or tribe by a totem or chief or dynasty or place or other name or a combination of these. Tradition records several unaccountable or arbitrary changes in these designating names, even in totems; often a non-totemic group adopts a totem of another group or a totemic group adds to its existing totems with subsequent loss of some. And this process occurs, not only in respect of totems or primary names, but also in respect of secondary names. There is a word (*phodemulɔgɔ* or *khaga-mutupo*) for

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571 a person who, not merely when he has no legal father, takes the totem or
619 secondary name of another group. We can, therefore, make no off-hand deductions from the names. Identity or similarity of name may or may not imply similar ancestry. A positive assertion of similarity or identity based upon the similarity or identity of the descriptive name is not conclusive; it may merely reflect a present sense of being related, important in itself, but with no basis in history or fact. It is by no means easy to deal with a situation of such infinite complexity; and from our present point of view there is no need to do so. Except where the name is significant for some other purpose, not that of reckoning relationship as such, and except within the functioning unit, little attention is given to these names. For the purposes of rank within the tribe, against other tribal units, it is important to designate oneself, not Elephant or Lion, but Lovedu. But when we have said this as regards the general position, we have also, as in everything else, to begin pointing out exceptions.

571 An Elephant of Ravothaṭa has as such nothing in common with an
565 Elephant, say, of Selowa. Their backgrounds, their origins, even their
619 customs, are conceived to be different. The Elephant of Ravothaṭa have come in recent years to tolerate the Elephant of Selowa; intermarriage is beginning to establish bonds, and common allegiance to the queen is breaking down the old barriers; yet on the whole an Elephant of Selowa is a *murska*, a person of the low country, not fit to aspire to such high positions in the tribe as the Elephants of Ravothaṭa. The *murska* is, however, much closer to the Ravothaṭa than the Shangana-Ṭonga Elephants; the latter are not unlike the lower classes, the dwellers in the slums, as compared with the aristocracy, among us. Through sagacity and some forms of achievement, they can rise in the scale, but as yet intermarriage is frowned upon and there are some strong barriers between them. What we wish to point out is that the Elephants of Ravothaṭa are far more closely associated with their immediate blood relatives and their relatives-in-law, whether they be Elephants or Lions or Pigs or what not, than with Elephants of Selowa or other Elephants, including far-off *varavothata*; and by far off we mean not merely any one of the sub-group within which kinship terms and behaviour obtain, but also any one of this lineage who lives far away or with whom there is no agreement. And yet there is something more to the matter. The history of the Ravothaṭa, their very early association with the royal group as messengers on the way from Rhodesia, the fact that since the earliest times their heads held an extensive district and still do, their prestige as makers of the skin of the sacred drums, all this and more places them in a special position. These things distinguish the Ravothaṭa as a group; they are like the crest of a noble family or like its traditions. They are scattered all over the tribe, it is true, and any ordinary member of the group would not presume to give himself airs because of the achievements of the past. They never act together, except within the limits of the interested family or lineage, just as happens anywhere else; yet there is some consciousness of belonging together, as indeed there is among families among us.

The same may be said of any other groups in Vulovedu. There are, for instance, the *vamavulana*, so closely linked to the royal group to-day

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that they are called the *kwɛvo* of Tshazi. Their history also dates back 571
to the earliest times, when they were Tshazi quite unrelated to the 565
kwɛvo. They are now and have been since the time of Khiali (*c.* 1740) 619
the great maternal uncles of the royal group. They have their distinctive
praise-titles and also a distinctive laudatory response. If one of the Mavulana 571
is called by his superior he answers by prefixing his words with the 565
praise *moni*. These laudatory responses (for which there is no generic 554
name) are found only among a few groups. The Ravothaṭa say *zemula*,
the Crocodiles of Vudupi *myagani*, the *kwɛvo mulemyazi*, the Dipanyika 619
nɛpya, some Venda (those from Twsale) *sigo*, the Khaḍa *khɛnɛlo*, and the
Lions of Magwale *maan*. This laudatory response honours both the
speaker and the person addressed; and it occurs sometimes in the great
praises of the group—for instance, 'Mavulana of Vutshazi! At Makhifaja,
the place of pasturing, we pasture our cattle in autumn; at Ḍaja it is that
the cattle graze in spring. We are *moni*.' A specific response does not,
however, belong to the whole group. You may hear a *kwɛvo* say *mule-
myazi*, but, after all, the Tswale also call themselves *kwɛvo*, and they say
sigo, while the Mahasha, who are *kwɛvo rathɔle*, may answer *mulovedu
rathɔle*, and a Crocodile of Vudupi, *vudupi vya mamyaka*.

The cluster, such as all the Pigs or all the Elephants, never has one common praise-title. One does not even find a common praise for many groups or sub-groups, such as the Crocodiles, say, of Vudupi; and the same is true of most of the groups. The members of some of the groups and sub-groups use common praise-titles, but the really live praises, those that stir people and stand as a symbol of their unity, are the district praises. They are taught in the *vyali* initiation and are sung when beer is brought by the district to the queen. The district praise may or may not coincide with the praise of the sub-group or lineage of the head of the district. The Mudiga of Madumani, for instance, one of the sub-groups of the Mudiga, identify themselves closely with the royal group, but their distinctive praise-title refers to the mountain of their district, just as the distinctive praise of the Mudiga of Mareroni, another district, refers to the place name as well as to a forebear to whom the district was originally given. In addition, both Madumani and Mareroni have the old Mudiga praise, 'You are hemmed in [by lions]' (*le a digwa*). The local district praise is far more alive than the group or sub-group praise, if it exists at all, in the case of people living in the district who are not Mudiga, but Crocodiles or Elephants or Lions and so on. It is thus far more usually a locality than a group praise, though, with regard to the people of the lineage of the head, it often is both. The exquisite poetry of these praise-names cannot easily be rendered in English, '*Vuuga vya uuga bula ea na*', the praise of Levibi, we may translate as 'When it thunders at Vuuga, the rain rains', but we cannot recapture the rumbling of the *u*'s nor the pattering of the *a*'s.

Let us look more closely at the Crocodiles. They are by no means 571
a real group at all. At Matsui, where one of them is a district head, they 619
are very closely linked to the royal nucleus; the mother of Matsui was a relative of Mamujaji the mother of the first Mujaji, and it is at Matsui that the cow Mamujaji, belonging to the head of the district, is dedicated

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to the spirit of Mamujaji. These Matsui Crocodiles, though they can trace their ancestry to the Ngwato of Bechuanaland, are, firstly, a closely linked lineage in their district and, secondly, they are relatives-in-law of the royal group as well as of several other groups, including Mavulana; but the other Crocodile groups never so much as obtrude themselves in their interests or consideration. There are the Crocodiles of Maunadala, who also answer *myagani*; yet they have a distinctive praise in which they refer to themselves as the 'outcasts of the rain' (*mɔrɔha wa metsi a bula*), because they are unable to make rain. They also are Crocodiles of Vudupi, but they are quite distinctive. They have a long history; they lived on the furthermost southern boundaries of Vulovedu relatively independent even for these parts; they held their national 'schools', as they still do to-day, with scant deference to the precedence that should be accorded to the queen; and among them are celebrated doctors of the *vuhwera*, *vyali*, and *gomana* complex of institutions. They owe their solidarity not so much to their common ancestry as to their concentration in a district in which they have been able to rule themselves and to build up their own traditions; but it is the solidarity of the people of Maunadala, whatever their totem or ancestry, not that of the Crocodiles. And much the same applies to Khaḍa, the Elephants of Sefareni, also called *ḍou Khalaga*. Their genetic relationship with the Leba, though, by way of derogation, affirmed by their neighbours, cannot be credited; there is no association, no intermarriage, no acknowledged relationship with the Leba. Their immediate alliance is to Khaḍa and the district; their ultimate alliance is with the royal nuclear group; with other Elephants they have nothing in common. And so we may go through all the constituent groups.

We have said enough to dispel the idea that the tie of real or supposed common ancestry in itself is of importance. In the larger groups the union that exists is due to other factors. The bonds within them do not even necessarily imply an informal feeling of preferential comradeship. The groups and sub-groups are not as such charged with specific functions, though, as we have seen, individuals in them may have special functions. For some time now one of the families of the Mudiga has been responsible for distributing the rain medicine (*mufugo*), but it would be a conception foreign to the Lovedu that the Mudiga only could be entrusted with this work. Not only Ramafalo, a Pig of Luɔdɛ, but many others of different groups are doctors of rain; and the same applies to other special positions.

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It is not difficult to see how these things work. One may still observe the process of the introduction of a new cult in neighbouring tribes. Rasekwalo, a Crocodile, recently brought the *gomana* to the Tswale tribe, just as another Crocodile brought it to the Virwa of Makhatho. By running the 'school', these foreigners pocket some of the fees and naturally try to safeguard their rights. Their children follow them and the special function or privilege appears to be attached to the group of Crocodiles. But in time the drums of the cult become the drums, not of the Rasekwalo, but of the chief; his descendants may still take a prominent part, not because they are Crocodiles, but because some of the secrets

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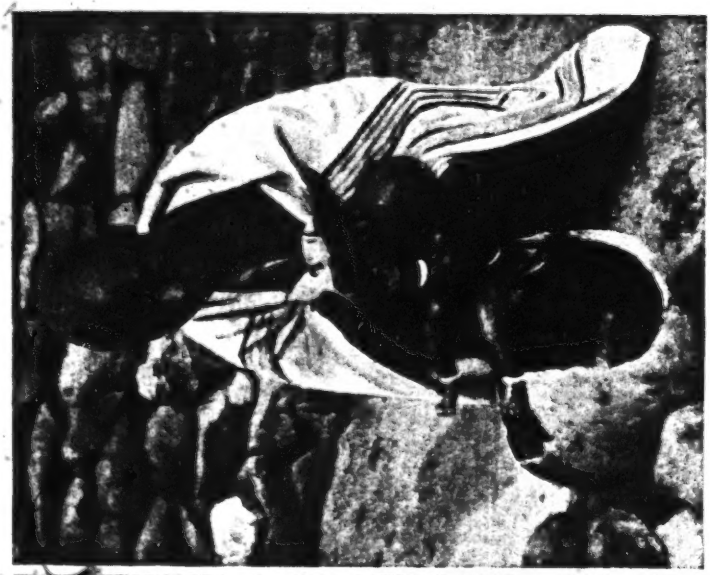

(b) BATHING BABY

V. THE LOVEDU BABY

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(a) FEEDING BABY

[facing p.96]

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VI. HOUSEWIVES, YOUNG AND OLD

(a) THE WATCHED POT (b) WATER AND VEGETABLES FOR HER HOME

[Facing p. 97]

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and medicines are in their hands, or rather in the hands, not of the group, 571
but of the specific family. That family may be honoured by being given 794
a district to rule, and, as marriage is patrilocal, the area gradually may 619
contain a fair percentage of the lineage of Crocodiles of Rasekwalo. They
may be lucky and retain the privilege, but there need be no necessary
continued association between the *varasekwalo* and the *gomana*. All
depends on the circumstances.

No one thinks of a certain group as having certain functions, from 571
which other groups are excluded. Yet only some district heads may, for 794
instance, hold the great national 'schools'; it is rather the privilege of 613
those heads whose people have traditionally held them. But this is not
considered to be a privilege of the groups; it is the privilege of a lineage
if that lineage happens also to be in charge of a district, for the organiza-
tion is territorial. The Lovedu, indeed, use the word *khɔrɔ*, but, as
applied to groups of people, it does not mean a segment of any kin
group. One speaks of the *khɔrɔ* of Mavulana, for instance; but the term
refers to the people that live in the district of Mavulana, not the *vamavu-
lana* who are scattered over many districts. One may even speak of the
khɔrɔ of Mulogwane, meaning a section of the capital which was in
charge of Mulogwane. Equally, one hears of the groups, the Mudiga,
the Mahasha, the Crocodiles of Vudupi and so on spoken of as the
dikhɔrɔ of the tribe. The connotation of the term is quite indefinite; it is
as likely to refer to a group or sub-group of people as to a district; the
word is not commonly used and is considered to be foreign.

The patrilineal groups or sub-groups have as such no functions. They 571
do not regulate marriage, nor do they imply co-operation and mutual 613
helpfulness. They are not at the basis of solidarity in legal and political
situations. It is not unilateral grouping which unites people in their
common interests or common activities, except when we come to the
smaller sub-divisions, in which close relationship is acknowledged. If
there was any real cohesion within them, the groups or sub-groups
would cut across both tribes and districts; they would constitute a chal-
lenge to the principle of local contiguity, and the culture would be as
diverse as the groups are numerous. Lack of group cohesion helps the
diffusion of the fundamental values and institutions. There is great
diversity in details, but the broad pattern of the culture stands out boldly.
Unilateral grouping of a smaller kind, such as the core of a lineage, is not
disruptive, for, on the one hand, the lineages which give tone to the
remarkably autonomous districts are intimately linked with the queen
and the tribal structure and, on the other hand, they harmonize admirably
with that local unit which is a great political unit. Co-residence tends
to be limited to the immediately effective lineage, the regulative principle
being patrilocal marriage. The sentiments developing about co-residence
are strengthened by inheritance and succession in the male line; the
core of the lineage has common property and other interests. The
segregation of this core is promoted by the tendency to take a name
which, according to the circumstances, is the name of a grandfather or a
father. It is the lineage, or, rather, the operative segment of a lineage,
that may be regarded as an important institution in the society.

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571 613 The patrilineal lineage, however, is a formal rather than a friendly group, at least when one goes beyond the brothers' sons of one father who, as the phrase goes, 'share even the head of a locust'. There is nothing, however, apart from the name of its members which divides it from sub-groups or groups. It has no generic name and no observances such as special milk or other taboos; but marriage within the patrilineal lineage is incest, at least outside the royal family. It is the group which exercises certain kinds of control; though it must be remembered that the head of a lineage is head only of his, not of his brother's or even his son's village. Within the lineage there is more often than not considerable friction. The conflict is a conflict about legal precedences, for if seniority is emphasized in the society, if the influence and status of a man or a woman depends largely upon his or her age or seniority in a certain position, it is the chief son or daughter, the issue of a man's mother's brother's daughter, however young he may be, who steps into the shoes of his father. A younger brother, whatever his legal status by this reckoning, calls his elder brothers 'great one' (*muhulu*) and later in life, when the chief brother becomes district head or councillor, there is at least the 'war of the eyes' between them. You will see struggles for influence and position everywhere within the lineage for this reason. The enormous weight of the social structure is massed behind the chief son; but seniority is given precedence in the 'schools' and in the kinship terminology.

571 602 It is not our intention to give more than a glimpse of the patrilineal lineage. But it is necessary to insist, on the one hand, that it is the *mulɔgɔ* relatives, both on the father's and on the mother's side, that the Lovedu have constantly in mind, and, on the other hand, that the groups with the most impressive reciprocal rights and obligations are the *vaḑuhulu* and the *vamakhulu*. In the most general sense and whenever these groupings are spoken of as linked groups of people, the *vaḑuhulu* are the people where one gets bridegrooms—that is, it gives *munywalo* cattle and receives brides. The *vamakhulu* in this context are the people who supply the brides and in return receive cattle. These two terms, in other contexts, have other connotations; for instance, the *vaḑuhulu* include all one's grandchildren, own and classificatory, but the term also refers to children of one's sister (man speaking). The pivot of the alinement of the two groupings is the cattle-linking of brother and sister and its co-ordination with cross-cousin marriage. The primary linking of brother and sister, described elsewhere, is immensely strong; and this strength is transmitted to the further linking of the two groups. The *vaḑuhulu* and the *vamakhulu* are not so much separate groups as interlinked people, and the bonds between them are partly kinship bonds, for they both are part of the *mulɔgɔ*; but the specially emphasized link is the link forged by the cattle. The linkage must, in its widest application, be regarded as binding together people who do not live together.

The patrilineal lineage is the core of co-residence units, such as the village and the districts. But the strongest links between these units are the links binding together the *vaḑuhulu* and the *vamakhulu*; they are the cattle links. The cattle forge links within the *mulɔgɔ*, a much wider group, ramifying both through males and females throughout the society. But

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kinship terminology and behaviour patterns, because they effectively 571
operate only within narrow limits and are unsupported by tangible 602
reciprocities beyond these limits—though distant relationship is spoken of as a 'flavour that is familiar' (*ledugela*, literally, a salty taste)—cannot hold together widely spread groups without assistance from other social arrangements. And this is precisely where the complex of kin segregated out by the cattle plays its decisive part. In generation after generation the links are renewed as grandfathers, fathers, sons, and grandsons all take their chief wives from and send their cattle to the same group. The bridegrooms not only give the cattle, they are perpetually giving all their lives, assisting the group of the brides in paying their debts and helping its male members with *munywalo* and in a hundred other ways; on the other hand, the brides or parents-in-law must always honour the bridegrooms and must maintain relationship with them by periodically bringing beer. These reciprocal obligations are at the very basis of the social system, of the interrelations between villages, of the bonds between the districts, and, finally, of the vast and intricate system that binds the nuclear group to the other groups and to the districts. If the lineages are the bricks out of which the society is constructed, the *mulɔgɔ* and particularly the cattle-relatives (*mulɔgɔ wa dikhomu*) constitute the straw and the mortar, even the steel framework. It is also within the grouping brought about by these cattle that the fiercest conflicts occur. The price that is paid for a system, without which the fundamental structure and interrelations of the society might crumble to the ground, is certainly great; but in view of the functions of this system, it is perhaps not too great.

The *munywalo* system is also closely associated with the hierarchy of 571
rank within the household. For the chief house of a polygynist is the 595
house established by the cattle he received from the marriage of his sister; and at the same time the mistress of this house is his cattle-linked cross-cousin. The rewards of rank thus support the *munywalo* system. But rank reckoned in this way is not completely co-ordinated with seniority and other arrangements in the society. Some of the conflicts that
arise are mentioned elsewhere. Here we shall refer briefly to social 561
groupings based upon age. Firstly, there are age-mates (*thaga*). Girls, on the one hand, and boys, on the other, from an early age club together in their games and their activities. The group is a very loose one, wholly unorganized from without; it is not unlike our play gangs. Techniques of co-operation and group cohesion are well developed, especially among herdboys. They have their games, their heroes, and their bullies; their loyalties are, in a sense, in conflict with adults, but they are not anti-social. They may not tell tales out of school; if they do, adults will dismiss the matter as nonsense. Girls bathe together, get firewood together, play and stamp mealies together. They know one another's love affairs, they share one another's troubles. This group of age-mates is purely localized; it does not extend beyond the district and is often confined to a few neighbouring villages. In later life these age-mates continue to be on friendly, even intimate and joking terms—that is, as far as such is possible when they are also relatives. Among girls especially,

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561 a whole group of age-mates may be punished for the delinquency of one of the group, but it is not strictly the same group as played together; it might be young mothers only, because one of them had insulted an old woman.

[881] Besides the *thaga* there is the *murəle*, the age-set brought into existence by the great national initiations, the *vudiga* for boys and the *vyali* for girls. (The word *murəle* is also applied to cattle born in the same year.) But these age-sets have much less significance than in other tribes. Their chief function is to grade men and women into groups to which a distinctive name is given and by which they can readily reckon their relative ages. In the very old days the age-sets had some military function, but the queens relied less and less upon their fighting unit and to-day nothing is left of the old basis, if it was such, of the age-set. There is hardly a bond of mutual help and fellowship within the group. It does not constitute the unit that is usually called to perform communal duties for chief or tribe. This work is done by districts rather than by regiments, though it is said that in the old days there was some sort of division of labour as between the different sets, and to-day occasionally in the district of the capital the youngest age-set is called upon to weed the field of the queen. Certainly there is still the conception that each regiment is entitled to some particular portion of a beast that is slaughtered, but in practice there is no evidence of the observance of this rule. It is as if, with the breakdown of their military functions, their other specific functions also fell into disuse. What remains are the privileges attached to seniority and to age. The enclosure of the queen's *khərə* is built by men of all ages, called up by districts; this applies equally to labour on the roads, brick-making, and building. If young men are sometimes given a specific piece of work, it is primarily because they are young men or the young men of such and such a district, and never in our experience as the whole age-set in the tribe.

But the function of marking relative ages, seniority in respect of important activities in the tribe, is of very great importance. A young man who has gone through one initiation may have advanced one important stage towards adulthood, but he is still very far from being a complete man or from being initiated into the inner secrets of the 'school'. In the second initiation he becomes a shepherd (*mudabi*), in the third he may be one stage higher up (one of the *medidi*), and, if he is lucky, he may reach the fourth stage, that of the old men or of one of the officials of the initiation. Girls have to go through even more stages before full initiation in the puberty ceremonial. And in the *vyali*, as we saw in 1939, only men who were initiated as far back as 1894 were allowed in the enclosure for men. The beer and the food and delicacies which were brought by the girl initiates were for these old men, though occasionally they relented and passed on a pot of beer to their juniors watching the proceedings from outside the enclosure. And there is a similar hierarchy in the *gomana* cult. Only gradually are men introduced to the innermost secrets; only the old men play the part of the weird whistling spirits (*zwidajani*), until they become too old to play the part and are replaced by younger men.

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Generally speaking, a man's prestige increases as he grows older; but, on the one hand, as his age disables him, practical control gradually passes out of his hands, and, on the other, there is the conflict for position, mentioned elsewhere, between the old and the middle-aged in the royal family. A grand old man like Mavulana is more genuinely respected than the greatest of the royal councillors, and people humble themselves more graciously before him than before even royalty itself. But he lives far from the capital, some five miles over stony places and up a difficult hill, and it is not he, but his sons, who conduct the business of the district with the queen; and of them it is not the chief, but the eldest son, who started earliest on this business and is gradually establishing himself as the next head after the death of the father. In every walk of life, in the supreme councils of the queen, in the struggles for succession to headship of districts, among the wives of a polygynous household, among siblings in a village, the same phenomenon repeats itself. The society values age and experience, sagacity and diplomacy; the claims of age and seniority are validated in kinship terminology, in the precedences accorded the elder brother or sister with regard to priority of marriage or in the initiation ceremonies; but on the whole it is the values of the society rather than its institutionalizations which emphasize the importance of seniority. The society also stresses the hierarchy of rank, such as the status and rights of the chief son, the position of the great wife, and the pre-eminence of the cattle-linked sister, though she be the younger sister. But at the very core of the society there is uncertainty: the heir to the throne is not determined by rigid rules, based upon seniority or legal precedences, and the councillors are involved in a conflict which throws into confusion, at least, the principle of seniority. The total configuration of the society cannot wholly rely upon these devices without damaging the foundations of the sacred kingship. The uncertainty of the succession is the guarantee that the queens are queens by divine decree.

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CHAPTER VII

EARLY TRAINING

Nursing and growing up—herdboy gang life and the learning of veld-lore—an institutionalized play-school—'crossing' rites and the significance of ordeals and obscene language—opportunities and satisfactions of old age—the task of the modern school.

000 WE have not yet dealt with all the values and arrangements of Lovedu society to which the individual must be adjusted if he is to become a co-operating member. But it will not be premature to give a short review of the moulding process, as we shall thereby be led to consider some striking institutions of the tribe. The moulding of the individual is a lifelong process; yet some of the main characteristics appear early.

853 To the Lovedu the aggressiveness of young European children of two
854 or three years old and their inability to play amicably later on with other children, characteristics natural in a competitive, non-co-operative,
865 individualistic society like ours, are a source of surprise and often also amusement. 'European children are not like ours,' they say. 'They like very much to fight.' The Lovedu child is from early infancy treated with great lenience and kindness. 'Care for it,' they say even of an uterine child, 'for to-morrow it will care for you' (*khi lele, ga matso khi lela wena*). There are no struggles for food, no strict rules of feeding. Whenever an infant cries, it is put to the breast. If its mother is away, its grandmother or even the young girl nursing it may put it to their breast to comfort it; but it is strictly forbidden for a suckling mother to allow any but her own child to drink of her milk. A woman who allowed a baby to cry without attending to it and trying to hush it would be severely reprimanded by the older women of the village. A baby is never left alone. Indeed, it is almost an appendix of its mother, at night sleeping against her naked breast, by day being carried on her back in its skin cradle. A woman, it is said, may forget all manner of things, but never the skin cradle of her child. When a mother wants to go out, there is never any problem as to what to do with baby. He is simply strapped to her back to accompany her, and should she choose to dance at a ceremony, even the most violent jumping movements would leave him unperturbed. So accustomed does a Lovedu baby become to his position on his mother's back that, when picked up, he quite naturally stretches out his feet at right angles to his body. While his mother stamps or hoes, the baby will be nursed by his grandmother or a nurse girl a little older than himself. This mode of life and treatment gives the child a sense of security, safety, and warmth. His wants are immediately attended to and the absence of cloth spares him even such small discomforts as wet napkins.

866 Before the long suckling period is over, the child is already walking and forms part of a group of toddlers, who give him his first lessons in independence. If he falls and hurts himself while playing with them, there is no one to fuss over him; if another child hits him, he will hit back or

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sit down and cry, but, beyond a few sympathetic words from his friends 866
and the injunction to be quiet, nothing is done which may enhance his
sense of his own importance. In competition with the growing interests
of the toddler, who is able also to partake of the ordinary food of adults, 862
suckling becomes of less and less importance, indulged in only at night
or when he feels in need of being fondled. His companions, too, many
of them a little older than himself, begin to tell him there are worms in
his mother's breast and perhaps even tease him a little. If there is no
younger brother or sister, a child may continue drinking at his mother's
breast until about four or five years of age and it is not at all an unusual
sight to see a boy of five stealing a drink at his mother's breast before
running off in the morning to herd goats with the others. Most children
leave off drinking quite naturally; sometimes, however, the mother puts
some chili on her breast or a bitter herb to deter the child. It is said that
boys generally like to drink from the breast much longer than do girls, and
certainly it was little boys from three to seven years of age, not little girls,
who used to nestle up to and stealthily fondle one of us.

There is no necessary connexion between weaning and the resumption of 862
sexual intercourse by the parents, which may take place at any time after 833
teething and depends largely upon the number of wives there are. It is,
however, believed that normal sex relations should not be resumed till
after weaning. If they are resumed before the child is able to walk, the
old women who control such relations between husband and wife will
warn the parents to be careful: 'For who will carry both children?' Sex
intercourse on the part of its mother is believed to harm the suckling
child. That is why, when husband and wife resume such relations, some
of the semen of the husband must be smeared all over the child 'that it
may know its father' and not take ill. Often the semen is mixed with
powdered medicine as well as with the vaginal secretions of its mother.
A suckling woman is seldom accused of adultery; it is thought that she
would not wilfully do a thing that is harmful to her child. Christians
resume intercourse after the child is a few months old; such external
intercourse is said by them to 'make the child grow'. The sending of
children to the mother's mother for a few years is likewise not definitely
associated with the weaning, though naturally it cannot take place before.

Grown-ups try to teach children to greet (*lɔɔha*) at an early age or they 868
clap their hands to make the toddlers dance, however unsteadily. When a 863
child is able to go on an errand to the next courtyard, this is considered
a great advance. It is then said, 'The child is able to hear.' Bodily
control is not expected of small children; but by the time a child is about
three years old its mother will take it outside the village near the ash heap
and smack it if it messes in the hut or courtyard. At five or six a child
will go out into the bush.

There are few restrictions in the life of a small child: no elders run after 861
him with injunctions not to touch this or that; if he chooses to roll in the 863
ash heap, he may do so without getting into any greater trouble than a
mild rebuke from his mother, who will tell him she objects to suckling
so dirty a boy. One may see a child playing with a sharp knife without a
word of admonition from his parents. There are no regular hours. A

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child will sleep when it feels sleepy or run about when it is not. Up to the age of about six it will be called to bed by its mother at night, but older children go to bed when they feel inclined, often long after their parents have retired. The only form of washing that may be insisted upon is that of the child's face before eating. In comparison with the life of a European child, constantly under the vigilant eye of a grown-up parent or nurse, surrounded by dangerous or valuable objects which he must not touch, dressed in clothes which he is expected to keep clean, and forced to keep regular hours, Bantu childhood is a wonderfully care-free existence with plenty of good companionship. Constant comradeship with those of his own age tends to make a Lovedu child shy in the presence of grown-ups, especially after the age of about six. But independence of its parents and of adults in general is developed to a marked degree. Small boys of seven will disappear from home to go and visit some relative miles away. Their parents will be unperturbed, though, if they do not return within a few days, they will set out to look for them. Boys of ten or eleven may run away to work with European farmers (though this is infrequent) and prove themselves well able to withstand the unsympathetic treatment they sometimes receive.

The attitude of parents to children is one of indulgence, but there is little spoiling, because parents are busy and a child spends most of his time with those of his own age-group. Punishment of children is infrequent, though threats are common. A child who is disobedient to his father 'will be eaten by the vultures'; and a situation which one sees enacted over and over again is an adult, stick in hand and with many imprecations, chasing away a group of toddlers and young children from the courtyard where a case is being held. The children, screaming and laughing, run away, only to return again within ten minutes, when the same performance has to be repeated. Beatings are relatively infrequent and children are never dealt with by stinting them as regards food or clothes. Small children may be smacked if they steal monkey nuts from their mother's stores; we have seen a child of four beaten on the legs with its mother's string necklace because it was crying for a second mealie when it had already been given one, and herdboys are beaten if they let the cattle stray into the gardens. On the whole, however, beatings are seldom administered, praising of children for their good actions being far more common. Discipline in a Lovedu child's life comes, not from parents, but from children older than himself. When a child gets into tantrums the attitude of adults and older children is one of forbearance; disciplinary action is never thought necessary. Madarabani, in a fit of temper because his sister had upset his tin of grasshopper stew, ran amok, hitting out at his elder brother and treading in the mealie meal put out to dry in the courtyard. Instead of punishing him, as he might have been in a European household, those around him merely tried to calm him: his elder brother humoured him and tried to distract his attention by showing him a double-bladed knife, while his sister tried to make amends by offering him a sweet potato. His mother, busy with her cooking, took no notice.

The personality of a child, his likes and dislikes, are respected by adults,

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as are also any rights of ownership he may have. A child, who has been given a piece of land of his own to cultivate, will dispose of its produce as he pleases, and he may sell it for clothes or allow it to be used by the household. If he has been given fowls and the father wishes to kill one, he will mention it to the child and promise him another. Among parents one does not find the competitive jealousies that are apt to arise between European mothers about the relative size, weight, or health of their children, and there is little or no comparison of babies or boasting of their ability or cleverness. But a very precocious child is not liked; people may suspect that he is being taught to be a witch; and 'he outwits you obliquely [by way of witchcraft]'. Frightening of children by adults is of common occurrence. Not only are children told when naughty that a Shangana-Tonga or European will come and catch them or that a big elephant stalks about the village at night killing small children who will not go to bed, but mothers take pleasure in frightening them even when they are not naughty. Often a mother would try to force her child to come near us when she saw it was afraid or would tell it that we were about to carry it away in our suitcase. When it ran away crying, she would laugh with great merriment. If a small child refuses to greet a relative in the correct manner, his mother might take a knife and threaten to cut him or take hold of a pot and threaten to cook him unless he obeys. But fear of bogies is not excessive and fear is certainly not the only or most effective means of control.

Children learn the tasks required of adults simply by doing them. They are anxious to imitate their elders, and there is never any compulsory element in the teaching of these skills. Moreover, in their education they have this advantage, that it is not carried on in an institution divorced from everyday adult activities. The child feels that he is an essential part of society; all he does is a direct contribution to the domestic economy. If a small girl of five accompanies her mother to the fountain and returns solemnly carrying a diminutive calabash of water on her head, she feels she is doing important work, for her contribution will be used with that of her mother. 'The stick even of a child helps the adult across' and, in fact, a girl of six is able to fill quite a large pot of water for a busy mother by going to and fro with small quantities at a time from the fountain. One night, while sitting in a hut, we watched a girl of seven learning to cook. Fermented porridge was needed for the baby and this the girl set out to make in a small pot in the presence of her mother and several other girls somewhat older than herself who happened to be there. When the water boiled, she put in some ground grain, twirling the porridge twirler between the palms as she had seen her mother do. She took the comments and criticisms of the company with good grace, even when they smiled at her awkwardness. Meanwhile, her mother mentioned to us how useful it would be to have some one who could cook the evening meal on days when she came home late or tired from fetching wood. To a helpful toddler, its mother might say, 'Thank you, my lady' (*Ahee Khoba ya ga*), praising her by implying that she has already reached the maturity and usefulness of a mature young woman; or she may quote the maxim, 'Bearing children is not the same as gathering

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868 greens' (*hu bɛ ba hasi hu ha murɔhɔ*), meaning that children are always of value, unlike relish, which can be used once only.

It is not so much technical skill as usefulness and willingness to help that are the great virtues. There is great tolerance of mediocre achievement and no one is made to suffer humiliation on account of it. Whenever she gets the chance, a small girl will, when her mother is stamping, try to follow suit, often with a play stamper specially made for her, and it is surprising how quickly a child will learn to winnow. Girls of from eight to ten are able to do almost every kind of housework, including the preparation of a meal. Beer-making, which requires considerable skill, is, however, not learnt till after puberty, and heavy work, such as carrying wood, is not done by young children. At the age of ten or eleven, a girl may be given a small portion of her grandmother's field to cultivate for herself. She will plant the crops she likes—lots of sugar-cane and also mealies and groundnuts—and in the disposal of these she acts as she pleases. Girls also learn the art of collecting leaves for relish: which plants can be used, which leaves are the most tasty and at what time of the year they should be picked.

857 Most children are pleased to help a little in the household tasks, for there are not very many outside diversions. They have, however, plenty of time also for play and are gloriously free to romp on moonlight nights long after their parents have retired to bed. As with us, play among the Lovedu is largely directed to the learning of skills useful in later life. A popular pastime of children is dancing, usually among small girls, to the accompaniment of drumming on paraffin tins. At adult dances young girls seize every opportunity in between dances to practise on the drums and, when the dance is in full swing and the men in a ring round the drums are bursting their cheeks as they blow their reed pipes, it is not unusual to see five or six small boys of from three to six years old going round on the outside, reed in mouth, imitating every movement of the adults. In the games of girls (those of boys will be discussed later), imitation of adult activities, such as a game resembling initiation mummeries and play-cooking, loom large. Sometimes they build miniature villages, mould small clay pots, and pretend to cook, but often their play takes a more real form. We have seen a group of small girls collect ripe morula fruits to make their own cider in pots borrowed from home. Next day, when it was ready, they all sat down solemnly to drink it, passing round the clay dish with great dignity, as they had seen grown-ups do. A group of small boys hung around in the hope of being invited to join in and they were not disappointed. The cider was perhaps a little dirty (small girls are not particular about washing hands before pressing out the juice), but the boys found it wonderfully good.

868 262 The education of a boy is received largely through the institution of herding. His first introduction to herding is pleasant enough. At the age of four or five he sets out with one of the bigger boys, who carries food for him, since he is as yet too young to remain long without a meal. Now he has his first taste of goat's milk, the food of herdboys, who do not notice the smell that nauseates adults. The goats are milked into hollows scooped out in rocks, into which juice of various kinds of acid

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fruits, such as *ditshidi*, may be squeezed to cause curds, eaten by means of a certain kinds of grass or leaves. At this stage the boy goes out with his protector to herd or stays at home with his nurse just as he pleases. Soon, however, he must begin seriously to herd goats and donkeys near home with other boys of his age. He finds this irksome at first and whenever he can he tries to remain at home with the girls. But his father will tell him that always being in women's company will make him grow up to be a coward; visitors coming to the village will ask, 'Are you herding yet?' and boys older than himself may begin to beat him if he does not accompany them, so that in the end he finds himself going out day after day to herd, whether his own father has goats and cattle or not. In the old days, when cattle raids were feared, full-grown men herded cattle; to-day this is not seen, except sometimes when on a rainy day an adult will go out with the cattle to prevent his children from getting coughs and colds. On wet days rough shelters are made, in which the herdboys sit round a fire. Just as the work of girls in the home as nursemaids and helpers forms an integral part of the whole economic structure of society, so herding is an important and essential activity. This the herdboy knows and feels.

Herding is a form of gang life in which a boy and his age-mates are very strictly controlled by those just older than themselves. It is the only discipline to which he is subjected outside the circumcision lodge, and it is characteristic of the society, that boys and girls both in and out of the formal initiation 'schools' are disciplined, not by adults, but by the group just older than themselves. It is the adults, more especially old people, who sometimes intervene on their behalf, lightening their burden. Much of what they are taught in the 'schools' likewise comes from the next age-set. As an educational principle, this is of considerable value: children learn more easily and more willingly from other children than from adults, and every boy knows that soon he too will enjoy the privilege of authority over those younger than he is. In herding, the smaller boys are made to do most of the unpleasant work. They are left to herd on hot afternoons while those older than themselves indulge in games and amusements; they have to fetch and carry for older boys and are often bullied into fighting one another. Constant fear of being made to fight decided a boy of eight to run away to his mother's brother's place. But there he had also to herd and, instead of escaping the fights he found so distasteful, he was again pitted against and worsted by boys stronger than himself. Every group of herdboys has its leader (*sholwe*), usually the strongest of the group. He and the other elder boys have many privileges. The younger boys have to do the fagging and, if they find a tree with ripe fruit, they may neither climb it nor pick fruit till they have called the older boys, who, after eating their fill, will allow them to have their turn. One branch must, however, be left untouched for the leader of the group. When cattle have strayed, the men beat only the bigger boys, knowing that the smaller ones will already have been punished by their seniors. Herdboys have their own standards, not always in accord with that of the rest of society. They steal sugar-cane, nuts, mealies from other people's fields; sometimes they collect honey from hives in the bush

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868 surrounding graves, a practice that is strictly taboo; they may even steal
854 fowls to kill and eat, but in this they are invariably discovered and severely
857 beaten. Among girls the emphasis upon the rights of seniority is in abeyance until initiation at puberty.

Herding and its concomitant activities afford an excellent education to the growing boy, one designed to fit him for the sort of life led by adults in the old days and which, even in the changed circumstances of to-day, gives him much of value that it would be impossible to get in any school. A good deal of time is spent in hunting and trapping birds, cane-rats, squirrels, rabbits, and, near the forests, domestic cats that have become wild. Boys become experts in the use of the bow and bulb-headed arrow and in hunting learn much that is useful about the habits of animals. But this is of small importance beside other aspects of their training while herding. Everything a boy uses in hunting or in play he has to make himself. He fashions his own bow and arrows, his own traps. If boys wish to play a game of *khororro*, which somewhat resembles hockey, they must cut out and shape their own clubs. They have no toys but those they have made themselves, and toy-making gives them a wonderful training in handicrafts. Herdboys mould clay oxen and manufacture toy wagons, motor cars, guns, sleds in a number of different mediums—wood, clay, mealie pith, prickly pear leaves. One day the herdboys near us would all make watches (one boy even had a locust inside his to move the hands!); on another they all came home wearing spectacles made of mealie pith, exact replicas, cleverly constructed, of those they had seen us wear. In February and March, when the grass is long, they weave grass arm bands and hats and caps of various shapes and sizes. They make a humming top of a hard-shelled fruit, *mufuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) and ropes to put through the nostrils of riding oxen for reins; they make their own musical instruments and cut reed pipes for their own play-dances. In this manner herdboys learn to know a vast number of useful things about their environment—the uses and quality of the wood of various trees, which are hard and strong and which soft or pliable, those useful for carving platters, and those used in basketry, the kinds of trees that yield bird-lime, the kinds of bark that can be used for making string. In their constant quest for food, they learn to know every edible fruit, berry, and root in the veld. A herdboy walking along with you will give you the name and uses of almost every tree or shrub you pass in that rich bushveld environment, and once a boy of fifteen astonished us by being able to name over 200 specimens of plants from that area.

854 Besides riding oxen and donkeys, boys play games, some of which
857 resemble European games, such as hide-and-seek, cat-and-mouse, twos-and-threes. One game, that of hurling at a rolling tuber a stick furnished with a circle of points at one end, is recognized as a training in hunting and exactness of aim. Bands of herdboys from neighbouring districts are keen rivals, but sometimes the rivalry is between pagans and Christians. Frequently fights take place. The winners will then milk the goats and ride the oxen of the vanquished, who may be made to undergo the disgrace of driving home the cattle of their conquerors.

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Even if blood flows, no case can be brought against a herdboy, for he is still uncircumcised, irresponsible.

Training for both boys and girls in home-making is embodied in the institution known as *mandwane*, which, while being little more than a game, is nevertheless accorded adult recognition. Utilization by the children of the harvest gleanings after reaping, which may be regarded as its practical economic aspect, is to-day not much in evidence, but while it lasts women whose sons are taking part are saved the trouble of cooking the evening meal. After the reaping, when the cattle graze in the mealie lands near home, *mandwane* is begun by the girls calling the boys to come and be chosen. They stand in a row while each girl chooses a 'husband' by kneeling before and greeting the boy of her choice. He signifies his consent by answering the greeting. After the parents have been told of their intention to hold *mandwane*, the boys begin to build rough huts in the fields, while the girls smear the floors and courtyards. Each couple may have its own establishment with very often also a small child chosen as their 'child', or one large house for all may be made. With pots, baskets, spoons, and other utensils borrowed from home, the girls stamp mealie meal and cook dishes of porridge, nuts, and pumpkin, while the boys, if they can, bring home birds as relish. The game begins about eleven o'clock in the morning and ends in dancing and singing after dark; this lasts for about ten days or more till, at the end, the miniature village is burnt. Each 'wife', in addition to serving food to her 'husband' in the proper manner, must also take food every evening to her 'mother-in-law' in the boy's home. This is eaten, not by the mother-in-law herself, but by children of the household who are not taking part in the game. Occasionally the elders walk over to watch activities in the play-village and give a word of advice. That the institution is taken seriously by adults is shown by the fact that, though *mandwane* partners never marry, the mother of the girl will very often after the *mandwane* take a gift of beer (usually five calabashes or so) to the parents of her small daughter's 'husband', who will slaughter a goat in recognition of the gift just as though the relationship were real. There is nothing to prevent relatives from being *mandwane* partners. To-day the 'husband' is usually much younger than the 'wife' and the game is confined to children under the age of puberty. Not more than a few years ago, however, boys and girls of marriageable age used to take part, the institution being considered as primarily for them. One of the reasons for the change is the absence of many of the older boys at work in town, while the failure of young men to keep the rules against impregnation in the play sexual intercourse that often forms part of the game makes mothers loath to allow elder girls to join in.

General behaviour, attitudes, and values are not taught by any formal training. These are inextricably bound up with life in the society and become unconsciously adopted by any one fully partaking in social life. Even a European, when speaking the language and trying to enter into their social activities, finds himself unconsciously taking for granted values that he never had before and which are certainly not to be found in European life. They seem to follow naturally from the social situation

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867 and to be bound up with language itself. A group of small girls were playing house in the sand with twigs and pebbles and tiny pots moulded in clay. 'What have you got in those pots?' we asked. '*Uyalwa*' (beer), came the reply, but the intonation and meaning they put into the word, the expression on their faces as they said it, implied a whole social situation. It was clear that, young as they were, the word 'beer' meant to them, not just a drink or food like porridge, but something prized and valuable, yet a source of pleasure and joy, something important in life. In short, they had a Lovedu attitude to beer, an attitude that has no parallel in European society. Certainly no European child could have conveyed what they did in that single word.

Where the standards of the society are apt to conflict to some extent with personal desires, as in the inculcation of good manners, censure and praise become important. If a child does not accept a gift with both hands he is told to do so with some remark, if he is big enough and should know better, calculated to rebuke him. Good manners in eating consists in avoiding noisy or hurried swallowing (one can smack one's lips to one's heart's content) and in sitting flat on the buttocks, not standing or squatting. Great importance is attached to the sharing of food: if any one approaches while you eat, he is automatically invited to share it by the words, 'We are eating.' His reply is either a refusal or consists in his sitting down to join you. Even small children are made to share tit-bits with their companions. If you give some sweets to good-mannered children such as you find in parts unaffected by the modern self-seeking spirit, you will still see how an elder girl calls all the children to sit down round the sweets. They eat slowly and decorously, each taking a second sweet when the first is finished with no sign of greed or hurry, in spite of the fact that they rarely see sweets. This does not mean that Lovedu children do not on occasion try to hide their sweets from others; but greater stress is laid on sharing food by them than by us and, what is more important, there are always half a dozen other children on the spot to share whatever is given. A child is taught to respect those older than himself, especially adults in whose presence there must be no swearing or bad language. When sent on errands, he must obey gracefully without grumbling. A child who observes these rules will be praised by adults to other children. They will say, 'The child of So-and-so is very polite, has good manners.'

The qualities that are most admired in adults and that therefore are most insisted upon in children are generosity and unselfishness and ability to live in peace with others. Quarrelsomeness is one of the worst [865] faults. Thus it is that, when children fight or quarrel, there is never any inquiry into who began the trouble; both are beaten, so that next time, even when in the right, the child will be afraid to fight. There is a proverb that 'it is the child that cries who is given to eat' (*muyana hu la ye a ilaho*) and in later life misplaced modesty as regards asking for the things one needs is deprecated. A man who as a guest diffidently nibbles at instead of enjoying the food lavished upon him by his host or who timidly passes by instead of begging for beer, even if it is the beer-party of the chief, suffers a loss for which only his over-sensitiveness is to blame,

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for as they phrase it, 'If you are ashamed of gnawing a bone, you will presently throw it away, meat and all.' Closely associated with that irritating characteristic of the Lovedu, especially Lovedu women, which the European terms shameless, unblushing beggary, is the aversion to theft. A child is told a thousand times, 'Always just ask (*hobɛla*) for anything you may want; never steal.' And whenever there has been a theft it is said, 'People should beg (*hobɛla*), not steal.' It is only when you get great differences in wealth, as when a European comes among Natives, that this custom becomes irritating. In this begging from Europeans, Natives do exceed the canons of politeness even of their own society, but many consider it of little consequence in dealings with the European, who, after all, is notoriously ill-mannered in his dealings with Natives. 867

Correct use of terms of relationship or address is not expected till after puberty and the young child, only gradually learning not to call people older than itself by their everyday names, makes many mistakes. One would think that the formal behaviour required in such complicated ceremonial as that of marriage visits, would require some form of special instruction. This is, however, not the case. A young man learns these things simply by hearing others talk, while a girl, by forming part of bridal parties when others in her village are married, comes to learn what is required of her. These facts bear out what experience shows, viz. that formalities are not so rigid as one is apt to imagine. Proper respect, politeness, and correct behaviour, involving use of the right terms of address to those older than yourself, are not insisted upon till after the puberty initiation in the case of a girl and circumcision in the case of a boy. Before this you are regarded as irresponsible, without proper knowledge of how to behave, lacking judgement and that wisdom in personal relationships associated with adults. You are a *leshovoro*.

It is significant, however, that, especially in the case of girls, a single ceremony is not considered sufficient to effect this great transformation to responsibility and adult status. In addition to her own puberty ceremony (*khɔba*), every girl has to attend and take part in a number of subsequent puberty ceremonies in the area—six in the royal area, four of five in other areas. At the first ceremony after her own she is a *thɔvyana*, who sits in seclusion with the *khɔba*, eats of the same food and, like her, is allowed no relish, is beaten hard and takes no part in the dancing at night. Instead, however, of having to go early each morning to the river with the initiate, she fetches water and helps with the cooking. The other *dithɔvyana* are responsible for all the work: they fetch wood and water, stamp, and cook; they run errands for the elder girls who have finished their course of initiation and wait on them; they carry the drums to the river and may be made to sit in the water with the initiate. 881

In control of the ceremony are the elder girls who have been fully initiated (*dishɔlwɛ*). They walk about with a great sense of their own importance and have to be royally entertained. It is essential that there be plenty of good food at an initiation ceremony. Mealie meal is cooked twice a day, much light beer is made, and monkey nuts and other delicacies are abundantly supplied. At one ceremony, lasting six days, a whole bag of mealie meal was consumed by the girls—that is, more than

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881 twice as much as would normally be consumed by the same number of people; and in addition they had large quantities of nuts, only exceptionally provided in ordinary life. For purposes of economy, the mother of the initiate usually makes porridge for her household of the bran of the stampings of the girls. Sometimes, in times of scarcity, a girl's puberty ceremony will be postponed, and it is noticeable that in the ploughing season, when the people are busy all day in the fields, there are few or no initiation ceremonies. Though in charge of the ceremony, the elder girls are subject to an old woman, 'mother of the *khɔba*', who has been chosen by the initiate herself and who, ever after, will be called 'mother' by her. For her own mother may have nothing to do with the ceremony and, even though it is held in her courtyard, may not enter the hut of seclusion. The girl's mother feels very sympathetic towards her daughter and often grumbles that the girls are 'killing' her daughter when she hears them beating her. But she has no say. If a girl is unpopular, her parents sometimes arrange for the ceremony to be held at a relative's village in another area, lest she be too badly treated.

881 The Lovedu girl does not approach her own mother about such an
841 intimate and personal matter as her first menstruation, but confides in a friend, who will inform the mother by means of the metaphorical phrase, 'So-and-so has scolded the women.' The other girls of the area are thereupon called to come and the ceremonial opens with their carrying the novice on their backs from a spot outside the village, where they have forgathered, into the hut of seclusion, usually the cooking hut of the mother. Some girls keep the fact of their menstruation hidden for months before divulging the secret. Mabula waited for three months. It will not be possible here to do more than indicate the main incidents of a girl's puberty ceremony. It must, however, be borne in mind that there is considerable variation in detail between one ceremony and another and that no mere analysis can give the atmosphere prevailing in such ceremonies. On the arrival in her hut of seclusion the girl is 'strengthened' (*hu thuswa*) by the old women. Ground herbs mixed with ochre and some of the girl's own menstrual blood are smeared on various parts of the body—in a circle round the wrist, on the head, nose, mouth, neck, arms, etc. The medicine is *ya hu rɔrwa bidzi mavala* (to give the zebra its stripes) and is said to prevent the girl from becoming ill (*hu khuma*) when entering the villages of other people. That night towards sunset the women of the area forgather at the village of the initiate, trilling and shouting, '*E a luma*' (it bites), on the way; they come to drum and dance, as they do almost every evening of the six days' seclusion.

881 While in seclusion the initiate and her companion sit to one side of the doorway of the hut without any covering except the loincloth. They talk in whispers only. When a stranger approaches the hut, she wails in a thin voice to warn him off (for she can see through the crevices of the doorway), and when the elder girls enter she must wail loudly lest she be beaten. When she wishes to relieve herself, she walks out completely covered in a blanket. Early each morning the initiate is taken to the river. She walks in a stooping attitude, covered in a blanket and surrounded by girls uttering a high-pitched wail as she goes. In the stream

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VII. ADOLESCENCE

(*a*) REALISTIC PLAY-COOKING IN THE MANDWANE

(*b*) A TROUPE OF YOUTHFUL DANCERS

[facing p. 112]

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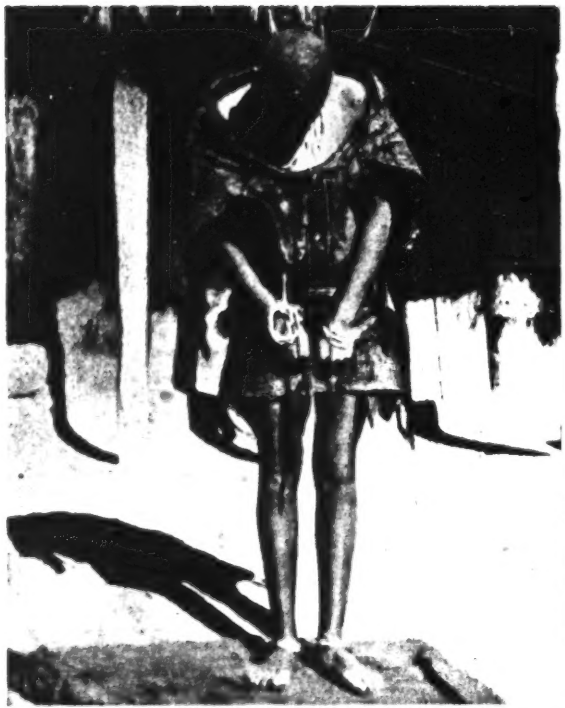

VIII. GIRLS' INITIATION INTO WOMANHOOD

(*a*) COMING FORTH FROM HER PUBERTY SECLUSION (*b*) GIRLS IN THE UYALI

[facing p. 113]

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a hole is hollowed out so as to be deep enough for her to sit in (if possible 881
the water should reach the neck) while a fire is kindled for the other girls, at whose pleasure she remains in the water, uttering her wail. If the girl has a good friend among the old women, she may free the initiate from [431]
going to the river after the first morning by a gift of snuff to the elder girls. This is called 'lifting the weight' from the girl (*hu rula*). They return home about eleven o'clock in the morning, when they have their meal. After this the elder girls return to their homes or do as they please, while the novice and her friend remain in their hut. They sleep if they can, for at night they get little chance to do so. During the initiation the girl undergoes harsh treatment at the hands of the older girls. She 'pays', by being beaten, for going to sleep, for waking up and on the slightest pretext. At night her blankets are taken away and used by the older girls, while she lies exposed with no fire to warm her. Not only is she allowed no relish with her porridge, but she may also be given filth to eat. One girl's menstrual blood was put in her porridge, which she immediately vomited up; sometimes a frog is given them to eat and one of us has seen initiates made to eat sand as relish. If she asks for water, the elder girls may clear the nose into it before it is given. All this harsh treatment is looked upon as good discipline.

Initiation at puberty includes instruction in rules connected with 881
the new stage of life the girl is entering upon. She is warned that she 864
has reached maturity and must be careful, in sex play with boys, to avoid becoming pregnant. She is advised also not to have more than one lover at a time, lest there be difficulty in establishing the paternity of her child should she have one. In the old days she was at this stage given a calabash doll which at her marriage was carried in a basket by the wedding party. If she was not virgin, the calabash was pierced. This custom has, however, fallen into disuse. The girl is taught the rules connected with menstruation: not to enter a sick-room while menstruating, not to enter [841]
a cattle kraal, not to sleep with men during her menses. If she has not enlarged her *labia minora* properly, she is severely scolded or punished by having hot, roasted sesamum put on them. In one case the elder girls inserted a mealie cob in an initiate to show her the dangers of intercourse, hurting her so badly that she was unable to walk properly. Her parents complained to the queen, who imposed a heavy fine on each of the elder girls responsible. There is no teaching connected with marriage. An initiate must be respectful to her elders: she is told that if people older than herself are in a hut she must greet (*lɔsha*) on entering. She is taught in a song to honour and obey her mother. Most of the teaching is in the form of songs or mummeries. The dancing that takes place every night when the women come consists largely of movements in a bent position 881
on the haunches, with arms held above the head for better balance. Some 535
of the dances are associated with the lessons of the initiation: two girls, one with a cloth passed between the legs to represent the loin covering of a man, dance facing each other; the 'man' dances with a lighted firebrand between the legs, the girl wears a cloth which makes her look pregnant. Another dance consists of movements in which legs are held close together, and sometimes crossed, symbolic of the manner in which

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535 male advances can be prevented from becoming dangerous. These are *digɔma*, secret things or mummeries.

The last night of the ceremony is devoted to dancing and the showing of many *digɔma*. It is *khilalawemi*, the night when one sleeps standing—that is, does not sleep at all, though, since people just take a nap any time they feel tired, the name is somewhat exaggerated. All the women of the area who wish to attend gather either in the village, from which men will be debarred, or at a secluded spot somewhere near, bringing with them mealies and nuts to roast and eat while there. There is a great deal of dancing and singing. The greatest *digɔma* are shown at about 3 a.m., after a period of comparative quiet that sets in towards midnight, when most of the people begin to doze around the fires, and these continue until dawn, when disguised figures come dancing in. Each mummery has its own meaning, but this is not clear to the initiate, who does not even see many of them. In the morning, while the girls are at the [302] river, the hut of seclusion is swept and freshly smeared. On her return, after having her head shaved along the sides and back, leaving a circular top, which is a form of hairdress much liked by girls and associated with ritual occasions, the girl is anointed with fat and, except when she is of the royal family, also with ochre. She is given three skins to wear, a [292] frontal covering, a rear covering, and a skin to wear over the shoulders like a cloak. Round her neck is a thick collarette of beads. When dressed, the girl has respectfully to salute the assembled company of women in the courtyard by lying down on one side, palms held together. Now follows a few days during which the novice speaks to no one and walks with bent head, fists clenched and held to the breast. She is taken by the [431] elder girls to greet various relations, who must *nosa* her by means of a small gift before she can rise. A month or more after the ceremony a grand beer-party is given by the girl's parents for the women of the area, [571] who, at a spot near which men are not allowed, have a dance of *digɔma*, specially disguised figures. When the novice has been through the requisite number of ceremonies, she is taken to the queen or the wife of the district head to be beaten with a stick as a sign of her graduation.

881 Boys' initiation (*vudiga*) is much more spectacular than the *khɔba*. Typically it is held by the whole tribe every twelve to fifteen years, but some district heads occasionally do not wait for the authority of the queen. The last *vudiga* upon a national scale was in 1919, but since then there have been local lodges, such as the one held by the district head Maunadala in 1937. The interval of more than twenty years is not considered extraordinary. Sometimes in the past there were delays, especially in the latter half of the reigns of queens, because, so it is said, they wished to postpone their ritual end, which coincided with the fourth initiation after their accession. In 1938–9 the *vyali*, or girls' initiation, was revived after thirty-five years, partly as a preliminary to the next boys' initiation; and if within a year or so there is a *vudiga*, it will be the third of a reign that has already lasted forty-three years. There are other reasons for the present delay. The *vudiga* involves an immense organization, brings all public activities, such as the courts, to a standstill, upsets the economic routine, and concentrates energies upon one supreme

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object. In modern conditions it is not easy to cope with such a situation. 881
On the one hand, many men work in the towns and some boys attend mission schools, and on the other the mobilization of the necessary organization and incentives is difficult in the face of discouragement and opposition. Many people realize that for practical purposes the payment of tax marks the introduction to manhood. The Christian mission cannot countenance interference with its schools. Adjustments are necessary, and in some tribes they are being successfully made; for instance, among the Koni of Matala, we saw an experiment whereby the whole *vudiga* was crowded into the month's holiday of the school in June–July, the purpose being to avoid conflicts with the Church and the educational authorities.

We cannot in this brief and generalized account do more than refer 881
cursorily to a few aspects of the institution. It involves circumcision, but 304
has nothing to do with biological puberty. Side by side with toddlers still drinking at their mother's breast, such as Khizbe in the 1919 initiation, married men of thirty or forty go to be circumcised. They will all one day belong to the same regiment. Moreover, there used to be an attenuated puberty rite, *hu fura khirugulu* (chewing the herb *khirugulu*), which is also chewed by doctors in order to give them power and insight to interpret the bones. The puberty rite took place after the first nocturnal emission; the boy went down to the river to wash; he was made to dig up a root, chew it and rub it between his legs in order to prevent the danger of *makhuma* (illness associated with crises in life); and he advanced from being a *musinaba* (child) to being a *mutanga* (adolescent or young man).

The *vudiga* is quite different: it is a circumcision rite which invests 881
the adolescent with the beginnings of social adulthood. But the investiture is imperfect, for manhood is not attained at a single bound; one grows into it by imperceptible stages. There is no single criterion of adulthood and the maturity that is required cannot be given merely by a ritual act. For that reason also, the *vudiga* teaches, not any single virtue, but impresses upon the boy all the values of the society and the necessity of a new outlook. From the almost outlaw play-gang, he must be conducted to the fringes of responsible society or be placed in a position from which he can gradually make his way into society. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *vudiga* is designed to cope with the turbulence of youth; for even the circumcised are still wild.

The general pattern of the *vudiga* has often been described and is not difficult to understand. After some preliminary practice of songs, which are the life-blood of the institution, the would-be novices undergo a [304]
series of rites culminating in the circumcision at the river and are taken into a lodge hidden somewhere in the bush. This cuts them off completely from the outside world. In their seclusion, emphasized by all manner of taboos and restrictions which mark the difference of their lives from that of ordinary people, they learn strange songs and unintelligible formulae. The spirit of this period is difficult to recapture and the obscure symbolism and secret rites seem unrelated to any cultural realities; yet we must think of them as having their roots deep in the past, while they have become overgrown with the meanings and

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881 purposes of the present culture. Then follows a stage, for about a month, of even stranger events, and it is heralded by a re-orientation of life within the lodge. At their singing performances the novices begin to sit facing the east, not the west, as in the previous three months. This re-orientation gradually affects more and more activities and issues in tentative contacts with the outside world. At last the lodge is burnt down and the initiates go home, where for a further week they remain on the fringes of ordinary life, to be drawn closer and closer by gradual ritual steps into the society and its everyday activities. But if these broad stages are intelligible enough, it is very different when we examine the details. They obviously have an immense background, both in a past that is lost in oblivion and in a present that owes many of its values to that past, but has at the same time added to and modified these values. Fortunately, however, as it is beyond the scope of this book to deal with those details, we may content ourselves with a few general observations.

The first stage among the Lovedu is *hu huwa*, when the heads of districts are told to arrange that the novices be taken into the veld to learn songs. The teaching is quite informal; it is a preparatory class, so that the proceedings in the lodge two weeks later may go with a swing. The teaching is done, not by the real shepherds (*medabi*), but by their juniors, those who were very young in the previous lodge. They were the large-bellied toddlers (*dimbana*, literally 'little stomachs') who ran away from their mothers to enjoy the excitement of the lodge. It could hardly be expected that they would have absorbed much and so they learn now by teaching the novices. At this preliminary and informal training, the boys may attend if they like; there are no taboos and no restrictions; the teachers may not chastise their pupils. There is as yet no seclusion. Nor are the novices given any special work to do for the chief. The fence of the *khɔrɔ* at the capital has to be rebuilt, but the novices do no more than they, as youngsters living at the capital, would do on other occasions when the *khɔrɔ* has to be repaired. When they come home they, as well as other young boys, bring light branches used to fill in the interstices between the poles. From areas beyond the capital it is only the older men who, as is customary whenever the *khɔrɔ* is built, give their assistance. At last the new moon appears, and Copernicus heralds the approach of winter. The shepherds have their hair shaved, district heads come to 'take the firebrand', the symbol that authorizes them to hold the initiation, and the *vudiga* officially opens at the capital. It is a ritual occasion: the older men beat the younger, sometimes black porridge without relish is eaten in the cattle kraal, there is an alarm, and the boys are conducted to the river to be circumcised.

881 304 For the circumcision the boys go to the valley which is appropriately called 'the place where things are forgotten'. They are being separated from ordinary life; they 'get lost'. The '*gɔma* first bites its owners', for in this as in other acts regard is had to certain precedences. It is the hierarchy of rank, as at a formal dinner among us, that is emphasized; but the precedence extends only, so to speak, to the three people sitting at the head table; the others take their place anywhere. As the operator proceeds, the old men chant, 'Sever, sever with the knife, [the foreskins]

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let the fishes take' (*tshikhi-tshikhi ga mufaga, khɔɔc jia*). It is the shepherds 881
who are chastised as they drive the novices, called cane-rats (*magwɛkɛle*) 304
at this stage, to the circumcision; they run the gauntlet through the ranks of singing men. It is enough that the novices should suffer the painful operation. Some bleed profusely, but it is their own fault (so it is thought); the medicine they are given can only alleviate the penalty for pre-circumcision promiscuity. Much else is enacted, but we must pass on to the next stage, the three months of intensive training in the lodge. It is the period, *par excellence*, of seclusion. The novices learn songs and formulae; they make a dancing costume and practise dances; their eating is a hurried ritual, for, as they phrase it, 'We are going to the medicines, the medicines of the veld to which there is no end.' By this they mean they have to go out to hunt, but clearly it is more than hunting that is intended; the outside world is full of wonderful things, shrubs and trees and animals which require their urgent attention; and there is so much to be done and to be learnt, that they should not spend all their time filling their bellies.

If that is the meaning of the ritual at the sacred tables, great *digɔma* 881
which shepherds, polluted by contact with women, approach at the peril of causing the novices to vomit, the ritual of the boys when they sit by the side of the fire 'stabbing the elephant' is inscrutably obscure. In other tribes the fire is undying and is called 'the elephant'. The Lovedu call the fire *khisibe* (meaning 'unknown', but probably from Kharanga *ximbe*, a coal of fire) not *ɖou* (elephant); they do not conceive it to be undying and they know nothing of the conception of 'stabbing the elephant'. Yet some of these conceptions are clearly present in the ritual: the ritual singing is *hu fɛfa ɖou*, merely one of the special phrases of the lodge; the song is *ɖo' vetsi*, an obvious contraction of *ɖou etsela* (elephant lie down); but not even the old men could suggest the derivation of the one from the other; the boys swing their arms in imitation of a stabbing action, but it is not thought of as such and, as they sing, the old men chant, 'Stab the elephant with arrows; next moon we return to those who have stayed at home.' Even this last is interpreted to mean that the boys by their action push on the moon to accelerate their return home. At a later stage, after the 'change', the *ɖo' vetsi* song becomes '*Mamaɖo u ile ɖou sala shagoni*' (mother-of-eyes said, 'elephant remain in the country'—because the boys are going home). We give this brief reconstruction to show how, despite obvious suggestions in this central ritual of the lodge, the Lovedu have reinterpreted the whole situation. This is one of the details to which we have referred, but with which we cannot here deal. The whole *vudiga* ritual is full of them and as often as not the original words of songs or formulae have become distorted out of recognition. Indeed, the diffusion of a culture element is far from being a simple matter.

The three months' seclusion is marked by taboos and restrictions and a régime which, for the Lovedu, is exceptionally strict. But, by comparison with other tribes, the taboos are not stringent and a great deal of latitude is allowed. The large-bellied toddlers are tenderly cared for by the old men. By day they play about in the lodge enclosure and by night

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881 they sleep by the 'mother' of the lodge (*maḡala*) near the fire. Those a little older set their traps and catch mice, which they roast by the *khisibe* fire; but relish and wild fruit is usually forbidden to them and they may not, though they often do, drink water. Sick boys, elsewhere subjected to hardships and taunts, are nursed and given soft food, not the hard *khivonclo* of the novices. The novices who go out to hunt certainly resent the malingering of the lazy ones (*magɔtha*), who are strong enough, but stay at home on this or that pretext. But the true spirit of the *vudiga* is seen, not so much in the beatings that the shepherds (*medabi*) administer, for they are beaten as much as if not more than, the novices, but in the actions and attitude of the older men. There are *medidi*, one regiment senior to the *medabi*, who are never beaten, but may be fined; and older than they are the old men (*vakhalabye*). They are kindly greybeards, some of them officials of the lodge and some who do no work (*vuralizitd*). Some of them constantly intercede for the young and weak boys who are threatened with punishment or trials beyond their strength or endurance, or 'stand for' those deserving novices who had been obedient or generous or respectful in their childhood. Above all, these old men, mellow with age and mature in wisdom, conditioned to a culture founded upon compromise and easy relations, not only restrain excesses, but add to the beauty of the performances by chanting their refrain of sayings and proverbs, encouragements and admonitions. It is they, not the shepherds with their whips, that give the tone to the proceedings.

The stage after this period of seclusion is called the 'change' (*hu fedulclwa*). The boys sit by the fire facing the rising, not the setting, sun, as was the case in the previous three months. Of course, we must not expect precision: the 1919 fire ran north-south, not east-west; the ideal always gives way to the practical, for the east-west disposition was rendered difficult, though not impossible, by the slope of the ground. In other respects also it was the spirit not the letter of the law that determined various arrangements. After the 'change' life is somewhat different in the lodge. The boys used to do homage (*lɔsha*) to a *morula* tree near the fire as if it were their ancestor (grandparent). But the tree [778] mysteriously withers and, after the change, is replaced by a pole (*murakadu*). No teaching is done from either tree or pole as is the case in other tribes, but it is associated with a whole series of ritual acts. After the 'change' no longer shepherds but women bring the food; boys perform within sight of women; some of the food taboos are raised, but [262] relish, though always brought, is forbidden and still thrown into the refuse heap. Apart from these and many other changes, we must also mention the visit by the novices to the village in order to 'beg for salt'. Then they sing the praises of salt, the seasoning virtues of which they now fully appreciate, having gone without it for so long. But on their return the pole has gone; their grandparent has died.

And now we press on to a day of great doings. The novices go out to [535] 'scratch [as fowls do] for food', only this means a spectacular dance before the women. That night, the last night in the lodge, it is *khilalawemi*, the night of standing, though many quietly doze off or escape to rest in the bush near by; there is none of the concentration we expect on

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occasions of importance. The boys are shown several sacred objects (*digoma*), each with its own meaning; and the proceedings end with the naming of the lodge and the new regiment that has been created. Next morning the boys remove the clay that 'disguised' them during their seclusion. They are given a loin cloth, which they wear back to front, their hair, except for a circular crown, is shaved and they are smeared with fat (not ochre among the royal Lovedu). They are 'people from the refuse heap' (*swigwamathukhu*), a name they discard only when, a week later, their heads are completely shaved. As they leave, the lodge, with all in it, is burnt down.

The *vudiga* is not at an end yet; it has merely entered a new stage in which the discipline is further relaxed. The novices leave the lodge with double-pointed sticks, covering with their hands the two ends, which are fashioned like the *glans penis*. In that manner they go about whenever they are in public; the action is said to impress upon them the necessity of concealing the object and meaning of circumcision. When they arrive at the village their mothers appear dancing with joy and choose out their sons, not always correctly, because their heads are bent down and their bodies have grown a good deal in the lodge. A goat is killed for them; it is the goat 'of vomiting the rats', for as men they must cast out the things of their childhood. Then for the next week they are in a state of semi-seclusion, but there are still many observances. They appear in public only in the bent, humble attitude, they carry their sticks, and they wear their loin cloths the wrong way round. Nevertheless, the 'gathering up' (*hu aluha*) into the society proceeds apace. They have a special enclosure made for them in the veld, the *khikhudo* (hiding place or secluded spot), in which they spend some time of the day. But they are scattered, as each group of villages has its own secluded spot; and their separateness and solidarity is further broken up by sleeping at home and herding for their own people. They do not speak, especially not to women, but at night at home they have contests of riddles (*nytbo*) with the old women who come to visit them, exactly as after a marriage ceremony. This stage ends with the 'seizing of the lion' (*hu tswara dau*). One night the shepherds go out with bullroarers, the whirling of which produces the roar of the lion. The boys give chase and he who catches the 'lion' is praised by the old men.

Finally come the last ritual acts. The boys are taken down to the river to lift the 'stomach of the cow', a log tied to a stone in a pool, and then to 'kindle a fire on the river' (done on a log in the water), for a man must be both strong and clever; he must be able even to make fire in the water. After these tests there is the final ordeal at the cave to which the boys are taken one by one, are beaten and given their last admonitions. At the cave the double-pointed stick is discarded, the fat removed from their heads and, if two brothers have attended the same lodge, the elder beats the younger on the way home to remove the presumption of belonging to the same regiment. At home the initiate's mother must *nosa* him by a gift to 'open his mouth', and next day each of the boys, accompanied by a shepherd, goes to visit some relative, who will feast him with meat and beer.

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881 That in the briefest possible outline is the procedure followed in the *vudiga*. To recapture the whole atmosphere, to present the details of a four months' ceremonial full of incident and meaning, is not possible. All we can do is to single out one or two special features of the educational aspect. Let us first dispel the idea that the régime is a rigid one. How can it be when there are toddlers of six or seven years of age nestling up to the 'mother' of the lodge where he sleeps by the fire? The boys are beaten, it is true, and they have to undergo various kinds of punishment, but the old men are there to 'stand for them'; and when the novices are tired, one of these kindly old men or a visitor will *rula* them, take off the weight from their heads, so that they can go to bed early. The little ones do not go out to hunt, they play about in the lodge. If one of them cries, the 'mother' of the lodge will inquire the cause from the *washe* (the head of the initiates), and if the *washe* has been negligent, it is he who will be punished. The cold is never severe nor are the boys attacked by worms or ants (for the floor is covered with ash); there is no rule that they must sleep on their backs with head or feet toward the fire, so that they will suffer more from the cold. Boys do not talk as if the *vudiga* is a terrible ordeal; it is the shepherds as much as the initiates who are punished. The food is not nauseating, but what is mentioned as particularly trying is
[62a] the stench issuing from the healing wounds. The stomach contents of a buck killed in the hunt is sprinkled over their porridge, but they like it and it is used in ordinary life as food. They may not drink water, but the lodge is quite near the river and it is not difficult to steal a drink now and then. Meat is never wholly taboo. They can always trap mice and rats and sometimes they are given meat, though it must not be openly displayed. Sometimes, when they are out hunting, the command '*Zapi*' is given; it is a signal for the boys to make an onslaught upon a sweet sorghum field or on wild fruits. It is said that a clever boy is very seldom beaten. The silence that is enjoined upon them, for theoretically they may communicate only by whistling, is not absolute; they may whisper to one another and only loud speaking is punished. They are not driven into cold pools every day to remove the scab of their wounds. On the contrary, the old men examine the wounds every day; and the doctor who has operated badly may be disgraced, as one was during the 1919 school; he was ignominiously chased away from the lodge. In short, despite the trials and restrictions, the régime is on the whole a mild one.

881 Obscene language does not loom large; it plays its part, not as obscenity,
831 but as ritual, but it is not an imposing part. After the 'change', when women start bringing the food, it is the shepherds who may swear at them. 'Go and eat,' they say; 'your pubes are torn'; or 'The red inside of your private parts, oho'; but they add, 'Do not feel hurt, women. We are not swearing at you. We are praising you.' But wilful swearing is an offence, as we saw in the *vyali* (girls' initiation), when even one of the important officials of the school, the attendant of the Bird, swore at a girl who had made a mistake and was promptly fined a goat. When the boys sit eating by the tables, it is at the command 'Let them defecate' (*A vu-le nyo*) that they stop, but in the circumstances it means no more than 'Dismiss'. Indeed, the word *musadi* (women) and any word associated

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with women is not to be used within the lodge at all. There is a rounded 832
ball of porridge set upon a stick which is stuck into the food brought to 834
the boys and it is called *khigagwowo* (clitoris); when the boys sit down by the tables or fire they are ordered to 'close the anus' and have to press one heel into the anus as they sit; and undoubtedly many of the formulae appear to have obscene references. But it would be a very great surprise to a Lovedu boy to learn that the *vudiga* teaches anything about sex or that there is anything obscene in it. Indeed, they know but disapprove of the delight in obscenity at the Shangana-Tonga lodges.

There is little direct teaching. One of the trials, that of hopping along 851
with a stick, sharpened at both ends and pressed between the knees, is 867
said to remind the boys that they must not defecate on the road, but should go into the bush. But note that little Mulati was too young to undergo it, Khirbe escaped it because his uncle 'stood for him', and Mudiva was sleeping in the hedge on the night it was undergone. The boys are all told they should avoid women since for a long time the wound will be liable to reopen and become bad. They are also warned not to divulge the secrets of the lodge. But that is practically the sum total of the direct admonitions. The laws and songs and formulae do not contain any precepts that the initiates understand or can bring into relation with virtues. And the same may be said of the punishments and ordeals. These things have nothing to do with moral standards or the inculcation of knowledge of facts. But they contribute to the general atmosphere, and their effect, in the context of the whole, is tremendous. The initiation is something different from ordinary life. Its genius lies, not in direct teaching, but in the manner in which the values of the society are emphasized. The final effect is to transform the boys into men; and certainly the situation is manipulated with consummate skill to attain this end. To us everything may appear meaningless. But we hardly realize how small is the life-adjustment value of mere verbal knowledge of facts and how important is the inculcation of a new set of standards. We know of these things from such religious experiences as conversion. The *vudiga* performs the same function; it is a turning away from the things of childhood and a turning towards the things of adulthood. Our pedagogical techniques might be tenfold more effective if they relied more upon the methods of the soap-box orator, of commercial advertising, and even of the yellow Press. Symbols and slogans, skilful manipulation of psychological situations, the play upon sentiments rooted in the cultural background—these are the methods of the *vudiga* as they are also the methods of our most skilful propaganda and our most effective advertisements. Who can deny that they contribute more to the moulding of our values and of our behaviour than do the science and history and mathematics in our schools? Perhaps it is fortunate that our pedagogical techniques are impotent, for the somewhat unrealistic world of our schools would otherwise wholly unfit us for life. But the technique of the lodge, though it teaches no verbal knowledge of facts, is effective and there is nothing in the *vudiga* which is out of harmony with the realities of life.

Consider for a moment the situation as the boys 'stab the elephant'.

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881 Consider for a moment the situation as the boys stab the shepherds
533 As they do so, the old men, mature in their wisdom, kindly guardians of
867 the initiates, slowly and solemnly 'sing with signs' (*va rima zwega*). These *zwega* are often also an accompaniment of the songs of the boys, in themselves most exquisite poetry. Many of the 'signs' are unintelligible, e.g. 'You may bring me a skin cradle. I am carrying an infant, my little children'; or 'The guinea fowls are crying; they are scratching for food, my children.' The old men always greet the novices, *vana va ga* (my little ones), though to one another and to the shepherds they are *valsi* (witches). The old men also chant proverbs and sayings, warnings and advice, all manner of admonitions and encouragement, some stereotyped, some extempore. To enumerate them would be to enumerate the virtues that are esteemed and the vices that are condemned in the society. 'I told you, O novice, but you plugged your ears with plugs of wood' is a general admonition, reminding the boys that, when they were young, they often were disobedient and now their errors are being expiated. Young boys are often told that, when they go to the *vudiga*, their impudence and disobedience will make their trials harder. 'Beware', a man might say to a youngster who is unwilling to help him or an elder. 'The *vudiga* is not far off; you will find no one to lift the weight from your head.' The virtues that are inculcated in this way are merely those the boys have heard of a thousand times in their ordinary lives. Again, one must not imagine that the boys take more note of the words of the old men in the lodge than we do when we sing a hymn in church, but they know that those *zwega* and admonitions express the fundamental values and ideals in the society: generosity, respectfulness and obedience to the elders, helpfulness, and so on. 'Give your seat up to an old man, carry his bundle for him on the road, go with him further than he asks you, do not mock at the blind or cripple'—these are some of the things one old man may say, whereas another will condemn theft and adultery and extol mutuality and modesty, almost impersonally, it is true, but always beautifully, solemnly, and effectively. These things sink into the minds of the novices, not as so many individual precepts, but as part of the ritual of the lodge, all indivisibly united into one whole concretion of values and sentiments. A man will say that the *vudiga* is a wonderful thing, but he will be at a loss to tell you anything concrete that it teaches. For you cannot dissect out a precept here and an example there—it is all one, like life itself.

881 We may now, before proceeding to adult education, touch upon a few
831 aspects of the *vudiga* and the *khoba*. Besides breaking the girl's attachment to the things of her childhood, the *khoba* stresses the importance and dangers of sexual maturity. But it can hardly be said that the *vudiga* is much concerned with the sudden emergence of a capacity for true sexual experience. Both institutions help us to understand the meaning and methods of attaining social adulthood; but they belong to different cultural backgrounds and are derived from different cultural sources. They are not counterparts of one another. The *khoba* is indigenous, the *vudiga* is foreign. We cannot here study the manner in which these two institutions, as well as the *vyali* and *vuhwera* (two further initiations for boys and girls), have merged with the different cultures in neighbouring tribes though the varying acceptance or rejection or

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remoulding of culture elements provides important clues to understanding the Lovedu. The *vudiga*, despite its admirable integration into Lovedu culture, still overstresses national regimentation and military virtues; it makes too much of the repudiation of association with women (a tendency rectified in the *vyali*); and the conception in it of an ordeal or revenge inflicted by adults, who have suffered circumcision, upon novices whose turn to suffer has come is too pronounced for a culture that abhors vengeance. It is curious, also, that in a society in which mates are born for one another the problem of harmonizing romantic love with the limited range of socially approved choices is not dealt with in the *khɔba* or the *vudiga*. Pre-marital sexual experiment is excluded at least as a means of avoiding individual incompatibilities; but such incompatibilities are not phrased as a difficulty in marriage, the sexual aspect of which is one of the least important in Lovedu society, and the institution of *vuḍavu* (of having lovers), with whom married much more than unmarried men or women form liaisons, gives an outlet to romanticism and supports the long suckling period. The chastity that is stressed in the *khɔba* is the pre-marital chastity that leads to no complications in the social structure, such as would be caused by the birth of a child to an unmarried girl; it does not preclude those satisfactions the desire for which is inevitably aroused by the great value that is placed upon fertility.

The rites of the *vudiga* and *khɔba* do not, as we have seen, change boys and girls from youth to full-fledged manhood. The transition is a gradual one. The *khɔba* becomes a bride; the bride after the birth of her first child is a *mudwana*; and she in turn, when her children marry, is a venerable old woman (*mukhegulu*). The bride is of small consequence even in her own home; for long she serves an apprenticeship under the control of her mother-in-law, who also takes her child out of her hands, baths it and feeds it. Only as an old woman does she reach the peak of her life. With a man the position is no different. After the *vudiga* he has a kind of legal status. After marriage he advances a further stage, but in his marital relations and as a father he is a child dependent upon advice from his elders. In public activities, such as in the courts, he still sits and listens, but the old men may entrust a case to him and his age-mates to teach them a sense of responsibility. His helplessness is strikingly in evidence when a child is born to him: he does not see it at first, knows little of its progress, is ordered by the old women to seek this or that root, for what purpose he cannot tell, and, when the child is taken out of the hut, he is merely called, given medicine and told what to do with it. Finally, he must seek the advice of the old women as to when he may resume sexual intercourse with his wife. In other spheres of life also, the education of the man or the woman gradually advances. Craftsmanship, for instance, is the province of the old. Young men and women may learn from their fathers or mothers, but more usually the leisure and inclination come in their old age. A bride, fully occupied with housework and cultivation under the eye of her mother-in-law, has no time for pottery and mat-making; a young man's life is too unsettled to allow him quietly to sit down to make a basket or a stamping-block. The Lovedu

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561 are not at all anxious that their children should be taught craftsmanship in the mission schools.

887 In contrast to our customs, education never ends. As the physiological capacities vary, so new activities are undertaken. The culture always provides a place for the aptitudes of every stage of life, and neither men nor women become redundant in their old age, unless, indeed, they are utterly decrepit. With their physical decline, the culture provides new avenues and interests, to which they are continuously adjusting themselves. They suffer no sense of frustration, because their adjustments are dynamic. With us old age may be tragic: among women, the menopause may precipitate a crisis; among men, retiring from work often causes loss of interest in life and mental decay. But old Lovedu men and women always have something more to learn and to do. Women are not perturbed about external signs of age and complacently accept the end of their childbearing years, for these years bring increased influence, a fuller life, and greater rewards. If physical disability excludes old men from active political life, they receive ample compensation in reduced responsibilities and added prestige. There is no sense of impotence that upsets their balance. Instead, the changing sphere of their roles and their interests both keeps them stable and makes them precious to the society. The distress of old age among us is seldom seen, for rewards always stimulate the new adjustments that have to be made. Utter decrepitude is, however, a tragedy, fortunately ended by the neglect that we may regard as pitiless, but which realistically eliminates those who cannot attain even the mediocre level of achievement that the society calls for. He who cannot attain this level cannot make simple adjustments. But he who can still use his faculties in his old age may become a doctor of note, or a recognized authority on tribal legends or history. Finally, the psychological effect of beliefs attaching to the very old is to provide them with new incentives and renewed opportunities. The widespread suspicion that they have personal contacts with the world of darkness enhances their power, while their elevation, in anticipation, to godhead, for they are already so near death that they may be referred to as gods (*vadimo*), invests their dignity and their wishes with a supernatural halo.

871 Beside this all-pervasive system of tribal education, the modern school,
797 with its three R's, is as yet of small importance. It reaches, and only in
177 an attenuated form, no more than 3 to 5 per cent. of the children. Its methods are foreign, divorced from life; its teachers are immature, handicapped by inadequate equipment and by being uprooted from the soil of tribal culture. Yet the modern school is the force of the future. Education is passionately desired by the young, and the old would welcome it if they did not feel that it was subversive. There is no compulsion upon a scholar to become a Christian; but the belief persists that education and Christianity are inseparable. It is a belief that raises an awkward dilemma: must the school, which at the same time is the gateway to Christianity, give up its task of breaking down, or can it compromise with superstition? Can it work from within, integrated into the culture, without defeating its purpose? The answer cannot be given here. The task of the school and the Church is no less prodigious and delicate than

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the difficulties of the young boy or girl are great and the conflicts within 881
him irreconcilable. He is ragged by other scholars unless he also attends 797
church; he is discouraged from playing with his friends, the pagans 177
who do not attend school; he is deprived of the joys of dancing and drumming. The *khɔba* and play-housekeeping are taboo to him. Tensions and maladjustments arise: Christian girls disgrace themselves and outrage Christian sentiment by having more illegitimate children than pagans; people laugh when they see Christian men attending beer-drinks and scornfully remark upon the bad manners of pretentious school-children.

The school, nevertheless, has made a notable contribution. Its 871
teachings have some immediate life-adjustment value. Reading and 177
writing, a training for a profession, a knowledge of English or Afrikaans are valuable aids in the economic struggle. But more important in the modern world is the long-run adjustment value of the outlook engendered in the schools. In the culture-contact situation, with the scales weighted in favour of a capacity to accommodate oneself to European thought and methods, the training of the school prepares the way to some measure of co-operation with agricultural demonstrators, European health officers, and those who are concerned with the reclamation of the reserves. The idea of progress takes root and, though it is a perverted idea, it provides new incentives and counteracts the sense of frustration before the march of an overwhelming force, the force of Western culture.

Unfortunately, the gains are counterbalanced by the losses. It may be that the losses are temporary, because, on the one hand, they are losses from the point of view of the old culture and, on the other, in a period of transition there must inevitably be tensions and conflicts. Men are guided by vast systems of values and sentiments, built up laboriously by centuries of tradition; these cannot be replaced by a new set of standards inculcated by a single institution, such as the modern school, especially when that institution uses ineffective techniques and is external to the main trends of the culture. Some of the losses are not inevitable: it is not the school as such which disables educated young men from accepting manual labour and housework. It might even be possible to avoid the loss of that valuable body of veldlore which the herdboys learn during the years of herding. Boys and girls need the three R's; they need to understand and trust the ways of the white man; but they also need the knowledge and the standards that make life worth while in the society of which they are part. It is the task of the school to take account, not of one, but of all these needs.

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CHAPTER VIII

FERTILITY AND THE DRUM CULT

The setting of the sacred drums in a mystical cult—initiation into the secrets of the whistling ancestors—calendric observances connected with fecundity, masks, and mummeries.

794 BESIDES the girls' puberty ceremony and the circumcision of boys, there are other initiation ceremonies among the Lovedu. One is the *vyali* (often looked upon as the women's counterpart of circumcision because of its regimentation), contemporaneous with which is the boys' *vuhwera*, consisting largely of masked dancing; another is the *gomana* for men. These are closely interwoven with a fertility and rain cult which, because of its association with sacred drums, one may call the drum cult. Their educational object, never very strongly marked in Bantu initiation schools, pales into insignificance before the ceremonial. Indeed the *gomana* as a 'school' is only an aspect of *gomana* ceremonial as a whole, the primary function of which is to secu· rain. The *vyali-vuhwera-gomana* complex is characterized by esoteric masks, mummeries, and mysteries and by a category of values which we may term the 'mystical philosophy' of the Lovedu. We shall give merely a brief picture of the complex, because, at the time of writing, the first *vyali-vuhwera* held for thirty-five years is still in progress and our ideas as to its true meaning are far from being settled.

794 796 The sacred drum cult has many ramifications. The *zwidajani*, supposed to be ancestral spirits coming to earth to take part in *gomana* singing and drumming of the sacred drums, have become incorporated into other aspects of the culture. They appear in the bush near the village whenever a harvest offering has been made in the families of royal [533] relatives; they come at the installation of a new district head and at the death of close relatives of the queen. On these occasions they join in the singing and dancing of *lenugu* songs, songs associated with the *vyali* of men and which, in addition to the above-mentioned occasions, are employed also when women dance for rain. The type of instrument by [776] means of which the *zwidajani* whistle or bleat out their songs and messages is used also by the Bird, the ruling spirit of the *vyali*.

534 778 Drums are much used in Lovedu life; they are played in the *gɔsha* dance to the accompaniment of reed pipes, they are important in all initiations except circumcision, they are beaten for days at the dancing of possessed people, and it is significant that the public recognition by the queen of a new district head at his installation consists in the handing over of a drumstick (*khiɔba kha gɔma*). Drums are of two types: the long cylindrical drum played with the hands as it lies on its side and the *gɔma*, a rounded drum with handles, played by means of a drumstick as it stands in an upright position. The sacred drums (*digomana*) of the tribe are of the *gɔma* type, but, unlike ordinary *gɔma* drums, are played by hand, not with a drumstick. They are four in number, each with its special

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name, and are kept at present in a village beside the bush in which the last three rulers lie buried. Their keeper is a descendant of Malegudu, eldest son of Mugɔdɔ, who fought with Mujaji for the throne. These drums are not to be seen by the public, nor are people, except inmates of the royal district, supposed to pass anywhere near there. In appearance and decoration they are no different from ordinary drums, but they are made in a special way and it is said that the maker 'will see them with his eyes but never hear them with his ears' (i.e. he will be put to death when his work is done). The largest is *phaṭaṭɛ*, which stands about 4 ft. high; next in size is *ṭaŋga*; then comes *pekahare*; while the smallest and most important of all is *raŋwedi*, to which is attributed powers even of locomotion, because in 1892, when Albasini set fire to the royal village, it was the only one of the *gomana* drums that was not burnt. While all four *gomana* drums are said to contain a human skull instead of the stone that one usually finds inside it, *raŋwedi*, the smallest, has the facial skin of a human being placed (in strips, it is said) under the resonator of ox hide and has, smeared on the outside, the body dirt of the person (said to be always a chief councillor or other important person of royal blood) killed for its manufacture. This drum is thought to be closely associated with the welfare of the tribe. Should the chief have occasion to escape from enemies, she should take with her this drum, and it is said that, when the heir to the throne receives instruction in the use of rain medicines just prior to the death of the ruling chief, she must be sitting upon it. In some of the neighbouring tribes the sacred drums are pierced on the death of the chief.

The care of these sacred drums, involving periodic smearing with fat and ochre to keep out weevils and moths, renewal of the skin resonators, building and repair of the hut in which they are kept, is the work of a special section of people, those of Ravothata, whose totem is *ḍou* of Vulebye. Vulebye is in Phalavorwa, where this drum cult is much stronger than among the Lovedu. These Ravothata are also responsible for closing the *vyali* initiation at the capital when they come at its end with their weird-costumed dancing performers, the *magɔgɔbya*. Thus once again the *gomana* and the *vyali-vuhwera* are linked into a common complex. The sacred drums, played only on special ceremonial occasions and by men, not women, who are usually responsible for drumming, are looked upon as gods (*vadimo*). The praise of *phaṭaṭɛ*, the largest, is 'Leg of *phaṭaṭɛ* of Muhale [the old chief]; if it is not a god we can throw it away rattling to the pool' (*Goto la phaṭaṭɛ a Muhale hɛ vga ve a se mudimo re ga laṭa re khogolosa ra iua madiveni*). The Thavina and Nareni, tribes to the south of the Lovedu, offer to the sacred drums the first-fruits, and everywhere their beating is associated with rain and the agricultural year. Not only are the drums gods, but their sound is thought to be very pleasing to the *muiḍajani*, those ancestral spirits who, when the drums are sounded, come and sing and dance. The knowledge that their part is played by initiated men does not appear to detract from their importance in the eyes of those who are in the secret. The instrument used consisted in the old days of the tibia of a human being with a feather inserted (and there is reason to believe that some of these are still extant) but to-day

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534 they use mostly two pieces of wood slightly concave on the inside in which
778 a piece of sinew or reed is temporarily inserted. The language being
794 tone-bound, messages and songs can be understood when whistled.
769 Not all ancestral spirits, but only those of the Lovedu proper and of some of the important groups, such as the Khaha and Nareni, are thought to be able to visit the earth as *zwiḍajani*.

794 The most important feature of the drum cult was the beating of the
769 sacred drums in an enclosure near the village, usually in the afternoon
782 and evening on six successive days twice every year: in the spring just before the sowing and in winter after the harvest thanksgiving. The spring drumming was preceded by propitiation of the royal ancestors by means of a libation on their graves in Ḍaja Forest, where the earlier chiefs lie buried. There was a special procession which no one was to see on pain of death, the Mulodozi River had to be crossed at a special spot called *Khiṭaba-vakɔlɔlɔ* (washing place of great people) and it is maintained by some that a black ox was also slaughtered. The district head at Ḍaja, who was responsible for clearing a way to the graves, had to plant near the royal graves a little of every seed cultivated. The people would then see, it is said, which grew best and would plant much of that. The *gomana*, the beating of the sacred drums, 'was the chief thing that had the power of asking rain from the ancestors'. The sounding of the drums at harvest-time was a thanksgiving. The first harvest *gomana* after the circumcision took the form of an initiation, in which the neophytes were introduced into the drum ritual and the secret of *zwiḍajani*, and received cuts on their faces as a sign that they had passed through it.

794 Though the sacred drums are still kept and the Ravothaṭa people are
782 still called to repair the hut in which they are placed, the regular beating of *gomana* drums has fallen into disuse. The last *gomana* initiation held officially by the queen in the tribe was in 1892, just before the accession of the present queen. It is difficult to account for this lapse when among neighbouring tribes the cult is still fully carried out. Some say the reason lies in the ritual murders that are associated with the drums, but since it is an accepted principle that a sheep may satisfactorily take the place of a human being and, moreover, this difficulty must somehow have been overcome in other tribes, this reason does not appear good enough. Possibly the cult was introduced from the south and had not become sufficiently assimilated or taken deep enough root to survive the lethargy induced by European contact. Perhaps the rain-making powers of the queen herself made it largely unnecessary. It is not impossible that it will suddenly spring back to life, as did the *vyali* in 1938–9 after a lapse of over thirty years.

794 Though the queen herself now holds no *gomana*, the institution is not dead. Elements such as *zwiḍajani* have taken permanent root and the queen has allowed a stranger, Rasekwalo, a rain doctor of the *kwena* totem who came to live on European-owned land under her jurisdiction, to hold a *gomana* with, of course, his own drums, and in 1929, when he came to ask that boys from the royal village should be allowed to attend the initiation, she gave her consent. He holds one *gomana* a year, receiving

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IX. MASKED DANCERS OF RAUOTHATA

[facing p. 128]

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X. MASQUERADE OF THE UUAHWERA

(a) STRUTTING OF THE UUAHWERA DANCE

(b) DANCE OF THE DUIKER

[facing p. 129]

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special permission from the queen on each occasion, and initiates circumcised and uncircumcised alike. 794

Gomana initiation to-day as held by Rasekwalo does not differ from the ceremonial in the queen's own *gomana* of old, though it is regarded as a 'business', a source of revenue to Rasekwalo, without the great power of the old Maulwi ceremony. Madume relates his experiences in 1929. He and about twenty others from the royal village, some of them over forty years of age because there had been no initiation for so long, set out for the scene of the initiation some twelve miles away in the charge of some men (*medabi* or shepherds) who had been through the *gomana* initiation. They walked at a very fast pace, almost running, because they 'were anxious to be initiated'. As members of the royal village, they did not, like the others, pay 5*s*. entrance fee, but on arrival in the evening were offered two huts to sleep in and given a meal. At sunrise next morning, when the *gomana* drums began to sound in the enclosure kept permanently for *gomana* purposes, the initiates gathered in the courtyard to be ceremonially beaten. This beating with sticks that have been medicated is said to *thusa* (help) the neophytes just as the *hu thusa* ceremony of a baby on the day it is first taken out of the hut strengthens it to withstand evil influences of the outside world. This beating is thus conceived to give health to the neophyte. The head of the school (Rasekwalo) himself stood at the gate holding two canes, a bent one in the left hand, a straight one in the right. As each boy passed with bent head and bare back, Rasekwalo, while pretending to beat with the left hand, really beat on the back with his right. The boys then put on the shirts they had had to doff for the beating and were conducted, filled with fearful anticipation, to the lodge by shepherds, who surrounded them and told them to look straight ahead.

On their arrival in the enclosure, they were made to kneel in two rows facing each other with bent heads for the operation. First some one blowing a spirit whistle brushed a handful of *muhulani* grass (*Rhynchelytrum repens*) over their heads, then two operators, one for each row, came with awl and knife. Four semicircular cuts are made on either cheek from mouth to cheekbone, the awl being used for lifting up the flesh. The process is very painful, but no importance is attached to manliness and the drumming and whistling drown all cries. Immediately after the operation, a piece of cloth (of any colour), bought by each boy for 6*d*. at the store, is put over the head, with loose ends hanging over the face and tucked in at the back under the shirt. This cloth must be worn when the initiates walk about, so that the cuts are not seen by the uninitiated, who are told that the boys are bitten by the *goma*. To Madume it came as a great surprise to find that the crying of the spirits was caused by whistles. After the operation the men whistled the song, 'Whoever reveals a *goma* brings about his own death or that of his father or mother', which was interpreted for the benefit of those who found it difficult to follow the whistling. They set out for home again almost immediately after the operation, for the formulae of the *gomana* are taught them at home. 794 304

The journey home was slow. The initiates, accompanied by five 794

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794 shepherds, walked, whistling as they went and holding sticks they had cut. Soon they met a man and were ordered by the shepherds to whistle '*mulao wa ga*' (my law). The stranger in reply recited a *gomana* law for them. A little further on they came upon three women and a man, all of whom fled on their approach, for, should they meet any one unable to give them a law, he is beaten unmercifully. The next initiated man they met asked the initiates to give him a law after he had recited one and, when they could not, he demanded 'his leg', i.e. each boy was to sit down holding up the left leg to be seized and beaten. As, however, they had not yet had an opportunity of learning any formulae, their shepherds procured exemption for them by giving the man snuff instead. That night they asked for food at a village, for they had had nothing all day, but the man insisted on their sleeping there and killed a goat in their honour. They set out again long before dawn so as not to be seen by women.

At home an enclosure of branches was made for them very near the village where they had to spend their time for the next few weeks. Here their food was brought from home by the shepherds, but they slept in the village in huts set aside for this purpose, coming in late at night and leaving again before dawn when women began to stamp. There were no food regulations. By day the smallest boys went out to herd goats, but the old initiates remained in the lodge, going out every afternoon either to fetch wood, each one log only, for the evening fires, or sometimes to hunt birds. When outside the lodge, they have to whistle as a warning to the uninitiated not to approach too near. They may not talk to each other except when out of sight. During this time many formulae, most of which are quite meaningless to the initiates as well as to older people, are taught by the shepherds, who beat them when they are unable to remember them; but there are no songs. The laws are passwords which indicate that you have been initiated. On the day after their arrival home, powdered medicine was given the initiates to put in their wounds, but for the rest one day was much like another. By the fifth week, when they were all thoroughly bored and tired, the order was given that they must go and wash at a place near Maulwi called *vuṭaba-mavoha* (where the *gomana* initiates wash). While they washed, the *zwiḍajani* were crying in the bush and the big sacred drum at Maulwi was beaten a few times. Then they went home where, on kneeling to greet, each one received 1*s*. from his parents (*hu noswa*). The lodge is merely broken down and the cloths taken home to be used. The *gomana* initiation is an initiation into a cult rather than a 'school', for, beside the formulae, the boys receive no instruction beyond the warning not to divulge what they have seen in the *gomana* lodge. The main purpose of their seclusion is to enable their wounds to heal before they can take part in ordinary life.

881 The *vyali*, generally looked upon as an initiation for girls, is to a great extent also the concern of old and mature men, who from a certain stage take part in it as fully as, if not more so than, the older women. Further, in many districts, though not at the royal village where they do not have *vuhwera* (their boys undergoing a kind of attenuated form of this initiation for a few days only at Maunadala's), the *vuhwera* for boys is held simultaneously

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with the *vyali*, but beginning rather later when the grass is sufficiently long to be used for the elaborate costumes worn. As in the case of circumcision, the *vyali*, though of national importance, is held locally by various district heads. Only those heads whose ancestors traditionally have held the *vyali* are allowed to hold it, and control is exercised by the fact that permission (literally, *khiso kha mullo*, or firebrand) has to be obtained from the queen by all those wishing to hold a *vyali* by payment of £1. One finds considerable variation from one district to another. In some the *vyali* only is held, their boys having to go elsewhere for initiation into *vuhwera*; in others *vuhwera* is held simultaneously with the *vyali*, while everywhere there are variations in detail according to the doctor responsible for the initiation or the religious habits and desires of the headman holding the initiation. Hence it is that, while at the royal village men of the last regiment (*maŋgwɛ*—Leopards) were in 1939 considered too young to be allowed to enter the enclosure of the girls or the place where the old men sit with their wonderful Bird, in many of the districts they were not debarred at all. At the great opening ceremony, when the gods of whoever holds the school are approached for their blessings, those of the royal *vyali* were merely 'cooled' by the spurting of water and a prayer, whereas those of Relela were propitiated with beer brought to the family graves in the depths of the forest. And while at the royal village the initiates were smeared with the stomach contents of a head of cattle killed by being shot, for those of Relela the tail fat of a sheep ritually killed with a medicated knife was used, the stomach contents being mixed with medicine for strengthening the enclosure. The doctor at the royal ceremony carried all the meat of the slaughtered beasts away on donkeys for his own private use, but at Relela the assembled company, including men, ate the meat with medicine. The institution is sufficiently flexible to allow for changes in keeping with modern needs and modern ideas: six European nails were allowed in the construction of the hut of the Bird, a stipulation being made that they should not be visible, loin cloths of material took the place of hide in many areas and other, more far-reaching innovations differentiated the 1939 ceremony from those in olden days. All the 'schools' do not open simultaneously: months after the queen's *vyali* had begun in 1939, district heads were sending to ask permission to hold theirs, while even in the queen's own *vyali* new initiates were joining as much as five months after the opening. In a society where time is unimportant this is not unexpected.

It is not possible here to give a detailed account of *vyali* ceremonial. Only a few of its most important aspects and main functions will be touched upon. Considerable emphasis is laid in the *vyali* on age and rank. The initiates have to be very respectful towards old men and women, greeting them in a special manner (kneeling and clapping with hollowed hands) whenever they pass them. This general pattern is exactly the same as that found in the *vudiga*, the boys' circumcision. The last initiated regiment is to some extent in authority over the novices. Yet the initiates themselves vary in age from small girls of seven or eight to married women. Indeed, in the 1939 *vyali*, held after a lapse of thirty-five years, it was found necessary to divide the initiates into two distinct

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881 regiments. Each local *vyali* has its office-bearers, whose rank above that
554 of the rest is emphasized in a number of ways. Chief among all initiates is the *muluvɛ*, the nearest relative of the chief or district head. She represents all the initiates, just as the queen represents the whole tribe, and so intimate is the bond between the *muluvɛ* and the others thought to be that witches wishing to harm the whole 'school' may do so through her, and in 1939, when a snake appeared in the courtyard of initiates at the royal village, the chief initiate only was 'doctored' and the snake disappeared. She is distinguished from the rest by a special kind of dress and is always given good things to eat by another office-bearer, her 'dog', whose duty it is also to run before her, barking, when the rest are given work to do or are taken to the veld. Another office-bearer is the 'shade' of the chief initiate; towards the end of the initiation, she holds a branch above the latter's head to keep off the sun. There are some half a dozen office-bearers among initiates, as well as among the women in charge; they sit at specially prepared fireplaces and their precedence is recognized in all ceremonial.

881 The *vyali* is of such importance that during the year that it lasts it
784 overshadows everything else. All men's attention, all men's energies, are taken up by the *vyali*, to which everything else becomes subsidiary. Even in the *khɔrɔ*, the forum of the men, only essential cases are dealt with. All marriages are held up: any one having the temerity to take a bride to his home during the *vyali* must pay a fine of one head of cattle and a goat. To such an extent are the attention and interest of the whole country focused on the *vyali* that no rival ceremonial is tolerated. There may be no dancing other than *vyali* dancing, no singing of songs other than those sung in the *vyali*. Even the dancing of possessed people is prohibited, a taboo communicated to the various possessing spirits at a large farewell dance of all the possessed in the area just prior to the opening of the *vyali*, when they are ordered not to manifest themselves and told that none of the usual taboos of the cult will be observed for the next year. It is customary, too, before the opening of the *vyali* for each district head to bring a farewell *gɔsha* dance to the royal village, but this was omitted in 1938 owing to the length of time it would require. The flexibility of Lovedu rules is illustrated also in the permission which the queen gave in 1938 to people on a European farm who wanted to hold a *gɔsha* for Christmas, to do so, though for one day only. These rules bind even the spirits who, during the *vyali*, never come to sing and whistle when there is a harvest offering.

881 There is a period of preparation lasting about a month or six weeks in which the initiates are taught some of the songs they are to sing, the manner in which they have to greet their elders, and the way in which debarked wood will have to be collected. Only after this preparatory schooling does the official opening take place. On this occasion the doctor in control of the 'school' strengthens the girls for the initiation by means of special medical treatment and reinforces the courtyard of the chief or district head, where the initiation is held, against the entry of witches who may wish to harm the girls. The initiates are ritually beaten with medicated sticks as at the *gomana*, precedence being given to the

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office-bearers of the *vyali*. It is significant that medical treatment is not confined to initiates, but includes, not only the 'owners' or holders of the 'school', but in many instances also all the older men and women present. It is done to make the ceremony a success. After their treatment, the initiates may not wash until about ten days have elapsed, when the 'mother' of the 'school' takes them to the river. From this time the novices, except in the case of pregnant women, are allowed no covering over the shoulder or body. Their loin-coverings should consist of hard, unworked skins, but in the 1939 *vyali*, owing to the difficulty of obtaining skins, European cloth was allowed. 881 [292]

From now the *vyali*, held in the *khɔrɔ* of the district head or chief, will continue for a period of a full year. Except on a few special occasions, however, all the activities are confined to the evenings and early mornings, leaving the initiates free to carry on their ordinary work at home for the greater part of the day. Most of the initiates sleep at home and married women become pregnant and have their babies during the year of their initiation without any inconvenience.

One of the most important activities of the *vyali* is the singing and drumming every morning and evening during the whole period of the initiation. Some of the songs are related to the stage of the initiation, different stages being characterized by different songs: thus after the medical treatment marking the official opening in about September a new song that has not been practised previously is begun, and later, when summer fruits are plentiful, a song is sung in which this abundance is mentioned. There is a cluster of songs associated with bringing the singing to a close each evening, when the *khɔrɔ* has to be closed by the girls, and again in the early morning, when the gate is opened. Most of the songs consist of a simple phrase repeated over and over again, the words of which are meaningless to the singers, and frequently, even where the song is long, only a small portion of it is repeated. There are songs consisting of praises of the queen, well-known district heads, and their areas, and a very important one in praise of the chief girl of the *vyali*. One song sung by the 'shepherds' refers to girls who enter only towards the end of the initiation, pointing out how inferior this is to full initiation, while another exhorts initiates to pinch and otherwise torment such girls. *Musɔvɛthɔ* songs, which are accompanied by dancing and begun in about December, are the main feature of the singing after the Bird, the pivot of the ceremony, has arrived (April). They are very similar to *lesugu* songs sung for rain, associated with the *zwidajani* spirits, and are believed to be identical in function. There are also *lesugu* songs in the *vyali*, and it is significant that among the Nareni there is each year a woman's counterpart of the *gomana* drumming in which *lesugu* songs are sung. If any initiate is seduced during the period of initiation, special songs of derision are sung in which she and her family are mentioned by name. Where the songs have no dancing accompaniment, they are sung to the clapping of hands until the arrival of the Bird, when two flat pieces of wood are used. 881 533

Initiation is considered to be a time of hardship for those who undergo it. The singing every evening, sometimes as late as eleven o'clock and 881

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881 every morning from about five o'clock till after sunrise, is looked upon as a burden that has each time to be 'lifted' (*hu rula*) by the order of some old woman or man until the arrival of the Bird, when it will *rula* the girls at its own pleasure. Only on rare occasions, when an important visitor comes and presents the older women with a gift of snuff or money, can initiates be excused altogether for an evening. It is a hardship, too, to go all through the winter, mild though it is in the lowveld, with no covering over the upper part of the body—so much so that one married woman in the 1939 initiation preter ded she was pregnant in order that she might cover her body. When she was discovered, however, she was severely beaten. The discipline of the *vyali* is not so strict that initiates are not able occasionally to absent themselves unnoticed from the singing. If discovered, they are beaten, sometimes by the queen herself. More serious cases in which an initiate has been absent for several days are treated more drastically: a whole procession of women carrying the drums sets out to her village where they pull the thatch off the roofs of the houses and exact a fine of a goat, which is killed and eaten by women and initiates alike. Breaches of the rules in the *vyali* are punished in the 'school' itself: when a number of girls shaved their hair, an action strictly forbidden during the year of initiation, not only they but all their age-mates were beaten for the offence. As a result, the offenders were pinched and ill-treated by their fellow initiates, who had been punished on their behalf. Initiates who quarrel among themselves are beaten when they gather in the enclosure to sing. There are no hardships connected [778] with food, but on various occasions, when the girls are taken out to be shown secret objects (*digɔma*), they are beaten—and one may see the marks of the sticks on their bare backs when they return. Sometimes there is an ordeal, such as being made to crawl along a path strewn with the velvet stinging-bean which causes intense irritation and itching over the whole body.

But such hardships occur only on special occasions and are by no means the order of the day. We should also be careful not to construe the beatings in terms of our conceptions. Where we have seen them, they were half serious, half playful—for instance, when the attendant of the Bird, amid merriment from the onlookers, chastised late-comers to the evening performance, the force of the blows being spent innocuously upon the skirts of the girls as they ran past him to take their place. The hardships and beatings certainly do not depress even the smallest of the girls. During the *morula* season they had to make a large quantity of cider which was consumed by initiated women, who gave a little also to the men, and, on one occasion, when the courtyard became overgrown with grass, the initiates were made to weed it. These tasks over a period of a whole year indicate clearly that work is not a major hardship.

881 A most essential aspect of the *vyali* is the showing of *digɔma*, usually
778 in some secluded spot to which the initiates are taken, but also on occasion at home in the evening, when there will be dancing all night (*khilalawemi*—night of standing). The connotation of the word *gɔma* is difficult to grasp. A *gɔma* is something secret and wonderful, something which it is a privilege to see and which is usually shown to initiates during an initiation.

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Though made by men or women, there is something almost supernatural about a *gɔma*: its manufacture is called 'giving birth to' (*hu dzwala digɔma*) and though, for example, in the case of a dancing *gɔma*, every one knows that some person is playing the part, this in no way detracts from its importance. Many of the *digɔma* are masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, or leaves. Some are mummeries with a meaning attached; others are simply interesting or wonderful objects. One *gɔma*, *dau* (lion), consists of a sound made by passing the hand down a stick on a piece of hide held over a pot. These *digɔma* are traditional in initiations, but very often new ones are invented and, since different regiments or areas come on many ceremonial occasions with their own *digɔma*, there may be a mild competitive element in the showing of *digɔma*, especially in *khɔba* and *vyali*. Laws taught in initiation ceremonial are also referred to as *digɔma*. But the greatest of all *digɔma* are the *gomana* drums, which are looked upon as gods and are associated with the ancestors and religious ritual. *Digɔma* vary from laws or mummeries to semi-gods. The element of awe, so conspicuously absent in Lovedu religious practices, is found in their attitude towards *digɔma*—not that there is any display of awe towards them or in their presence, but that in referring to some of them people talk as though of something awesome or god-like. Even the *zwidajani*, ancestral spirits, who come to earth when *gomana* drums are played or at religious ceremonies, are thought of as *digɔma*, which in this manner become part of religion itself.

The greatest *gɔma* of the *vyali* is *khiudogani* or *khiudogala*, referred to also as the great Bird of Muhale or of Rhodesia who, like most *digɔma*, is believed to come from a pool in the river. It is a *gɔma* of the men and manifests itself only when there is moonlight, returning, it is said, to its pool when the moon is dark. But it is always there, secreted in its enclosure. The girls have to sing whether it is there or not, and often, though the moon is dark, it whistles its directions and commands. It consists of a light, semicircular framework about 4 ft. high, over which are put strings of the *muga* thorn tree (*Acacia rehmanniana*), which have been placed in water to become black. Surmounting it all is a small head crowned with an ostrich or other feather. It is seen only occasionally, when it comes dancing into the *vyali* courtyard at night, and, in spite of bright moonlight, its black colour makes it difficult to discern it clearly. It speaks and sings by whistling through an instrument similar to, but larger than, that used by *zwidajani*, made of the leg-bone of cattle.

This Bird is the ruling spirit of the *vyali*. It has many praises used by the girls in its honour. Coming as it does when the green foods of summer are being eaten and the grass is long, it is the embodiment of plenty and has daily to receive from each initiate summer foods and beer. All the time it is there every one in the area who makes beer has to bring one calabash to its enclosure. If this is not observed the person may be fined. The Bird regulates the whole procedure of the *vyali*, ordering which songs have to be sung, telling the girls when to dance, when to stop singing, what to do. At times it even gets angry and then, if it is dancing, it may stamp out the courtyard fires. Any infringement of the rules of the school are referred to as 'breaking the ribs' (*hu rɔva lejagori*)

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881 of the Bird. One man was fined a goat for beating his wife. The Bird
779 said, 'You've beaten my *muṭagani*' (married initiate); another, an important official in the *vyali*, was fined for swearing at an initiate who made a mistake in her answers to the Bird. From the time of its arrival, the women of the village may not get up and begin stamping in the early mornings before the Bird has made itself heard, and it is even said that *khiuḍogani* does not like cocks near the village, because they crow before he has begun to whistle and so disregard his precedence.

The arrival of *khiuḍogani* is a culminating point in the *vyali* and comes after long and elaborate preparations. For months before its arrival, men have been erecting various enclosures beside the village—one enclosure and hut to house the Bird itself, leading into a large courtyard in which the singing and drumming of the initiates is to take place once the Bird has arrived. At the far end of the courtyard is a row of de-barked poles set up in a specially medicated furrow, backing a carefully prepared platform on and around which the initiates stand when singing in the mornings and evenings. It is looked upon by the initiates as a kind of refuge from the Bird should he come too near. In front of this *levalclo* stands the *khulunoni* shrine of the *vyali*, a long medicated pole of *musoso* (*Terminalia sericea*) forking at the top end into a circlet of branches. Round this pole a circular mound has been built, containing a river stone like many religious shrines. Here it is that the initiates have to stand when conversing with the Bird. Besides the enclosure, there are other preparations for the arrival of the Bird. From February and March, when the grass is long enough, bandoliers of *leṭaṭe* rush (*Mariscus sp.*) to be worn by the initiates once the Bird has arrived, are woven, dancing skirts of a special kind of reed strung together in pieces about 1 in. long are made, and pointed, flat pieces of wood, two for each girl, are prepared for use while singing. No significance is attached to their manufacture.

A great deal of the ceremonial of the *vyali* centres on the Bird and, in the ritual conversations that take place morning and evening between the women and the Bird, special terms peculiar to the *vyali* are employed: mealies are 'teeth of Shangana-Ṭonga'; beer is 'fat of the crocodile'; native potatoes are 'fingers of the baboon'; firewood is 'bones of the giraffe'. Every day some girls and women are detailed to carry the drums at about four o'clock in the afternoon to the enclosure, there to await the pleasure of the Bird. Sooner or later the Bird whistles out '*muluwe a Khidigwe*', the opening phrase of the praise of the head of the initiates, whereupon one of the girls (any one—not necessarily the chief girl herself) mounts the shrine and replies in a loud voice, 'I've been waiting here a long while, Bird of Muhale', adding one of its many praises. 'Whose *myali* (initiate) are you?' asks the Bird. 'I am the *myali* of So-and-so' (giving the name of her father). The Bird will then, whistling metaphorical phrases, order the drums to be beaten, indicating what song is to be sung. The sounding of the drums is the signal for all the initiates to come to the enclosure, which gradually fills as they arrive in twos and threes. After much singing and drumming, the Bird may ask, 'What have you brought me?' to which the initiate, replying, answers, 'Crocodile's fat', or whatever she has brought. In the 1938–9 *vyali* there

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was at the royal village an arrangement whereby a certain number of girls 681
brought beer every evening (six to eight calabashes), while in the morn- 778
ings each initiate came with green mealies, nuts, or any appetizing dish. These are put down at a certain spot from where the *lumati* and *lumatyana*, men who act as go-betweens when the Bird is crying, interpreting if necessary what he says, carry it all into the Bird's enclosure, where it is consumed by old men. During the *vyali* these old men sleep in that enclosure if they like, and greatly enjoy the good food brought for the Bird. Sometimes, when too much for them has accumulated, they may send some to the queen or district head. Later the Bird orders the girls to eat their supper, which they have brought with them, and after a long time gives the order to stop, '*Kwaŋga*'. After a while the Bird asks for his wood. Each initiate has brought one piece of wood, with bark removed, lest, it is said, scorpions which are apt to be found in the bark bite the Bird, and at the order of the Bird all proceed to a spot near the entrance to the Bird's enclosure. Here at a given signal they throw down their wood with a great noise and rush back to their platform of safety. If the moon is bright, the girls will be told to don their dancing skirts and do their whirling dance and, if it likes, the Bird itself will come dancing in, keeping to the shadows, and with one or two men always near to act as guides. They are given the order to stop by the Bird at about ten or eleven o'clock at night or eight o'clock in the morning.

Towards the end of the *vyali*, when *muŋvetho* songs are sung, the 881
older men come and dance before the women, waving ox tails in their hands. They would, in the *vyali* of old, wave the tail over the head of a woman they liked and, if she acknowledged it by bowing the head and clapping with hollowed hands, she was giving her consent to be his lover during the initiation. For a remarkable feature of the *vyali* was promiscuous sexual intercourse between men and women in which initiates could take part only at the end. In the 1938–9 *vyali* there was no such intercourse: it was thought that the young married men were too 'wild' (owing to modern conditions) to tolerate a position in which the older men could have free access to their wives in the initiation, and it was said that the great preponderance of women over men might lead to great jealousies and conflicts between the women for the favours of the old men.

Towards the end of the initiation a number of important events takes place. There is, first of all, a ceremony in which the old men tie up the hair of initiates—which during the year has grown to a length of an inch or two—in tufts all over the head with strings of the bark of *mutwiriri* (*Bauhinia Galpinii*). After this the women belonging to the previously initiated regiment come into the enclosure one by one, dancing and shouting the praise titles of any area in the country. They are followed by the initiates, beginning with the office-bearers, and the ceremony therefore takes a full day or longer. While this is going on, one of the girl initiates, who is addressed by the praise-title of a wife (*muṭanoni*) of the queen, is taken to have her hair shaved and is dressed in a leopard skin with a collarette of beads round the neck. On her return a mat is spread for her to sit on and she does obeisance in the normal manner (not the manner of initiates). Another office-bearer (*muridi*) is given a standard

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881 of feathers to shade the head girl. After much dancing, cloths are tied round the initiates in the manner common to the possessed. This ceremony foreshadows the end of the initiation and indicates to the whole country that it is drawing to a close. The last month is devoted to
881 dancing: every area that is holding *a oyali* sends its initiates to dance
535 before the queen, some coming with *vuhwera*, others without. Last of
778 all come the people of Ravothata with the *magɔgɔbya* and it is their performance that closes the 'school'. The *magɔgɔbya* have more imposing
[292] costumes even than the *vuhwera*, characterized by the stuffed baboon and duiker that surmount them. After a number of important *digɔma* have been shown, there is a grand finale one night (*khilalawemi*), when the Bird hangs its head sideways and says, 'My head aches and I know my end has come.' A *gɔma* of the women, the Butterfly (*khirurwele*), dressed in leaves, comes dancing in at the girls' entrance to tease and chase the Bird. Before sunrise, when the Bird has returned to its hut, some of the initiates (those who have come for a short time only) may be taken to 'touch the Bird', a terrible ordeal. Then next morning they are all taken to the river, where they are shaved and given new clothes to wear. They are now 'things from the rubbish heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), like boys after circumcision: they walk in a bent position, may not speak freely, receive gifts, and at night ask riddles (*dinytbo*) specially associated with initiations. The enclosures are burnt. After a final washing in the river the initiates return to ordinary life and activities. A small operation is performed on initiates at the river on the last day. Among some tribes
[304] it consists of defloration, but among the Lovedu it is said to consist of a cut above the clitoris which is so small that it causes no pain or inconvenience.

881 At the time when the initiates make preparations for the arrival
292 of the Bird (February–March), the boys of those areas that have the
535 *vuhwera* as well are taken out into the bush every day to learn how to weave the elaborate costumes associated with this initiation. These are of two types: a light one, said to be for hunting, and a heavy one. Both costumes have skirts of loose-hanging grass, flung out in a circle by the gyrations of the dancer, as well as comely waist, arm, and leg bands and under-skirts of woven grass. The light costume has in addition broad shoulder bands crossing over chest and back and a mask resting upon the shoulders, veiling the face and open at the top. The heavy costume is far more imposing. Besides a woven waistcoat, there is an immense covering for head and shoulders, rising to a crested summit, flanked by what gives the impression of scales arranged in rows or projecting wings, and fronted by a snout like that of a crocodile. The dance reminds one, now of the prancings of a male bird courting its mate, now of a lizard convulsively shaking its whole body as it rests upon a rock. The lizard-bird suggests a weird dragon-like mythical monster, but its appearance belies its functions and qualities, though perhaps not the mystical meaning of the *digɔma* of the 'school'.

[778] The enclosure for *vuhwera* boys is made beside that for the Bird. Here, after having being beaten with medicated sticks, the boys spend their time, except when out hunting or dancing, their food being brought to

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the *vyali* courtyard by their sisters. They are taught a few 'laws' or 881
formulae associated with the *vuhwera*, but their main activities are 292
learning to make the elaborately woven costumes and later to dance in 535
the *vyali* courtyard. Towards the end of the initiation they spend most of their time going about to dance, accepting invitations from other district heads and paying their respects at the royal village. They do beautiful movements to the drumming of their own *vyali* girls. Only two dance at a time and, while they dance, attendants (*medobi*) stand near by supervising. The masked boys may whistle out the tune to which they wish to dance or may beg snuff by means of whistling (for this is their only means of conversation during their initiation). When they dance well, women and girls come to give them gifts of leg- or arm-rings. The *vuhwera* is a kind of finishing school, an initiation into the secret of [776] what the Bird is and how the costumes are made. It is almost as though this is an esoteric art, the preservation of which has become the main function of the *vuhwera*. A person who enters the *vuhwera* enclosure may be required to display his skill at weaving and in 1939 a man who was unable to weave (and thus showed himself to be uninitiated) was heavily fined. The fact that there is no *vuhwera* held at the royal kraal, whose boys used in the old days to go for this initiation to Khaḓa or to the *Tsawesi*, a section of the Khaḓa, suggests that the institution is a more recent adoption than the *vyali*.

It is not easy for a European to appreciate the meaning and value of 881
such institutions as *vyali* and *vuhwera*. Most of their features cannot be explained by the Lovedu themselves. They are the result of a long, historical development which, in the absence of all evidence, may never be unravelled. The *vyali* has many aspects. One of the most important is that of a crossing or initiation similar to circumcision. The initiates are often called *vawedi* (crossers) and initiation may be referred to as 'to cross over' (*ku wela*). It is conceived as a period of hardship, a crossing for which medical treatment and ancestral blessings are essential. Respect for those older than oneself is emphasized: the initiates must be humble; but older people, especially the old men who remain in the Bird's enclosure, live royally on the beer and delicacies brought daily by initiates. There is emphasis, too, on the importance of the rank of district heads and chief, and the learning of praises of all the areas, followed towards the end of the initiation by inter-district visits, is an important feature.

Intermingled with and overshadowing the *vyali* as an initiation is the 794
vyali as a fertility and rain cult, related to the *gumana* drum cult and 789
serving the same purpose. The *vyali* lasts a year, a full agricultural cycle, 778
and some of its stages are associated with the seasons: the typical *vyali* dress of the girls cannot be plaited till the grass has grown long; the Bird arrives only when there is plenty of food. The singing of *vyali* songs is believed to bring rain. Even before the rains of the summer of 1938–9 had fallen, it was said in Ḓuloedu that the year would be one of plenty on account of the *vyali*. These expectations were more than realized, for not only was the summer rainy, but even the winter, which is normally dry, was exceptionally wet. Stress is laid in the *vyali* on grass and vegetation: the girls wear plaited bandoliers of grass which are said by

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794 some to render them fertile; the *digoma* are almost all made of grasses,
789 reeds, or leaves; the remarkable *vuhwera* costumes are made of various
778 special kinds of grass; and on one of the most important excursions made by the *vyali* girls, called *muiglini* (at the locusts), they are made to collect the bark of various kinds of trees. The *vyali* as a fertility rite is most clearly seen in the sexual intercourse at the order of the Bird which used to be indulged in towards the end of the initiation on the approach of spring. The true meaning of the Bird is difficult to discover, though it is significant that it is associated with moonlight, comes from a pool, and declares on its departure that it will leave mists behind it. In one praise song of the Bird it appears to be referred to as *vaqaja*, the ancestral spirits: 'I have heard you, Bird of ours and Rahufa of Muhale. The father of giving has gone, O *vaqaja*. There remain only things for which one must pay' (*Gi hu phulaphudi nomi yenu le vuRahufa a Muhale rahufa khi ile, vaqaja, hu sadi kha muthego ftila*). This Bird, *goma* of the old men, is related to the *gomana* cult, using the same method of whistling through an instrument.

881 The Lovedu appear to have borrowed *vyali* and *vuhwera* and the
794 *gomana* drum cult from neighbours. Some elements, like *muiqajani*,
771 have become firmly embedded in a number of institutions; others, like *vuhwera*, are looked upon more as entertaining appurtenances without any very serious meaning beyond that of giving pleasure. But the sacred drum cult clashes to some extent with the rain cult of the queen and there is little doubt that to this fact one must partly attribute the failure to best *gomana* drums in recent years.

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CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Mate selection and marriage exchanges as reflections of the social structure—social and psychological aspects of nuptial rites—the handling of the themes of sex and concubinage, of barrenness and premature death in the marriage situation.

FROM mummeries and masks we turn to marriage and *munywalo* (bride-price). The secrecy of the *digoma* contrasts strangely with the publicity of marriage ceremonial; but they are both cultural devices for dealing with cultural problems. The hidden forces in nature and man are intractable and can be brought under control only by rephrasing them as mysteries, the fear of which is overcome by man-made initiations and cults. Marriage is also an initiation, but its complicated ceremonial is concerned chiefly with laying the concrete foundations of the social structure. This is a gigantic and delicate task, almost beyond the capacity of the culture. Fortunately, we can see more clearly than in the case of the *digoma* how this task has been accomplished, but unfortunately we shall have space merely to glance at the larger features instead of examining closely the exquisite workmanship and superlative ornamentation.

It is not easy to appreciate the immense implications of marriage among the Lovedu. For one thing, the concomitant cattle exchanges transform it into something wholly unlike the contract between two individuals of different sex among us. The fact that a Lovedu woman may, just like a man, marry a wife, warns us that we are in a world entirely different from our own. The elaborate ceremonial reflects the enormous importance of marriage and of the network of links that are forged by the cattle that pass. The bonds that are created in this manner can be put to all manner of uses. They form the basis of the *munywalo* ring of exchanges. They hold together the political system, incorporating as they do foreign elements in the tribe, and casting the net of relationship over the whole country. Marriage and *munywalo* provide the pattern even for dealing with homicide: the murder is not avenged; by handing over cattle or by giving his daughter, the murderer and his relatives become enmeshed in the network of exchanges; he is transformed from criminal to kinsman and a potential blood feud is turned into the reciprocal relations between the people of the bride and those of the groom. A man threatened with starvation when his crops have failed and his cattle have died can, by linking himself to the *munywalo* ring of another, save both himself and his family.

But the most startling proof of the importance of Lovedu marriage lies therein that the tribunals of the *khoro*—in other words, the organization that corresponds to our legal system—are mainly concerned with marriage and *munywalo* tangles; the *raison d'être* of the *khoro* and its law appear to be the preservation of the marriage system. The whole genius of *khoro* law and of *khoro* judicial proceedings is the genius of resolving tensions within the gigantic superstructure built upon marriage and its

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581 associated institutions. In these circumstances, it is patently absurd for
182 us to orientate ourselves as if marriage affects only personal relationships
692 between two individuals. To regard marriage as primarily a sexual partnership or even as an institution for promoting the procreation and rearing of children is to misunderstand completely its great role in the social organization.

581 As the main function of marriage is to create and perpetuate alliances
582 between groups of people, sexual or temperamental compatibility between the prospective spouses is not regarded as an ideal. Emphasis on romantic love, and pre-marital sexual experimentation, with a view to testing out compatibility, would be incongruous with the prevailing type of marriage. Mate selection in its ideal form is socially regulated, and the ideal form is the basic pattern of all marriages. The social organization determines whom one shall marry, and the parents, not the individuals concerned, set the machinery of the organization into motion. The ideal marriage is marriage of a man with his mothers' brother's daughter or of a woman with her father's sister's son. This does not mean that all cross-cousins are preferred mates. It is, for instance, considered irregular for a man to marry his father's sister's daughter; that cases of such marriages are found should not surprise us. There are irregularities in every sphere of culture, and the rules of mate selection are particularly liable to be upset because of the complex interrelations that arise in the social system. The fundamental rule is that a man must marry, not the daughter of any brother of his mother, but the daughter of that brother who has used his mother's marriage cattle to obtain a wife for himself. His mother and his mother's brother are cattle-linked sister and brother because, when she married, the cattle that came in were handed to the brother for obtaining a wife: the cattle of the sister are said to 'build a hut for her brother'. We may thus say that a man must marry a daughter of his cattle-linked maternal uncle, and we may call her his 'cattle-linked cross-cousin'.

But the Lovedu phrase the matter rather differently and more significantly. They say that the sister has 'built the house of her brother' (the cattle-linked brother), that therefore she 'has a gate' by which she may enter his house, this gate being 'the gate which the cattle seek', and that it is her right to demand from the 'house built by her cattle' a daughter who must come to her as her daughter-in-law to stamp and cook for her. Note that the right is not phrased as the right of her son to obtain his wife from that house; note further that the right is in respect of the house—that is, of the wife of the cattle-linked brother, not in respect of the brother. That wife is the *muvoyi* (returner) of the sister, the person who is obliged to return her daughter to the place whence the cattle came; and it does not matter if in the house of the sister there is no son to marry this daughter. The *muvoyi* must send her daughter if requested, and, if cattle are offered, to be the daughter-in-law of her husband's cattle-linked sister, whether that sister has a son or not; for it is the sister's right to be served and helped, especially in her old age, by the daughter of the house which she has established. The ideal is that a girl should not be married to her father's sister's husband or, in

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other words, that a man should not marry his wife's brother's daughter. But one finds a suggestive number of cases of this marriage and, what is noteworthy is that even to-day a girl still jokingly calls her father's sister's husband *munna* (husband) and, it is said, not long ago regularly called him 'husband', while the girl's own husband was 'child' (*gwana*) to her. These vestiges may reflect a rather different system, not unknown in tribes further north which Lovedu *monyoalo* arrangements have reshaped.

The sister may, as we have said, demand that her cattle-linked brother send his daughter either to be the wife of her son or, if she has no son, to be her daughter-in-law and, in the latter case, the sister 'marries' her cattle-linked brother's daughter on behalf of a supposititious son. If the demand is not acceded to, whether the reason be that the daughter refuses to go or her parents refuse to fulfil their obligation, the results may be disastrous. The sister (or her husband) may 'pull down the house she built at her brother's' by taking back her cattle, and she may give them to some one else who will establish a house that is prepared to fulfil its obligations; or, if the cattle have already passed on, in the chain of exchanges, from the wife of the cattle-linked brother to that wife's brother or, further still, the 'roots of the cattle' may be 'followed', perhaps involving the snapping of the chain at several points. The whole system of interrelations created by the cattle may, in such a case, be thrown out of gear and the repercussions may be so widespread that the whole country is said 'to be spoilt'. There are, however, many safety devices and the genius for effecting compromises ensures the isolation of the stresses and strains to manageable limits.

The ideal form of marriage, that of a man with his cattle-linked cross-cousin, turns out to be an inevitable consequence of the whole social system, the ground pattern of which is determined by kinship obligations though the detailed arrangements are regulated by the cattle-linking exchanges. It is conceived of not so much as a cross-cousin marriage as of a niece performing an obligation towards her cattle-linked aunt. The conception of a marriage is not wholly submerged, but it stands out far less boldly than the conception of the duty of a niece to love, cherish, and obey her cattle-linked aunt. The central feature, the pivot upon which the whole system is conceived to turn, is the passing of the cattle from a sister, by whose marriage they come in, to her uterine brother, to be used by him for the purpose of acquiring a wife; and from the wife of the brother they pass on to her uterine brother and so on *ad infinitum*. Brother and sister of the same house are cattle-linked, but each is also linked to a partner by the marriage validated by the cattle. The sister-brother cattle link and the husband-wife marriage-plus-cattle link form a continuous chain from sister to brother to wife of brother to brother of wife of brother and so on, which is doubled and redoubled in the second generation, when the same interlinking takes place and the son of the sister marries the daughter of the brother, the brother receiving cattle and the sister a daughter-in-law, while the son of the brother marries the daughter of the brother of his wife. It will be noticed that the three essential links are those between brother and

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581 sister, between husband and wife and between cattle-linked cross-cousins,
582 and these links, as well as the whole network of subsidiary links, arise from the implications of marriage and cattle-linking. The brothers who receive the cattle from the sisters return daughters to them and again receive cattle; the brothers become the nucleus of a group providing brides, and hence, from the point of view of the sisters and their children, they are the brides or parents-in-law (*vamakhulu*), while the sister's husbands are, from the point of view of the brothers and their children, the group supplying bridegrooms (*vatsemi*) or sons-in-law (*vaguhulu*). The *vamakhulu* give brides and receive cattle; the *vaguhulu* give cattle and receive brides.

582 That is the complex network in which cross-cousin marriage is enmeshed. Cattle-linked cross-cousins are said to be 'born for' one another; a man is said to marry where his father has married, a woman is said to go to her father's sister (thus marrying where the latter has married). Actually over 60 per cent. of the men marry the cattle-linked cross-cousin 'born for them'; and she, whether married first or last, becomes the chief wife. This means that she bears the chief son. It may happen that she is not married at all during the lifetime of the man she was 'born for'; she may be too young or he may die prematurely; yet she will be the wife who must, for any important purpose, bear the chief son. If the husband
588 'born for her' has died or never comes into existence, and a successor to him is required in any position of importance, such as headship of a district, she will nevertheless be married to him; the cattle will pass and he who 'enters' will be some one else, chosen not by her, but by the group of the bridegrooms or, more precisely, the house of the non-existent bridegroom (which in practice more often than not means the mistress of that house). Of course, the system is not inflexible. When nothing of importance as regards status or position is at stake or, if the girl is headstrong and refuses to allow the chosen one to enter, she may 'pick up children in the bush'. But she has no right to marry any one else, though sometimes she is inherited by the brother of her supposititious spouse as if she were a widow; sometimes she merely goes to cook for her cattle-linked aunt and there bears children as if she were the chief wife of that aunt's son.

It is only a step from this situation to the further elaboration that allows a woman to marry a wife, not for her son, but for herself. If the system logically implies that a woman may have in her service a husbandless daughter-in-law doing all the work of a wife, by a slight extension of this conception she may actually marry a wife. There is ample precedent for this elaboration in the fact that the queen has wives; she is their 'husband' and to the children of her wives she is 'father' (*vubabe*). This model is followed by other women, especially women of importance and women who, as doctors and potters, have cattle of their own with which to obtain wives. In general, however, such women call their wife 'daughter-in-law', as though they had been married, not for themselves, but on behalf of a son.

582 It is not only these peculiar elaborations that result from the pivotal institutions of cattle-linked brother and sister and 'being born' for one

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XI. DOMESTIC DUTIES

(a) DISHING UP REQUIRES GREAT SKILL

(b) STRAINING THE PRECIOUS BEER BREW

[facing p. 144]

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XII. THE BRIDE BECOMES A WIFE

(a) 'LITTLE BRIDE OF OCHRE, SEEK SHELTER'

(b) STILL IN HER FINERY, THE BRIDE BEGINS WORKING

[facing p. 145]

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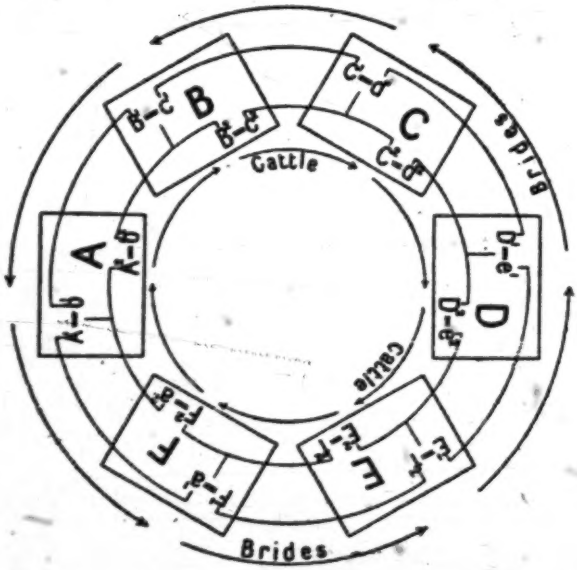
another. On the one hand, the whole marriage ceremonial is based upon the assumption that it should subserve these primary arrangements; and, on the other hand, the range of permissible marriages (except marriage outside the kin) is circumscribed by their logical implications. We shall turn first to the preferential marriages. A marriage is obligatory or approved, or discouraged or strongly disapproved or absolutely interdicted, quite apart from considerations of incest, according as it strengthens and upholds or harmonizes with or strains or to a lesser or greater degree conflicts with the foundations and superstructure of the edifice erected by the cattle. We must conceive of the bonds of reciprocity between cattle-linked brothers and sisters extending eventually to the whole *munywalo* chain, which from one point of view is a chain of cattle and from another a chain of brides and bridegrooms. The cattle move in one direction, the brides in the opposite direction.



At the risk of over-simplification, we may represent the position by the diagram above, though it must be clearly understood that nothing so definite and regular will be found in the society, nor does the chain in practice form the complete ring represented for greater convenience in the diagram. The six rectangles represent, not complete patrilineal lineages, but nuclei in the patrilineal lineages of A, B, C, D, E and F. Thus A^2 is that son of the house A^1b^1 who marries where his father father A^1 married, viz. a daughter b^2 of the house B^1c^1 which has been built by the cattle coming in by the marriage of b^1 and passing to her brother B^2. If we may call the houses A^1b^1 and B^1c^1 cattle-linked, we may designate the houses A^1b^1 and A^2b^2 cattle-descent houses. The cattle-descent houses then constitute the nuclei of

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582 the patrilineal rectangles, while the links between the cattle-linked houses are the primary links between these nuclei. Each nucleus, it will be observed, is linked to its immediate neighbours on the right as well as on the left. To the left it sends brides and in return receives cattle (e.g. a^2 goes to marry F^2 and the cattle for her are received by the house A^1b^1); to the right it sends the cattle so received and in return receives brides (i.e. the cattle coming in from the marriage of a^2 and received by the house A^1b^1 pass on to the house B^1c^1, whence a daughter b^2 is returned as a bride of A^2). Thus brides move continuously from the right to the left, but ordinarily only between two immediately adjacent nuclei, while cattle move right round in a clockwise manner, so that the same cattle or their offspring are in turn used by A, B, C, D, and so on. It will also be seen that each nucleus is both doubly obligated and doubly entitled. A is bride-obligated to F and cattle-obligated to B; but A is also bride-entitled in respect of B and cattle-entitled in respect of F. These are the primary reciprocal relations, but they are extended by the operation of kinship bonds beyond the nuclei of cattle-descent houses—that is, from the core of the lineage they extend to the whole lineage. The cattle-descent houses in the rectangle F, which is the group of bridegrooms in respect of A, are the core of A's sons-in-law (*vaḓuhulu*); while B similarly are the core of A's parents-in-law (*vamakhulu*) because the brides of A come from B. The core is segregated out from the larger groups by the arrangements implied in the *munywalo* system.

The vast implications of this system need not be further elaborated. But from the point of view of preferential marriages some points may be referred to. Difficulties obviously arise where in the cattle-descent houses there is an unequal number of daughters and sons. The primary cattle-linking of brother and sister, which is the pivot of the system and of the strongly institutionalized reciprocity pattern between uterine brother and sister, is necessarily thrown out of alinement by such an inequality. If in any house there are more sons than daughters, some of the sons may have to receive the cattle they need, not from their uterine sisters, but from elsewhere. Should the cattle be acquired by their own labours or the labours of their parents, there need be no upsets, for the sons may continue to marry into the group where their father married. But a new alliance may be dictated by a variety of circumstances and in that case new alinements are created: the son and his descendants become a new cattle-descent nucleus, cattle-obligated to the group whence the son's wife came. The cattle for the marriage of a son may, however, come from a relative, and in that case the simple primary arrangements of the whole system become greatly complicated.

To attempt an analysis of the complications is beyond our present purpose. All we need point out is that, provided the cattle come from the right direction (in the diagram from the left) the essential pattern is maintained and the marriages that logically follow upon the basic principle, that where a man receives cattle he must send brides, are approved. Suppose, for instance, that A^2 has no sister and hence is given the cattle that come in from the marriage of a^1, his father's sister; in that case A^2 must send his daughter to marry a^1's son F^1, and F^1 marries his cattle-

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linked cross-cousin-once-removed (*mudzwaladzwalani*)—that is, his mother's brother's son's daughter. This is a common and strongly approved arrangement, for the cattle-descent houses maintain their dispositions towards one another, brides from A still go to F, and cattle still move from F to A—in short, this is merely a variation upon the fundamental theme. Suppose the house A^1b^1 has only daughters, the most approved arrangement would be for b^1 to send some of the cattle to B^1, her brother, who establishes a second house from which daughters-in-law may come, and to use some to set up a house of a supposititious son through whom the cattle-descent nucleus may be continued. But if A^1 used the cattle to obtain a second wife for himself complications arise, both in the *munywalo* arrangements and in the relationship between A^1's daughter and his second wife, for, though this second wife is the daughter's *mmani* (small mother), the daughter has rights over that *mmani's* house, rights of authority incompatible with the status of a daughter. Yet the essential *munywalo* configuration, though greatly complicated, is maintained, and the arrangement is possible, though not approved. What is really surprising is an arrangement that, upon the pattern of cross-cousin marriage, appears legitimate, but turns out to be absolutely prohibited. It is said that 'two sisters cannot eat one another's property'—that is, the cattle accruing to the house of one sister though the marriage of her daughter cannot be used to provide a wife for the son of the other sister. The reason for this rule lies again in the *munywalo* configuration. If the two sisters have married into the same cattle-descent lineage, the one will be giving cattle to the other, who must return brides, and the same lineage will be both cattle- and bride-obligated to itself; if, on the other hand, they have married into different lineages, the reciprocities arising in respect of giving cattle or brides are incompatible with their possibly generations-old configuration.

Whether the system described in outline is the result of the merging of cattle exchanges and antecedent intermarrying lineages or of an elaboration of the arrangements implied in the cattle-linking of brothers and sisters superimposed upon cross-cousin marriage, it is unnecessary to determine. We are merely concerned to indicate how mate selection is regulated by its fundamental principles and thus harmonizes as completely as possible with the social organization. A man cannot marry his father's sister's daughter, because such marriage reverses cattle- and bride-giving reciprocities. But this type of marriage, though rare, does occur, and the irregularity illustrates the extreme complications in the system. Marriage with the wife's brother's daughter, which does not disturb the fundamental alinements, is quite regular; but marriage with the wife's brother's wife is impossible, as in Lovedu phraseology it is tantamount to taking back one's cattle. Seizure of this wife is a method, however, of vicariously bringing pressure to bear upon the lineage of the wife's brother, should one's wife desert. For by taking her, which is usually done only by order of court, one breaks the link between the wife's brother and the people of his wife. The wife's brother, having been deprived of his wife, can claim back his cattle from her people, and so is enabled to return the cattle to his sister's husband, thereby releasing

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582 his wife. The measure is a drastic means of getting back one's cattle, and negatives any conception of marrying the wife's brother's wife.

582 The *munywalo* configuration is, of course, incompatible with brother-
602 sister exchange; the cattle cannot both come from and go into the same direction. So also does it exclude marriage of ortho-cousins, though complications introduced by reckoning relationship though the queen as if she were a male and the stress upon maintaining the purity of the royal blood lead to arrangements that appear to be based on such marriages. The children of all the queen's wives are brothers and sisters, but unless their natural fathers are identical, the formal relationship recedes before the physiological, and these brothers and sisters can and do intermarry. Moreover, in the society generally and especially among royal kin, a man may be related to another man or to a woman in many ways; what they will call one another depends upon status or rank or arrangements agreed upon between the families, and is often determined by personal choices and adjustments. A man who wishes to 'play with' his classificatory sister (reckoning relationship through, say, the father) will call her cross-cousin (reckoning relationship through, perhaps, the mother). How such a situation can arise is at once clear when we remember that a man may have a woman as his legal father, even taking her lineage name; but it arises in many other ways, such as the tremendous entanglements in the *munywalo* system. Among many neighbouring tribes a special ritual of 'cutting the kin' sometimes makes possible the marriage of incestuously related mates; among the Lovedu such a device is unknown. Many tribes have a highly developed technique of love
[832] charms; the Lovedu regard love charms as illegal, akin to sorcery and witchcraft, though there is one interesting exception, a rite based upon a religious pattern. Resort to love charms, except in the service of the arrangements of the social structure, would obviously strike at the basis of the conception that spouses are 'born for' one another.

583 We may now turn very briefly to the marriage ceremonial which, in harmony with the leading part played by the institution it supports, is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu life. Apart from its function of transferring the cattle and laying the foundations of a structure within which the greater part of human interrelations are enacted, the ceremonial stresses many values unconnected with marriage. The general plan of the ceremonial is patterned to the needs of the ideal form of marriage, that with the cattle-linked cross-cousin. In some neighbouring tribes, a man must bespeak his cross-cousin by paying a special beast; in others he must hand over an additional beast for her; but among the Lovedu all marriages are arranged on the one model, as if there were no other competing forms of marriage. Because the girl is said 'to be
584 born' for the boy, his parents simply send the 'goat of the skin cradle' to intimate that he is coming. It is a most appropriate action for, as she is 'born for' him, his people must provide the wherewithal in which to carry her, the cradle symbolizing nursing, tender care, and upbringing. Marriages to strangers, nevertheless, are initiated in the same way, as if the conception of being 'born for' the boy and its implications were projected upon them. It is only in the case of cross-cousin marriage that

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one speaks of 'binding the kin'; but the ceremonial of all marriages 584
significantly stresses this aim. The boy takes no prominent part in the proceedings; it is his mother who, as cattle-linked sister of his maternal uncle, is entitled to ask the uncle for a daughter and, as we have seen, he can refuse her only at the peril of having his house broken down. His sense of obligation, owing to the cattle he received, explains why the transaction must be in a ceremonial form.

There is no trace of hostility between the *vaguhulu* (sister's sons) and the *vamakhulu* (the people of the brother who gives the bride); they are always on the best of terms, even in the midst of the marriage negotiations. Structurally, the relationships between the two groups are liable to strains and tensions—so much so that *khɔrɔ* proceedings mainly turn upon, and have developed their special genius for effecting compromises in connexion with them. But equally the social system strives to set up reciprocities and to further smooth relations between them. An aggressive potentiality in the social system is converted into a co-operative actuality. We must expect no recriminations between the intermarrying groups, no bargaining for advantages, and no competitive displays; and indeed there are none.

All communications of a formal nature go through a *khiwaga* (umpire, one who settles disputes) or *madizila* (one who goes on the road between the parties); and both sides have such an umpire. In a cattle-linked cross-cousin marriage these umpires appear on the stage, not when the 'cradle' is sent, but only later. Their main function is phrased as being official witnesses of the gifts that pass and, in actual fact, in the courts it is always upon the evidence of the *zwiwaga* that reliance is placed; the *khɔrɔ* hardly ever decides what has to be returned upon divorce without calling them as witnesses. It is possible that their intervention between the parties in the marriage negotiations adds to the dignity and decorum of the situation; but they do not appear to be there to avoid the friction that in other tribes accompanies the hard bargaining. The gifts that may be asked are institutionalized and the idea that one party is trying to outwit the other is utterly foreign. The bride's people ask for what they want; the bridegroom's people do not always give it, but they never refuse: they say they will go and 'look for' it. It is a familiar formula—people are always 'looking for' the things they owe others; they may never find them, but that on the whole does not matter; what is important is the expression of their willingness. Bargaining and calculation are abhorrent; they cannot co-exist with the great reliance of the social structure upon mutuality and co-operation. And so in the marriage negotiations there is never any inquiry as to the resources of the boy's people, no tacit, much less express, agreement beforehand as to how much is to be handed over for the bride. The *munywalo* for a princess is no different from the *munywalo* for a commoner. The transactions move on slowly, perhaps over a period of many years. One may roughly distinguish certain stages, and here and there a stage, for some reason, not necessarily connected with the end result, is emphasized, marked by the delivery of a special beast or thrown into relief by a significant ceremony; but on the whole there is not the gradual unfolding of a plan such as in the initiations.

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583 We may single out for brief consideration a few of the many aspects of the marriage ceremonial. First there is the *munywalo*, the things of marriage (*hu nywala*). Of about thirty institutionalized gifts, each with its special name and special function, some pass in connexion with a ceremony, others mark the beginning or the end of a stage in the proceedings. The average *munywalo* is eight cattle, seven goats, £11 cash and odds and ends of clothes and cloths, beads and leg-rings to the value of about £2. There are variations, but they are not determined by the rank of the bride or the affluence of the bridegroom's people; poverty of the boy's family or general scarcity of cattle in the tribe affects some individual cases or lowers the amount as a whole. The cattle, which constitute over 70 per cent. of the value of the *munywalo*, are the cattle which came in through the marriage of a girl in the family of the bridegroom. The actual average corresponds very closely to the socially approved norm to-day, which is eight cattle, eight goats, £10, and various odds and ends; yet we must not imagine that the theoretical norm weighs heavily with the people. One rather gets the impression of a muddling through, of wide latitude allowed to personal inclinations, of no one striving consciously towards absolute conformity, yet somehow attaining it.

Munywalo, above all, 'builds villages': from the point of view of a man, it 'builds a hut for his brother-in-law', because it is he who in turn uses the cattle to *nywala* (marry) a wife; from the point of view of a woman, it 'builds the house where she [as cattle-linked sister] may put her things' and which will produce a daughter-in-law for her. Her cattle are the 'cattle of the gate' which open the way for her to the house. When a wife dies, the husband reports to her people that 'the house has fallen' and they may, if they like, re-establish it with a girl who 're-opens the door'. Even underlying the names of the main gifts that pass there is the same idea; these gifts appear symbolically to build a complete village and a complete herd. The value placed upon erecting a village is intelligible, but the insignificance of the role of cattle as food is in strong contrast to the emphasis in the terminology upon building up a herd. Among the *munywalo* animals are: the 'cow-and-calf of the men's *khɔrɔ*' (*ʂwɛdɛ ya khoroni*), the 'cow-and-calf of the women's place', the 'axe of the *khɔrɔ*' or its 'branch', which refers to the instruments or materials with which it is built; the 'string to tie the cattle', so that they can be milked; the 'knife' that enables the recipients to exercise the supreme right of killing them and that symbolizes the acquisition of control over them; the 'manure of the cattle', which represents a commodity of value in keeping the hut tidy, and, to mention only one other, the 'beast for bartering' (*khiṭuḍɔ*), which is to be traded for the grain that will sustain the household. The names are all associated with the cattle, the courtyard, the things that go to make up a home.

There is no notion of compensation for the loss of the bride. The home which is built is linked up, through the girl, with other homes, and the same cattle continue to build homes in an endless, interlinked series which firmly holds them all together. But to build for an all-comprehensive ideal is not enough. The individual builders must be made to feel

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that they have a personal stake in the social investment; their desire for 583
recognition cannot be ignored; to maintain their interest at the requisite intensity, they must be significantly rewarded. And so the 'cow-and-calf of the women's place' is conceived to be a personal reward to the bride's mother; it is her special property, not, indeed, to be detached from the chain of exchanges, for *munywalo* cattle must remain *munywalo* cattle and can never become unencumbered property of an individual, but to be preserved by her, if she so desires, in order that she may help her youngest son, who succours her in her old age. Often in the old days [83]
when the bride's chastity was an honour to be displayed, but rarely to-day, because absence of chastity is a disgrace to be concealed, the 'cow-and-calf of the woman's place' was withheld or claimed back if the bride proved not to be a virgin. As things are to-day, this gift mainly recognizes, as it also did in the old days, the special contribution of the mother to the health and strength and virtues of her daughter, the bride. The 'beast for bartering' is a contribution to help the mother of the bride, but not so much in her personal capacity as in her capacity as food-provider of the home; owing to the aversion to killing cattle, this beast passes to-day only in times of shortage when the bride's mother is really in need of grain.

The 'cow-and-calf of the courtyard' recognizes the special interest of the father and vicariously his male relatives; it is a gift that acknowledges their special services in bringing up the bride. The situation must be made acceptable also to the bride herself, for marriage is not an easy matter, involving new and heavy responsibilities and partially severing the bride from her home. In the old days the girl was usually given the *musubullo*, a cow, said to provide a change of clothing for her; to-day she is given £5 or £6 worth of clothes. But the rule that she forfeited this wedding outfit if she were found to be deflowered is in disuse to-day, since young men object to the public humiliation of their brides.

There are many other gifts which, apart from contributing to the main result, recognize particular aspects of the situation. The sending of the 'cradle', for instance, intimates that the sister lays her claim to the bride as her daughter-in-law and, when the goat is killed and members from both families partake of the meat, it is the tacit consent to the projected alliance to which the families, rather than the boy and girl, are the true parties. Or, again, the 'calabash of water', usually a goat, signifies that the boy is asking the girl to come and set up home with him, while the girl's people equally indicate with the 'goat of killing' their satisfaction that all they asked has been duly given and that, as far as they are concerned, the bride may now leave.

All too soon we must pass on to some other aspects of marriage cere- 584
monial. The absence of strained relations between the parties makes unnecessary the subterfuges and displays of hostility often found elsewhere in marriage negotiations. The go-between, whatever message he brings from the boy's family, is well received, for 'The messenger sent to swear at a king must fulfil his mission and cannot be harmed'. His first announcement is direct and to the point: 'I am sent by So-and-so to ask whether you will *beba* them' (that is, carry the girl in the cradle). This

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584 applies to marriages between strangers, for in the case of marriages between persons 'born for' one another, there is no go-between at this stage. The girl may dislike the proposed alliance and, though there is great social pressure on her to accept a proposal coming from the father's cattle-linked sister, she is not quite powerless. The society dislikes resorting to any form of compulsion. A proverb warns people that an unwilling bride is liable to commit suicide or to suffer some misfortune, and it is legitimate to send back the answer, 'We have no power. Ask the girl.' This formula seems to contradict *munywalo* dispositions, but the culture is full of apparent contradictions testifying to its flexibility and to the subjection even of institutional arrangements to the desire for agreement and compromise. At the formal betrothal, involving a public exchange of gifts, it is quite often not the bridegroom, even if he is available, but his sister or even his daughter that acts for him. One often sees a man's daughter paying what we would call the formal courting visits not merely on occasion, but from the beginning throughout all the years of negotiation until the end of the actual wedding. Indeed, the wedding itself may be by what we would call 'proxy'.

The courtship visits provide the prospective bridegroom with an opportunity for self-expression and contact with the age-mates of his bride, at least if he is not already an old man. Certainly, however, courtship is a conception very different from ours. The young man always takes a companion (if his sister or daughter goes, she also will take with her a girl friend) who serves as a link between him and the bride's friends. These are the affairs of the young people, which provide a whole side-show of their own, with its own rules, its observances, its entertainments and so on. There is no set number of visits and, except for the last visit, no development in the formal relations of the parties. The bride never reciprocates these visits. Restraint and caution characterize the bridegroom's, not his companion's, attitude, but he does not resist, or require any persuasion to accept the hospitality. Similarly, the bride maintains her distance, veiled in her blanket and inaccessible to her suitor, but her companions are not so reserved. The whole outward behaviour pattern is almost exactly that which is expected when a son-in-law or any member of his group visits his parents-in-law or any member of their group, with this addition that the bridegroom and bride are subject to special taboos, while by contrast, in private at least, their companions relax to an extent which we might regard as licentious.

In olden days there was a custom called *hu khatswa ditswi*, whereby the leader of the group of girls placed cakes of porridge one on top of the other on her left hand and thus offered food to the visiting bridegroom and his companion, but the last cake, the one resting on her hand, could not be eaten by them. It had to be left, just as nowadays some of the food given by the girls to the visitors must be left in the basket, as a sign, they say, of their good manners. There are countless observances of this nature, designed to impress upon the visitors the importance of good manners and dignified behaviour, and upon the hosts the necessity of being hospitable to their future brother-in-law. These things are of

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supreme consequence in supporting the structure that the marriage will 584
eventually build up. Courtship visits are concerned, not with courting, but with laying the foundations of the new pattern of reciprocity between the young people. They were cross-cousins before, free and easy in their relations with one another; after the marriage they are in-laws, between whom the delicate balance of adult privileges and responsibilities must be evenly maintained.

The courtship visits have other functions. They would hardly appeal to the young if there were no lighter side to the heavy burden of their serious purpose. All Lovedu ceremonial recognizes the need for diversity, for dramatic interest, for ringing the changes between the serious and the superficial, the purposeful and the playful, the grave and the comic. The bridegroom, unseen by his bride though he be, has a thrill in displaying his best clothes. He sometimes deliberately breaks taboos. In the old days the *musubullo* used to 'reveal' the bride, for only after it the bridegroom could see her and speak to her in private, a privilege he 431
obtains to-day by a gift of a few shillings or more (*hu nosa*) long before the *musubullo* is given. Nevertheless, there is to-day adventure in going to the store, where, besides making her wishes felt by requiring this or that as part of her *musubullo* (change of clothes), the bride must be coaxed by gifts to look at one thing, to handle another, and at every step. After he brings the calabash of water, 'the beast of asking the bride to come home with him', the bridegroom and his companion come on the *hu sela* visit. *Hu sela* means that they will 'trouble' the girl and her companions. In other tribes the parents have to be 'begged' to release the bride; the Lovedu *hu sela* is designed to irritate the parents so that they will be impatient of the bride's unwillingness to go and will bring pressure to bear upon her. For the *munywalo* has all passed and the will of the bride must not be allowed to cause them discomfort. The boy's companion especially makes things unpleasant. He interferes with the work of the girls, worries and annoys them at night when they want to sleep He tries to stir their hearts by playing a plaintive stringed instrument, pinches and beats them. But what is really effective is his interference with their cooking: he throws sticks and filth into the porridge pots, and the older people, always particular about the cleanliness of their food, complain bitterly and say that the bride had better go.

The drama ends usually with an exciting 'elopement' of the couple. 585
It is not a true but an institutionalized elopement. Sometimes it does 431
not occur and sometimes it occurs even after a religious ceremony with which, strictly speaking, it is incompatible. Indeed, theoretically the giving of the *musubullo* is supposed to exclude resort to an elopement. But the 'elopement' is so common that it is the only form usually described. One night the bridegroom, having left 1s., 'the thing resting under the mat', which in the old days was an arrow, surreptitiously escapes with the bride and her companions. The 'thing under the mat' explains the flight. The journey to the bridegroom's village is painfully slow: at each step the girls call a halt and have to be persuaded by gifts (*hu nosa*) to move on; they may even have to be pushed, threatened, carried. The bride is completely covered with a blanket amid the troop of girls as they

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585 431 walk in single file. The bride (and sometimes her companions too) weeps, fearful of the new life full of responsibilities. They visit the boy's cattle-linked sister to be offered a goat and as a reminder that it is that sister who with her cattle has erected the new home. There may be a dumb show as the girls, marching up and down, display their final reluctance to give up the bride and, by contrast, the old women humorously mock the girls. At the gate of the boy's village they have to be carried in, and at last, as they humbly crawl to enter the hut, some one pours water on the roof and you hear the song, 'Little bride of ochre, seek shelter, you are raining wet'.

This is merely the general plan; there are many embellishments and many variations. But of some significance and worth mentioning as illustrative of the comprehensive nature of the ceremonial are the last few gifts just before the bride leaves home. There is a goat or 10s. to 'lift' the bride from maiden to wife, for every important new step she takes may, in Lovedu phraseology, be made the occasion for asking something; another goat to 'take out the stamping block', symbolizing the transference of the bride's chief economically productive power; and still another to 'finish the complaints' of the bride's mother. Among neighbouring tribes there are similar gifts, but sometimes with different names and often, though having the same name, with different functions. A study of their reinterpretation by, and merging with the purposes of, each culture cannot be undertaken here. To two points we may, however, briefly refer. Occasionally among the Lovedu there are reciprocal feasts entailing the slaughter of a beast, first by the bride's and then by the bridegroom's family, and ending with an extra beast given by the latter to 'fill up the *munywalo*'. These feasts belong to a very different pattern, found, for instance, among the Ŭirwa, where bride and bridegroom before the final acts are made to sit together on a mat, are offered advice and given presents. Secondly, and in strong contrast to many other tribes, the bride comes to her new home without any presents from her people. The troop of girls carry a waisted basket (*khirudwana*) in which there are certain grains from the bride's village, but everything else except the grains, even her clothes, have been given her by the bridegroom. Her people give her nothing whatever to set up a new home. Household utensils she does not need, for she cooks in the hut and uses the pots and furniture of her mother-in-law until, with the coming of a younger daughter-in-law, she becomes independent and has her own cooking hut.

585 782 In a really orthodox marriage among the Lovedu there is a religious ceremony. It is preceded by the slaughter of the 'goat of killing' brought by the bridegroom; a leg is given to him and from the skin the bride's *thwyana* (skirt) is made. Thereafter a prayer is offered to the gods on behalf of the girl: 'Here is the woman. We let you know that she is leaving us. She is going to the place where she is married. Let her be happy there; let all she does there be right; let her be smeared with fat [have children]. We have no complaint against her [i.e. we shall not cause illness through being angry and so also you should not]; we have given her beads to help her so that she may make a good home where she

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is going.' It is, of course, an extempore prayer, not bound to any set words. After this rite there is no need to elope; it is *hu vega*, to marry with proper rites, not *hu ʃala*, to run away surreptitiously. Yet the secret elopement by night is so interesting that it frequently follows, and in any case the slow journey of the troop of girls, who must be persuaded at every step, is always part of the ceremony. 585 782

The final stage of the marriage ceremonial consists of several successive steps lasting a month or longer. Again a whole series of new gifts (*manosa*) passes and new rites are enacted. From early morning until late at night the bride's companions are busy—cooking, stamping mealies, bringing water for the inmates of the village to wash in, and in other ways. At night there are contests of riddles between the visiting girls and the boys and girls of the village; they are ordinary riddles (*dithai*), not those curious *dinyɛbo* that end the initiations, but the pattern of the institution is the same. There is, for instance, the *hu nosa* of the girls at every turn and their exaggerated politeness. Then, after a week, having fetched wood and distributed among themselves the gifts received, the bride's companions go home, crawling out of the village and accompanied some way by the boys. The bride is now alone and, still in her finery, she begins to do the household work. When she menstruates for the first time, she secretly 'flees the moon' (*hu shava muɛdi*), running to an old woman, who takes her back with beer of 'shunning the moon' and a goat is killed for her. This shunning of the menses is a minor detail in marriage ceremonial, with rules and observances, however, in which the virginity of the bride, the part played by the go-between, the division of the beer and meat, the reciprocal duties of the *vamakhulu* and the *vaḑuhulu*, the one giving beer, the other returning a goat, are once more emphasized. 585 431 [841]

But all the rites and ceremonies are equally full of meaning, not only for the purpose in hand, but for the whole social structure. About three or four weeks after the marriage the bride goes to her home with the goat or 10s. of 'pouring out her bridehood' (*hu shulla vumyɛji*), and thereafter, according to ideal standards, the bridegroom may exercise full marital rights. This 'pouring out', with its associated observances, is still universally carried out, though the couple may already have received permission to cohabit. If the bridegroom migrates to town, as sometimes happens, before the home-bringing of the bride, the breach of orthodox rules, implied by the premature permission, is avoided. After a while the bride returns and brings the beer to 'open the way' for her mother. In the old days the boy's people then sent the *hu hobɛla* goat, the goat 'of asking permission' for the consummation of the marriage. At the stage when permission to cohabit is given, the couple are ritually mixed, the ceremony varying from mutual inoculation to common steaming under a blanket: it is a rite pregnant with meaning and with the associations it acquires as being a part of many other ritual occasions. The bride becomes an apprentice to her mother-in-law, there are avoidances and gifts (*manosa*) to remove them and so, at every stage, the marriage ceremonial is cut to the configuration of the social structure, fitted into its foundations and walls, and made to merge into the smallest details of its ornamentation.

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583 There are scores of aspects we cannot even touch upon. There are rules as to the kind of cattle or other beasts that may properly be used as *munywalo*: the rules may seem curious to us, but they have their reason in social and other arrangements. The number seven is taboo, for [801] the seventh finger 'points', as does a witch when he says, 'You'll *see*,' and it is wrong so to point at one's in-laws, with whom co-operation is [825] essential. Similarly, as the size of the testicles of full-grown male animals is an insult, because it is a challenge, such uncastrated animals cannot be part of the *munywalo*. So also yellowish cattle presage jealousies between co-wives; they will cause the bride to run away. Marriage is patrilocal, otherwise a man is said 'to have been married by his wife'; it is good to live near, but not too near, one's wife's people; for, if proximity is an economic and social advantage, to live under the roof of the parents-in-law is to relinquish all authority in one's own home. Generally speaking, the bride's family do not call the bridegroom to help them with actual work, such as building huts or ploughing. But the idea of service instead of, or in addition to, *munywalo* is faintly reflected in the fact that men now still living were required towards the end of the ceremonial to build a hut for their parents-in-law. The rule was that, when bridegroom had completed the hut, he climbed to the roof and refused to come down until the bride was immediately released to go home with him and she by greeting (*hu bsha*) signified her willingness to come. Such a hut in case of divorce counted as one head of cattle. And perhaps we should add, though it is clearly implied in all we have said, that no one except the boy's parents contributes and no one except the house of the girl's mother receives the *munywalo*. More than that, a man cannot help the son of one house by taking the cattle of another, for it is said, 'One house cannot eat the property of another,' though this, as everything else, is subject to the supreme principle that 'if they agree', the rigidity of the rule may be relaxed. It may involve difficult readjustments, but agreement is conceived as being able to overcome the difficulties. Sometimes also a relative who has brought up the bride is given one of the beasts of her *munywalo*, but it is not a custom as in many tribes, it is merely a matter of agreement.

581 The sexual aspect of marriage is treated with great moderation. Among us, where love looms large and represents a romantic ideal when we are young, it more often than not ends in disillusionment when we are old. The structure of Lovedu society lays no stress upon sexual compatibility, and marriage almost completely ignores sexual adjustments. Co-operation and agreement as regards its main purposes, both economic and structural, not companionship of husband and wife, is the ideal. Agreement is the watchword of the society, the guarantee of harmonious relations between spouses as well as co-wives. In describing the possible relations and dispositions within the family, no phrase is more frequently used than the phrase, 'if they agree'. No custom, no rule, no arrangement, decreed by the laws of the family, are absolute; and because the *khoro* judicial proceedings deal with difficulties in the family and in the social structure, they also are guided and controlled by agreement and compromises. And so it is agreement, not sexual compatibility, which is the

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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense 581
marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the 837
nadawu institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of completely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the purposes of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suckling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried people who have their lovers (*nadawu*). Nevertheless, a European finds it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grandmothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our preferences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should as often as not be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient 831
of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their 848
spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the 684
nyali) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Tongs. The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men, but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy and was proudly worn by her younger sister; if not, the girl's people had to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity 831
be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. 848
Girls are still examined, especially at the *khoba*, but the matter is private; 847
and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sins 753
of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*glore* or *ushwafe nya nasadi*). A man gets *glore* from intercourse with a woman who has had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death from *glore* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter. 593

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593 If a wife refuses cohabitation, there is usually a good reason, but a reason that has nothing to do with sexual incompatibility. The husband concerned will perhaps solicit the aid of the old women; but never will he dare say that he can go elsewhere for his pleasure, for she has equal power to retaliate in that manner. The Lovedu know
833 of the belief of other tribes that continued sexual intercourse after
843 pregnancy builds up the child forming in the womb. They also continue intercourse, but they do not stress, and even deny, that semen builds up the foetus. It is worth noting that sexual intercourse at a late stage of pregnancy (after the seventh month) is considered not quite correct, and this ideal is reflected in the anger of the midwives, who may reprimand the husband if they find signs, as they think, of his semen on the new-born infant. Nor is the sexual act brought into relation with so many special occasions as elsewhere; it has not to any extent been institutionalized in connexion with dangerous or new enterprises, as is the case among the Shangana-Tonga in their midst. Full coitus is taboo while a mother suckles her child; the milk of the new pregnancy will poison the child, but a child is not sent away when sexual relations are
842 resumed. Even the theme of fertility is handled with moderation or submerged under a mass of ritual. A wife is not ochred on her first pregnancy and, in those ceremonies that are directed to fertility, this motive is kept far in the background. Likewise, barrenness in a woman is not regarded as entitling a man to nullify his marriage and, when a substitute is sent, the children are presumed to be, not the children of the barren wife, but of the substitute. The conception of 'buying a womb' is negatived by the fact that full *masyusalo* is given for the substitute, who is not subservient to, but independent of, the barren wife. These arrangements also imply that barrenness is not a great humiliation.
837 A married woman is theoretically denied the right of having children if her husband is impotent or absents himself for years. In practice, 'picking up children in the veld' is realistically tolerated, but it must be done surreptitiously, for the custom in other tribes, whereby the husband appoints a 'bull', is not approved. A wife can never be lent to another, for, as the proverb runs, 'About clothes you may say, "Lend them to me," but never about a woman' (*ng'adimeni gi a gwo, musadia a na ng'adime*).

Marital fidelity is not a matter of great importance; a father will reprimand his adulterous son, but only because in his pursuit of other women he fails in his duty to look after his wife—that is the main thing in marriage. Similarly a wife's adultery can never be the cause of divorce; but it must be judicious; it must not offend the proprieties. No doubt a man has greater opportunities than a woman and before marriage one may speak of a double standard of morality, but after marriage the differences are small. Both a husband and a wife can administer medicines to the other partner, making extra-marital irregularities very dangerous to health. A wife during pregnancy by a lover is also a grave danger to her husband. On the whole, the remarkable thing is, not that there is marital infidelity, but that there is so little of it. After all, a man may not 'mix' his wives; he cannot go from the one to the other; he cannot bring

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home a second wife until his first has had a child or, more usually to-day, until she is pregnant; and he has to avoid his wife to some extent until the baby is weaned, a period of three years or even more. 837

If a wife is barren, a substitute may, as we have seen, be sent. The whole subject of substitution is too large for adequate treatment here, but some aspects of it may be mentioned. Among the Lovedu a man may marry two sisters in the ordinary course of events, quite irrespective of whether the first married has prematurely died or is barren, but the wife's sister is not specially reserved for the husband as if he had a prior right to her. The marriage is desirable, not enjoined by the society, when it is known that the sisters will co-operate and care for each other's children. In the case of barrenness, there is substitution, but the substitute wife is not a subservient wife. It is not a case of true substitution, but a strengthening of a weak link in the chain of bride and cattle exchanges. A barren wife cannot be discarded; on the contrary, the insistence upon treating her well, though it recognizes, also represses the tendency to regard her position with misgivings. Men make a great effort, by treating a barren wife well, to elicit the praise of others, especially the queen, whose continuous interest is a guarantee that the virtue will be idealised. There are other considerations that reinforce the great concern of a female ruler for peacefulness and good relations. A man who ill-treats his barren wife need expect no reciprocity from her parents, and he has no weapons against them. He cannot demand back his cattle, for failure to have children does not vitiate the cattle exchanges. He cannot even initiate the procedure whereby his parents-in-law will send him a substitute. On the contrary, he must await their pleasure and if they do decide to send a substitute, he must *nyusela* (give cattle), and he may be asked more *mayusela* than for her sister. But if he has been a good husband and is poor, less may be asked. A man realizes that the virtue of treating a barren wife well is richly rewarded. 842 595

Similarly, a husband whose wife has died prematurely without issue is in the same position: he has no right to demand a substitute or, in default, the return of the *mayusela*. When he is offered his wife's sister or other suitable substitute, he must hand over cattle for her. It is true that the substitute sets up the house that 'has fallen', but the really important point is that the relationship created by the cattle exchanges should be maintained. A husband must report the death of his wife with an ox; he must call her people to the ceremony ending the mourning period; he must continue his visits as son-in-law; he must always be prepared to help his parents-in-law. All this will not necessarily induce them to give him a substitute; and if he neglects these things, the potential right to such substitute is not effaced. On the other hand, his parents-in-law must continue to honour him when he visits, they must still send him beer, they must acknowledge relationship with him. If they do not do these things, if they spread tales that he has been the cause of the death of their daughter, the relationship may be broken; and consequently the claim to a substitute, non-existent before, now is given recognition. If they value the link broken by their conduct they must reforge it by sending a substitute; if they do not, their action has already caused it to snap 587 768

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587 and the *munywalo* must be returned. But it is only at the stage where
768 interrelations have become intolerably strained that the widower can demand back his cattle. The law thus is that a man who has lost his wife has no right to demand a substitute; but if it appears that his parents-in-law maliciously refuse to give him one, in circumstances that break the bonds established by the *munywalo*, he may do so.

Substitutions have to be distinguished from inheritances of spouses, for the latter is not spoken of as marriage at all; it is '*hu khwa*', to hand over or allocate, and implies looking after. Among some of the neighbouring tribes, a man may, on the death of the brother, inherit the wife of his brother, both of his elder or his younger brother. Among the Lovedu the theoretical rule is that only a younger brother may inherit an elder brother's wife; but sometimes, if the parties agree, it is the elder brother who inherits. Among some tribes a man cannot inherit his father's wives, unless they are wives that have not yet actually been married. Among them the supreme vice, the sin that disqualifies even the heir to the throne, is to 'spoil' the wives of their father. Among the Lovedu the two things are not interconnected, and a man may inherit any of his deceased father's wives, if he calls them *mmani* (little mother), which implies that they are wives junior to his mother. A woman may inherit
[588] wives just as she may marry them, especially the widow of her cattle-linked brother, but also the widow of her elder or of her younger brother. There are no rigid rules as regards inheritance of wives; if a man's younger brothers are preferred to his sons and the latter are preferred to the sons of the younger brothers, the actual arrangements are in essence determined by the deceased's cattle-linked sister, who officiates but acts upon the advice of her father's brother or her own brothers and sisters. It is all a matter of agreement. There is no institutionalized method whereby the inherited wives may signify their approval or disapproval, but in practice they are exceedingly independent, almost invariably remain in their own village wherever the man who inherits them may be, and not infrequently become everybody's prey. They sometimes marry wives of their own, which releases them from undue dependence upon their inheritors, who are, however, obliged to assist them in the things that men do. Sometimes their gardens and houses, just as their beer drinks and entertainments, are markedly superior to those of married women; for they are able to accept favours from numerous admirers. And on the whole the lot of a widow is not an unenviable one.

A man cannot inherit his mother's sister, nor can he inherit the wife of a son of his mother's sister. Such arrangements would be incongruous with the *munywalo* complex, for 'two sisters cannot eat one another's property'. Nor may a father inherit his son's wife; it would upset the hierarchical arrangement of the society. Again, a man cannot inherit his mother's brother's wife, even if she is not the mother of his own wife. It is also curious that the Lovedu do not attach great importance to seed-raising. They speak of 'raising seed to the family' (*hu dzosa mulogo*) when a girl marries at her cattle-linked aunt's, and that is the primary meaning of the phrase. A younger brother who takes his elder brother's widow

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *munywalo* scheme.

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagambi, a man of thirty-five, scorned to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*mugaula*) has in practice a high status.

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *mugaula*, and when he died the *mugaula* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *mugaula* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *mugaula* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *mugaula* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, even jealousies, between a man and his *mugaula* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Muhale complained, not that his son was living with a *mugaula*, but that the *mugaula's* laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *mugaula* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. A man who illicitly lives upon a woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*madilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father of the porridge bowls' (*ramadilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *munywalo* and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *munywalo* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *munywalo* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

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578 unmanageable complication arises, unless there is agreement between all the persons interested: the son to whom the cattle should have been allotted, the daughter from whose marriage they came, the house established by these cattle, and the father himself. Tensions arise in many other ways: neglect of one wife and favouritism of another in respect of economic services, interference with the independence of the houses, and so on. Unwillingness to co-operate in the home and in fulfilling the wider group obligations is a more potent cause of trouble than adultery; and witchcraft, except as a symptom of tensions otherwise created, takes a minor place; and neither adultery nor witchcraft as such can snap the *munywalo* bonds.

426 The character of these tensions may be briefly illustrated by the case
595 of Muvirwa and Mara. Faced with starvation, Mara obtained cattle
684 from Muvirwa (who was a friend, not a relative), promising, in accordance with the 'mud-stamper' institution, a daughter in exchange. In fact, this daughter, the little 'mud-stamper', as she is called, because she is too young to stamp mealies, was not yet in existence. That is not unusual in these transactions, which require that the 'mud-stamper' shall in due course be given gratuitously to the benefactor; and thereby the two lineages become cattle-linked, so that, for instance, Mara and his descendants would have to offer brides and receive cattle and Muvirwa and his descendants would offer cattle and receive brides. If Mara had no brides to offer, Muvirwa would still have to give cattle; otherwise the link might be broken. The 'mud-stamper', after reaching years of discretion, may dislike the benefactor, who is usually already old and decrepit, and that may lead to conflicts. In this instance, when Mara's daughter entered her *khoba* initiation, Muvirwa, as is customary, paid the *levala* goat, for a bridegroom for whom a bride is 'born' must, so to speak, nurse her and 'grow' her. Not long afterwards the 'mud-stamper' died. Mara offered another daughter and, as the girl had died before actual marriage, no further *munywalo* was required from Muvirwa. But the substitute, having grown up, married and then deserted Muvirwa, who was already very old; she ran away to a lover, Mara himself conniving at the desertion. Mara returned some cattle to Muvirwa, thereby severing the relationship, and promised the balance when the lover had paid *munywalo*.

684 Years passed and nothing happened. Muvirwa eventually brought an action, which Magaebia, Mara's wife, contested. She said that on the death of the 'mud-stamper' she had offered to return the cattle, but this was refused, that the substitute was forced to marry Muvirwa against her will, and that the religious ceremony was omitted. Muvirwa replied that he had already received seventeen of the twenty-four cattle (the number to which the original eight had increased), that it was thus not he who had broken the relationship, and that the religious ceremony, which for various reasons could not be held in Mara's village, had taken place at the village of Magaebia's brother. The court could not but side with Mara, but it tried hard to reduce his claim, for twenty-four cattle, it said, were an enormous number. Then recriminations broke out between Mara and his wife, which revealed a many-sided conflict in the

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family. 'That woman,' said Mara, indicating his wife, 'took her daughter from Muoirwa and gave her to the lover because I had eaten four of Muoirwa's cattle. Two of them I gave to a son of another house to help him marry and two I sold for food. My wife disagreed and deserted me. Now the lover has given seven cattle to my wife. She can pay Muoirwa with them. As for me, I wash my hands of the whole matter, because my wife has deserted me.' But Magsebia replied, 'It is you who, seeing the seven cattle arrive, urged me and my daughters to marry a wife with them. They refused and the cattle have died.' The court, realizing the nature of the conflict, said, 'We see that you, Mara, were planning things to your own advantage. But you have already paid many cattle. It will be enough, if Muoirwa agrees, that you give him four more cattle, to show that you are weeping with him, for he has lost a wife (the 'mud-stamper' who died). If you do so, we shall know that you are not bad people. As for the disagreement between you and your wife, the discussion where to get the four cattle may bring you together again. Go home and decide the matter between yourselves.' The court was right. Mara had another daughter from whose marriage he was receiving cattle and he had thought of using the cattle for himself, as the daughter, siding with her mother, had also deserted him. That would have led to further complications. It was better to give way and arrange amicably with his wife how the future claims of her house should be settled. And once this was done, the cause of the conflict disappeared.

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CHAPTER X

COGS IN THE POLITICAL MACHINERY

Ritual suicide, divine selection, the fire rite, and celibacy as aspects of the royal complex of institutions—links in the political system forged by the wives of the queen—the part women play in politics—structure and individuality of the districts.

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THE political system is not a thing apart, standing aloof from marriage and social structure. These and other institutions are closely interwoven. The political scheme is effective largely because it is patterned upon the arrangements and relies upon the genius of the social system. Its most emphasized aspects are the elaboration of institutions which centre in the queen and the highly developed local administration in the hands of the district heads. The districts form a federation rather than a union, but their autonomy is counterbalanced by subtle devices holding them closely together in the meshes of a web radiating from the capital. The district and the tribe itself may, from certain points of view, be regarded as the village writ large, but the village is not a political unit, and the approach from its organization is not comprehensive enough for fruitful examination.

The district, with its distinctive community life, is linked to the capital upon the pattern of reciprocities created by marriage and *mawundo*, the system thus harmonizing with the most powerfully supported institutions. The reliance upon the queen as a rain-making divinity further stimulates the growth of a common tribal consciousness. Elsewhere chiefs are also rain magicians, but failure to produce rain is not a fatal defect. The Lovedu queen, however, suffers deposition if she fails, and it is upon her rain-making divinity that are based the structure of the royal institutions and much of the political system. And the two systems, centring apparently poles apart, the one in marriage and *mawundo* and the other in rain-making, have been interlocked as skilfully as the most intricate piece of machinery.

The complexity of the tribe as regards constituent groups, and the submergence of the royal group amid the other groups create a problem which, from the point of view of tribal solidarity, could conceivably be solved in many ways. The Lovedu solution stresses local autonomy side by side with social links. Many functions elsewhere reserved to chiefs are exercised by district heads, and the theoretical authority of the queen is seldom interposed in practice. Yet they are powers of persuasion, not of coercion. Her authority is congruent with the main emphases of the society: the reliance on compromise, the aversion from military institutions, and the subtlety of feminine persuasion. These characteristics promoted the willing allegiance of the many foreigners drawn to the sanctuary of Uulovedu, where they were safeguarded, not only against their foes, but also against the uncertainties of nature. In return for protection and security, they sent their daughters and sisters to be the wives of the

[See categories 582 and 583 in Analysis]

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queen. And in the system these wives, after a period of training at the royal court, were re-allocated to district heads and royal relatives.

The system is not unknown elsewhere. Among the Shona, so we are told by Bullock, when one tribe conquered another, the survivors were incorporated by being given wives; in time of famine, tribes sometimes exchanged their daughters for food; and some of the Mambo handed their wives to their bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but faithful service. The Rozwi appear to have maintained their dominance over subjected chiefs, not by deposing them, but by assisting in their ceremonial appointment and the superimposition of the cult of Mwari, the high god, which had its priesthood and could withhold rain. This cluster of institutions is interesting to us because the Lovedu came from those parts and have retained some of their features. Lovedu district heads give 'tributary' wives to the queen in exchange for rain and these wives are re-allocated to important men. But the form and setting of the institution has changed; the circulation of wives, drawn into the network of the political and social scheme, subserves the purposes of the Lovedu cultural configuration.

By singling out for brief consideration the complex of royal institutions and of districts, we are giving prominence to certain aspects of the political structure. That is unavoidable in a generalized account, which must largely ignore the variations among the 140 districts (of which fifty are on European-owned land). We have often referred to cultural divergences and the tolerance towards them. In the autonomous districts they are very much in evidence. You may be told over and over again there is no such thing as ancestors represented by snakes, except among the possessed and in their cult; and the conception seems alien to a religion in which ancestors are not reincarnated in an animal, but animals may be dedicated to ancestors. Yet suddenly one day you may find that the sacred object (*thagula*) of a head of a district, such as Relela, is a snake. The lack of uniformity and the tolerance of almost contradictory customs may give the impression of ineffective political institutions. Conformity there must be in the interests of economy and solidarity, but the conformity need not be that of a regimented society such as ours. As to the royal cluster of institutions, we shall consider those maintaining the confidence of the people in the powers of the queen, and those converting tribute of wives into the visible links of the social organization. The elaboration of the royal institutions must not, however, obscure the essential humanity of the queen; we do not deal with the latter, but we must remember that it is a factor of great importance in the dynamics of these institutions.

In 140 years there have been only three queens, and Mujaji III, after having already ruled for over forty-three years, is still physically strong and is said never to have had a day's illness. The Lovedu attach little importance to the longevity of their queens, who in other tribes have been immortalized. In the north, whence the Lovedu came, kings ruled only for brief periods; they were not allowed to become old or decrepit, lest the kingdom suffer; and either they committed suicide or they were killed. Don Santos, writing in 1607, records that the kings of

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643 Sofala had formerly to take poison when disaster or a natural defect fell
171 upon them. Among the Lovedu, tradition decrees that the queen shall have no physical defect and must poison herself, not when she is old, but at the end of the fourth initiation (*vudiga*) of her reign. The emergence of physical imperfections and the holding of the fourth *vudiga* cannot both determine the date of suicide. In fact, no reign has been cut short because of bodily defects, though the conception of the relation survives. The queen is believed to be immune from disease and it is thought that her first will be her last illness; it is even said that Mujaji III's elder uterine brother was excluded from the throne because of his weak ankles. At the same time, not kings, but queens are wanted, there are no tests of physical fitness as are recorded for tribes in the north, and in the legends
[173] of the Lovedu and of tribes which, following the Lovedu, have ritual suicide, physical defects do not figure as a theme. In this complex, heirs to the throne have been disqualified or chiefs have been deposed because of inability to make rain, disobedience to their sovereign, or adultery with his wives. Among the Mamaila, a branch of the Lovedu, one chief is said to have become a cripple because he forced open the door which magically yields to the touch of the true heir, and the Nemesis that overtook him is attributed to his sin, not to his defect. Impotence disqualifies in the north, but Mujaji II was barren and, in the pattern as adopted in some tribes, such as the Khaha of Maake, barrenness of the queen is expected; for, as the queen may have no official husband, it is a virtue to have no children. That conception is not accepted by the Lovedu, for Mujaji II's barrenness was a source of sadness and strife and every effort was made to cure her. Physical fitness is an aspect of the perfection and divinity of the queen, but it has no practical relation to the right of succession.

643 The relation between the length of a reign and the initiations is far
778 more obscure. In many tribes where ritual suicide is enjoined (Thavina,
171 Khaha, Ŭirwa), the number of 'schools' is said to be seven. The 'schools' are there held more frequently, and possibly there is some connexion
177 with the number of sacred drums (*digɔma*), for the Khaha have seven and the Lovedu four. The chief's life, as we have seen, is intimately bound up with the drums; both drums and 'schools' are great *dogɔma*, objects or activities in which power is concentrated. Power is also concentrated in *dithugula*, a category of objects chiefly associated with the gods. The distinction is not that between magic and religion; the *digɔma* and *dithugula* appear to belong to different cultural complexes. The one was characterized, we may suppose, by 'schools', drums, and cults linked up with national calendric observances, dramatization of the crises in life, and the sanctity and power of the chief; the other, by sacred beads, shrines, reincarnation of ancestors in dedicated animals, and ritual suicide of the chief. In the process of merging, the great *digɔma* were, we suggest, grafted on to the royal institutions and brought into relation with the life as well as the death of the chief. This is little more than speculation, for it is difficult to isolate the oldest cultural substrata and their distinctive patterns.

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly,

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The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly, 643
ritual suicide is not conceived to have any relation to the welfare of the 762
country. People do not say that the country will suffer if the physical 731
powers of the queen fail. But ritual suicide does elevate the queen to a divinity; only by her act, not because of susceptibility to the weaknesses of man, can she die. Age neither increases nor decreases her powers. She is the 'soil'; her death 'heals' or 'dries up' the soil in the double sense of defiling it (as twins do) and scorching it (as the sun does); and as they phrase it, the 'country dies with its owner'. Consequently, after the queen's death, famines come, cattle and people succumb, and many flee the country. When Mujaji II committed suicide in 1894, there followed the *matshona*, the three years of unprecedented drought and pests, during which, according to contemporary European observers, practically all the cattle and a third of the population died. After the death of Mugɔdɔ, likewise, there was a great famine. The only other famine vividly recorded by tradition was during the reign of a chief who, being a usurper, was unable to make rain. Though the death of a chief presages death of the country, there is no great hurry to appoint a new queen. To the unfolding of a plan that guarantees abundance, immediate needs, even the need for the life-giving rain, must be subordinated.

For an account of succession to the throne we have to rely upon the 643
memories of men who were adults forty-five years ago. The practical 762
and the ideal are confused in their minds. The generalized account we give is thus not specifically related to the death of Mujaji II unless otherwise indicated. Shortly before her death, the queen calls together her great men, sits silently looking at them for a while, and then retires to her hut. She will not see again the young boys who have gone to the *vudiga*. Long before this, Mujaji II and her inner 'council' had named the daughter of Leakhali, who was her 'sister' and great wife, as successor; she had driven both mother and daughter with their brothers from the country, but was secretly receiving and instructing the daughter. None but a small circle of close relatives knew of these arrangements; and a little later she took poison (*khitaba*) [278] in which the fatal ingredients are said to be the brain and spinal cord of the crocodile. There is a rule that the killer of a crocodile is for ever debarred from entering the capital, a prohibition patterned [784] upon the taboos against bringing into a village the wood of trees with which shrines and protective charms (*dithugula*) are made, for these trees 'reveal', and so render useless, what they create. The poison is not conceived to kill instantaneously; the queen dies in the presence of those who know the secrets, but the death is not made public. Those who pass the royal hut still greet her; even cases are still submitted as if for her final decision. Deception of the people is the aim emphasized in descriptions and in phraseology. In the old days many cattle were killed 'to deceive the people', but neither this killing, which provided at least for the funeral feast and the skin for the dead body, nor the other arrangements, had this function only. The spirit of the deceased continues, as it were, to preside over the country and no one could take over the reins 643
of government. 766

The body decomposes, it is ritually rubbed (*hu fɔrɔla*) to remove skin 789

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and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mufugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mufugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khɔrɔ* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mufugo* (*hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualises its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite. 372 783 177

Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khoba*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*ondiga*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*washe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *nyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu swa*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mufugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mufugo* is used before the accession of a new queen. 372 881 783

Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, i.e. firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mufugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. 372 643 651

Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *gwa* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*diphaba*) in which the products of the sea are the most powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mufugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler. 372 789

Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly reasserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be suspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite. 372 783 643

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643 After the fire rite there follows the rite of opening the door, which will
578 determine the identity of the heir. No one knows for certain who will succeed. Some nobles, availing themselves of the interregnum, mobilize their supporters, and all come fully armed, for there is sure to be some display of hostility. Even in 1896, at the accession of Mujaji III, a son of a wife of Mujaji II and great councillor marched upon the capital supported by the Mahasha, but there was no strife, as Mujaji III's followers were prepared. The rival claimants, in the presence of the
[342] assembled people, go one by one to the hut in which the queen died and which (like one of the queen's huts even to-day) has two doors. They approach the door one by one, address the spirit of the deceased, saying who they are, and lightly touch the door. It is arranged that the most ambitious claimants go first, and those who are indifferent as regards their prospects last, the true heir to whom the door will open taking his place between them.

The spirit of the deceased, by opening the door, chooses the successor. The new queen, taking the axe, spear, and shield of her royal predecessors, escapes by the other door. She may have to flee, if the party of a rival is too strong, but in time she will be formally presented by a great councillor to the people. There is doubt as to the fate of the person who held the door from within: some say he must die, others that he is given a wife and sent out of the country. There is much uncertainty and secrecy about what happened in 1896; it is even doubted whether the door was opened. The reason lay in the fear of European intervention, for just previously the Boer General had been deceived and the lowveld tribes conquered, as described in Chapter I. Cowed by disaster, the Lovedu wisely decided to emphasize, not their own ritual, but the formal confirmation of the accession by the European.

643 The opening of the door, as known among neighbouring tribes, serves
578 chiefly to resolve conflicts between rivals to the throne. It sometimes
173 co-exists with institutional predetermination of the heir—for instance, where he must be the chief son of a wife married with special ceremonies and with cattle contributed by the whole tribe, the issue of a house in which the tribesmen all have a stake. In such circumstances conflicts arise, and European authority throws its weight on the side of 'constitutional arrangements' rather than 'coincidence'. In some tribes the opening of the door serves to strengthen the claim of the institutional heir; that is the case where there is no great massing of institutions behind the chief heir and conflicts are liable to break out if there are several claimants of standing. Among the Lovedu, succession was quite uncertain, the personal choice of the chief, not primogeniture, being stressed. The great son seldom succeeded, it is said, because the second child was favoured; and that is one explanation of the origin of the Mamaila, Sekhopo, and Rakhwadu tribes, for the great son was driven out of the country. In traditional history the 'Filler of the Rivers', who was chief son and seized the throne, had to make way for the 'Drainer of the Rivers', who proved to be the choice of his father and to whom the rain secrets had been imparted. Khashani, the great son, was expelled by Mugodo, his younger brother (we do not know whether he was the second son), of whom it is

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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the 643
people. Khashani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as 578
well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugɔdɔ, 173
which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugɔdɔ was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwareni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by 643
them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by 644
an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong [847] social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much 643
stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in 578
doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and 687
her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely 644
expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled

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643 to join him in exile. The conflict was so serious that the tribe seethed
578 with disaffection, though the queen seemed to be torn between love for
687 her daughter and disapproval of the whole episode. The present conflict
644 is in many respects typical. There is, as there used to be in the past, strife between the old councillors, who lose their power when the old queen dies, and the new councillors, who side with the new queen. The latter gradually supplant the former, but regard with fear the day when the friends of the heir in turn will oust them. This struggle is very real, and seems to reflect a more fundamental conflict; for the exalted purpose of the royal institutions exacts an unnatural sacrifice by the queen in order to make way for the heir she naturally loves.

643 The whole royal complex is perfectly logical once it is granted that there
644 must be queens, that succession is uncertain, and that ritual suicide is the guarantee of the chief's divinity. In a society in which the 'sister' (*khadi*) is priestess, her great religious role, still seen to-day among neighbouring tribes where chiefs are males, falls to the queen among the Lovedu. The ideal, imperfectly actualized since queens replaced kings, still persists that the *khadi* of the chief should have power and be given a large district to rule. In theory the brother of the chief is the great councillor, general, and judge. But in practice the complications set up by having queens throws these arrangements out of gear. True to pattern, the greatest district head is to-day a woman, who is a 'sister' to the queen and, though a 'sister' threefold (through mother, legal father, and paternal uncle), she is not the uterine or ritual 'sister'. At present the relatives through the queen's mother, not through Mujaji II her legal father, are important councillors, but it is not unlikely that in the next reign the great councillors will be the present heir's relatives through her legal father, the queen, who is also her physiological mother.

642 Owing to the inapplicability of the term 'council' to Lovedu arrange-
643 ments, we need say only a few words on this subject. There is no need
644 of a visible organization to support Lovedu court life, which is ceremonious, but not politically oriented. Power and authority derive from the queen's divine appointment, her exclusive secret of rain-making, and her strategic position in the social web. She is neither a military nor a political leader; she does not even have a priesthood organization to assist her in her function as high-priest. There are confidential advisers, but they neither constitute the more or less definite secret council (*sephiri*) of some neighbouring tribes nor necessarily function as political councillors; on the contrary the former, having assisted in the accession of the queen, are in institutional conflict with the latter, who later gain political control. The councillors represent the assertion of power by the rising generation of men in the sphere of law and politics as against women and the older generation in ritual, religion, and the social system. They are part mainly of the court (*khɔrɔ*) and the tribal gathering (*khɔrɔjɔ*), two indeterminate bodies.

644 Confidential advisers are mainly important district heads; councillors
643 are always residents in the capital. Both are relatives, but, in the case of
634 the confidants, not necessarily close relatives of the queen. In the inner royal circle, the closest kin are necessarily those reckoned through the

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queen's mother—that is, either the queen's predecessor on the throne or, if she has borne no children, the queen's physiological mother. The unofficial husbands of the queens are brothers chosen from the line of Malegudu (elder brother of Mujaji I), but relationship is not reckoned through them as fathers. Closeness of relationship is important, but personality and opportunity count as much. The most influential councillor is often said to be the queen's mother's brother—in other words, the brother of the deceased queen or, if she has no issue, the brother of the wife of the queen who bore the queen. In fact, however, other relatives rise to equally influential positions. To take a concrete instance, the councillors of Mujaji III have been relatives either through Leakhali, chief wife and 'sister' of Mujaji II and physiological mother of Mujaji III, or through Mujaji II, her mother, Mujaji I, and the latter's brothers, such as Malegudu. Muneri, the chief councillor to-day, is Leakhali's uterine brother's son, and before him there were Mulogwane, uterine brother of the queen, and also Leakhali's uterine brother. Earlier still, but in the present queen's time, the greatest councillors were others tracing descent from Malegudu. There is no precise rule either as to the number or identity of the councillors. The *duna* of the queen should not be a relative; he is merely a messenger, and, unlike the *induna* elsewhere, is of no account, having no special legal or other status or function.

The *khivijɔ* is neither the more or less determinate body of private advisers (*kxotla*), nor even the tribal gathering (*pitshɔ*), of the Sotho. It is mainly constituted by district heads, or their representatives, and the men of the capital, but any one attends; and it is never conceived of as a general assembly of all the initiated men of the tribe. It has little power and less initiative; it is summoned mostly to discuss European matters, and there is now a tendency to place some decisions of the men of the capital before it for confirmation; but it is hardly a means of gauging popular feeling or of expressing the royal will. The co-operation of the tribe is secured and its desires made known, not through the *khivijɔ*, but through other social arrangements, which we shall describe at greater length.

These arrangements run parallel with a distinctive system of wives of the queen, called *vaṭaroni*, a term also applied to the wives of all nobles, and women other than the queen may have *vaṭanoni*. The majority of the queen's wives are given to her by her district heads. In a sense, these wives are tribute (*va hu lova*), but the queen always gives some *munywalo*.[1] She also receives wives from foreign chiefs who supplicate for rain or for peace, and from headmen who settle in her country and send their daughters or sisters; in these cases no *munywalo* is given. Finally, she is sent wives by the nobles, by those to whom she has given wives or cattle with which to secure wives, and by those who promise their little 'mud-stampers' as repayment for the assistance they ask. Sometimes also the queen takes a liking to a girl and asks her in marriage and sometimes commoners send their daughters. It will be impracticable to deal with all these cases; and, from the point of view of the political organization, we are mainly concerned with the wives sent by district heads. They send their daughters for purposes of *hu lova*, a word used in a wide

[1] [marriage cattle, See cat. 583 per detail.—Analyst]

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643 connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
588 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
634 District heads *lowa* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
789 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
648 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Ḋulovedu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*hu lowa*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Ṭonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
588 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of
[831] marriage and *munywalo*; the *munywalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
588 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
837 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own 643
hut (and in the old days a cow into the bargain) and be allowed to co- 588
habit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable 837
place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private 554
councils of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Vafanowi* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *vafanowi*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads.

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *mufanowi* 643
to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, 588
such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. 578
Only some of the *vafanowi* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *vafanowi* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves Mujaji and they are described as 'the heads of Muhale', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing.

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district 643
heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noble- 588
men she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the 634
mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *mungwalo* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *mungwalo* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *mungwalo* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.'

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

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ease of presentation. Mavetha, district head of Mareroni, some thirty-eight years ago gave his daughter, Muthatso, to the queen. Muthatso after a time was allotted to Khidima, the queen's maternal uncle. Later Khidima sent a daughter to be one of the wives of the queen and this girl in turn was given by the queen to Nagambi, district head of Maulwi. Meanwhile Mavetha's son, Muhale, succeeded at Mareroni and sent the only issue of his wife, the daughter Makwajo, to the queen (1936). The next ruler at Mareroni will be either Makwajo or an heir raised by the wife acquired with the cattle given by the queen as *munywalo* for Mukwajo. Already these arrangements link the district heads of Mareroni and of Maulwi with the queen and one of her nobles, and also with one another. The network is indefinitely continued in all directions, and though its ends appear to diverge, they centre in the queen and become interlinked at many points. For instance, to Rasodi, a younger brother of Nagambi, the queen gave Malwada, her wife, who came from Malematsha, an important district head, and as a result Rasodi's son must marry at Malematsha's. Once these interrelations are established, they set into motion the whole social system and the reciprocities which double the links and perpetuate the interrelations. In the district of the capital the ramifications of exchanges and re-exchanges are so complex as to defy analysis.

Broadly speaking, districts may be divided into those given to one of the old *kuvo* or royal groups (of Muhale, of Mudiga and of Mahasha), those originating from *vafanomi*, and those held by heads of foreign groups. The so-called *vafanomi* districts constitute a composite group, because women do not normally succeed to one another. We have already mentioned elsewhere how the district Matsui was given by Mujaji I to her wife, who, marrying a Crocodile, was succeeded by her son Matsui and his line of Crocodiles. In 34 per cent. of the 100 districts we know well enough to trace their origin, the position has not been very different. To-day sixty of these 100 districts are held by the royal groups and forty by foreign groups, and of those held by foreigners sixteen were acquired, as Matsui was, through *vafanomi*. Thus 40 per cent. of the foreign and 30 per cent. of the *kuvo* districts, as far as we know, were originally handed to wives of the chiefs. Districts may originate in many other ways. It was customary for the kings to place their districts under sisters and brothers and temporarily also under their wives. Their wives could not as easily as among the queens consolidate their position, as they were unable to send their daughters as wives to the king, whereas now they can and do send such wives to the queens. Districts were also given to the great messengers (*didwa*) of the chiefs; to foreigners, who, though they came with no large following, were renowned doctors of the national 'schools', some of which they introduced; to men who gave the queen cattle and a wife, and occasionally to those who had rendered services of value.

It does not much matter how a district originates from the point of view of the links that are gradually established with the queen and with one another. If foreigners come with a large, compact body of followers, they are often given an area and in return send their daughters as wives

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634 to the queen. A Ʈalerwa group came from the west in Khiali's reign
563 (*c.* 1740), had a *mutanomi* at the capital and were given a large district.
571 Malematsha, a son of the *mutanomi*, having married a daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the next chief, was given half the district, the other half being ruled by the Ʈalerwa head. By these arrangements the Ʈalerwa line became *namakhulu* of Malematsha, whose son succeeded to the whole area in 1895, when the Ʈalerwa ruling family left as the result of famine. The Malematsha are *nafuhulu* of the royal Lovedu. At Bagoni, which was originally given by Mujaji I to her younger brother, Murwatsɛʈa, there now rules Mukupi, daughter of Murwatsɛʈa's son. Mukupi had been the wife of Mujaji II, but, as there was no living male heir, she was released by the queen so as to enable her to rule the area. The true heir, son of the girl whom Mukupi's brother, had he lived, would have married (for the girl was the brother's cattle-linked cross-cousin), is now about forty-five years of age. It is doubtful whether he will ever succeed, for Mukupi is an ambitious and important woman, a district head who, like the queen, has no legal husband, but several wives; she is related to the queen and her councillors in a dozen ways, the most important being that she is *makhadi* of the queen and was wife of Mujaji II. Rekla has a long history, but we need go no further back than the time when it was entrusted by Mujaji I to Mathogani, daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the chief, and *mutanomi* of Mujaji I. Mathogani married first Rampi and, after his death, Muhotɛla, Rampi's brother. Kwathi, son of the latter, who was given a *mutanomi* by Mujaji II, for reasons we need not here consider, usurped the headship. Segɛte is a district given by Mujaji II to her wife Makhicass, who was daughter of a Venda chief, and, as Makhicass had no issue, she was succeeded by her sister's son, the sister having married a direct male descendant of the elder brother of Mujaji I. This elder brother, Malegudu, had a daughter, Magɔɔo, who became *mutanomi* of Mujaji II. Mujaji III made Magɔɔo head of Maulwi, and Magɔɔo's son, Mugɔdɔ, was the man who was chosen to raise the next heir to the throne. A son of Mugɔdɔ by his chief wife (not the queen) is now district head at Maulwi. These are but some of the cases, much simplified, that give us an idea of the manner in which districts originate and become linked up with the queen and the royal group.

634 The district is a political and a territorial unit, often very small in size,
571 and usually having a distinctive praise. The site varies from half a square
554 mile to nine square miles, the average in the congested reserve being under one square mile. Originally the districts were larger, but, as European occupation advanced, the old districts were divided and subdivided to make room for the heads that were ousted. The praises, already mentioned elsewhere, are generally praises of the group or subgroup of the head. At Maunadala, though he migrated from Neji, near Tzaneen in the south, to the tribal farm Khinobɛlwa to the north of Ulovedu, they still sing, 'Crocodile of Mugasi, outcast (*mutsha*) of the rain water,' because his people had no rain-making magic; when Mahubusana brings beer, the praise runs, 'At the kitchen-hut of Magwala of Khodini, where potatoes are eaten,' though Mahubusana now rules near the capital, having long ago left Khodini, to the south of Ulovedu;

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and at Khimarila one may hear, 'You are drunk, you of Maleakhotho, you who are habitual smokers of hemp.' Not only have sub-groups and even lineages distinctive variations upon perhaps a common praise of the group, but there are different praises appropriate to different occasions. 634 571 554

Owing to patrilocal marriage, the patrilineal kin tend to form the core of a district. These cores were perhaps more distinct in the distant past, for it is quite clear that, for instance, the districts of the Mudiga lay towards the east, while those of the Mahasha clustered together in the north-west. But members of the Mudiga and Mahasha were always scattered throughout the tribe and never co-operated as groups in any political situation. We must not think of co-operating patrilineal groups, for 'A man has influence and fortune where he has relatives-in-law'. The core of the district may be the brothers, father's brothers, and their sons in the district, but generally the mother is a link with one outside district and sisters and daughters marry into others. There is seldom a numerical preponderance of the lineage of the district head in the territorial unit, their number and solidarity depending upon a large number of factors: length of residence or of headship, the homogeneity of diversity, size, dispersion or concentration of the group that immigrated and was given a district, agreement within the group, and so on. 634 571

We may take Matsui as an example. The head, a Crocodile, and his male forebears have ruled the area for over a century. Matsui is at one point immediately adjacent to the capital, but it is also near a whole chain of old Crocodile settlements, which 150 years ago extended from Mamaila in the north to Uufupi in the south. The district is largely a valley area and thus avoided by the Lovedu royal group, but extensively occupied by the Shangana-Tonga since about 1840. The population is 22 per cent. Crocodile and 14 per cent. Lovedu; 47 per cent. of the people belong to foreign groups or sub-groups, with whom intermarriage is not wholly disapproved, and 17 per cent. Shangana-Tonga. The Crocodiles are patrilineal kin and the Lovedu are relatives-in-law of the head, but the links with the Shangana-Tonga are those of neighbourliness, some friendship, and some economic interdependence. Of the intermarriageable foreigners, 20 per cent. are related in some way to the head, being mostly relatives of the line of 'messengers' (*dikhona*) of the district head. It is generally felt that the messengers should not be patrilineally related to the head because of possible conflicts, but their alliance with the head is usually a close and long-established one. In the case of Matsui, the links are not only through the capital where the group of the 'messenger' used to be officials, but also through the district head's brother, who is the *mughabale* (cattle-linked sister's son) of the 'messenger'. In other districts, of course, the dispositions are different: on the hills, for instance, there are no Shangana-Tonga and few of the more or less outcast *earths*. The diversity of the groups is very great, as we have indicated elsewhere, but the manner in which they have been interwoven into the royal group, chiefly through the districts, is even more impressive.

The patrilineal core of the district is no more important than the link through the bilateral kin, especially through mothers and sisters and daughters and the cattle-chains forged by them with other areas and with 634 562

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the capital. These links emphasize the part played by women in the political system. The intermediaries or registrars at the capital, through whom political and legal matters are taken from the district to the queen, are called, not fathers or councillors, as is very usual in other tribes, but 'mothers' of the district heads (*mme ndna*), a very appropriate name in the light of the fact that one usually approaches the paternal authority through one's mother. 'Mothers' of districts may be women as well as men, and quite often a male 'mother' is succeeded by his widow. The position opens large avenues of political opportunity for women. Again, at present 14 per cent. of the acting district heads are women, some holding in their own right, some on behalf of a male heir, who perhaps, as in the case of Mukupi, will never have much influence during the lifetime of the deputy. If we reckon cases in which a son is ruling in consultation with his mother, the percentage is much higher.

Let us take a few examples. Mukoko, the jester (*khidada*) at the capital, is nominally head at Racothata; but until her death it was his mother, daughter of the brother of Mujaji II and a wife of the queen, who was in charge, and it is now his wife, also an ex-wife of the queen, who has remained behind and rules, though Mukoko has appointed a deputy. At Madumani, the heir has quarrelled with and was expelled by the sister of his deceased father; she installed another son, Khobi, as nominal head; and when Khobi died, his sister took over control, feathering the nest of her son, against whom the chances of the rightful heir seem at present to be small. At Muthomeni the mother's influential relatives secured the succession of Mudzwalo against that of his younger brother, the legal heir. Matsere's sister's daughter is head at Khiobeni and her husband does the court work. Khimarela, an old Mudiga district, was consistently given to wives of the queen; and in its recent history, Matinagu, a wife of the queen who married a Mudiga, was head until her son, Thagu, took over. The mother of a district head at Khithunja rules because the son has paralysis. At Lerejini, Bogi, who is now head, entrusted the district to his elder sister, who, in order to rule, as she did until her death, left her husband, who lived in another area. Rapada at Mashakha had only one daughter in the great house and she was a wife of the queen when he died; his wife is now head and, if the ideal pattern is followed, she will be succeeded by the heir of the daughter-in-law, supposititious wife of her son, who comes to cook for her; but this daughter-in-law, as experience shows, is likely to overshadow her son, the true heir. Magoro, sister of Mugodo, the chief, was the first ruler at Mudzinoni; as she had no issue, her sister succeeded her, the next head was daughter of the sister (because the son expelled the true heir and then died prematurely), and this daughter was followed by her own choice, the son of her brother.

Cases of this nature, where a woman plays the decisive role, may be multiplied. They may give the impression that there are no strongly institutionalized rules of succession; yet these rules exist. They are patrilineally patterned, but they recognise the claims of the sister's son (*mughulada*). The weight of the social structure, in all complicated cases, balances unevenly between the cattle-descent and the cattle-linked

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houses—that is, between the heir raised in the chief house of the head 634
and the head's cattle-linked sister. The daughter of the cattle-linked 562
brother comes as daughter-in-law to the mistress of the chief house, her cattle-linked aunt, to bear the heir, whether that house has a son or not; and legal precedences support this arrangement and succession. This emphasizes the power of the mother and her lineage. But the position of the cattle-linked sister is also strong, as we have indicated elsewhere, and in cases of succession to the headship of a district is further strengthened if she has been a wife of the queen. Conflicts do often arise and it is not strange that the queen usually leaves them to settle themselves. It is seldom that she interferes or interposes her authority, though she does so when the balance of convenience or interest strongly inclines one way. Tenure of headship is tolerably secure. The queen would only exceptionally and for very good reasons favour the displacement of a district head of one of the old groups; and in that case the district itself must strongly desire it while, not a stranger, but the nearest acceptable relative of the lineage will be substituted. If, however, the links with the royal family are not close, tenure by the lineage is less secure and it occasions no surprise that a man, coming to the queen with a few pounds, may be given a district where there has been trouble. We have seen a few such cases and it seemed incomprehensible to those with whom we discussed them that we suspected bribery and corruption.

The district is singularly autonomous in its political arrangements. 634
Land is allotted by the district head not, as in many neighbouring tribes, 425
by the chief. The district head, if he wishes, gives land to people living 609
in other districts; at Mawa, for instance, non-residents hold over 300 423
fields. The district head reports the settlement of a stranger from another tribe by taking £1 to the queen, but it is to him as district owner that landholders annually bring beer. A non-resident also nowadays cultivates the district head with beer, clothes, and even money before asking for land. The land given to a non-resident is not very securely held; the tenure is so imperfectly institutionalized that practice varies from one district to another and definite rights and obligations cannot easily be deduced; on the whole, it is not unlike lending, though the culture does not recognize lending of land for a consideration. A non-resident holding land in a district, unlike a resident, cannot, generally speaking, interchange it with or lend it to others without the consent of the head; but at the capital he can, even without reporting to the queen; and there also a resident may break new land without any one's permission.

Land tenure is too complicated for treatment here, but we may note 634
that where a district head takes back the land of a resident, the queen's 425
court may, but does not usually, interfere in the interests not so much of 423
security of land tenure as of peace. If a resident quarrels with the district head, he cannot beg pardon with beer, highly though that method of reconciliation is appraised, because he would be 'humbling himself with the mealies of the land' or, as it is sometimes phrased, 'paying a fine with the calf of the cattle of the district head'. A resident migrating from the district should bid its head farewell with 'the beer of greeting'; application

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634 for land, would then be regarded more favourably should he one day
425 return. The fruits of the soil are dealt with in much the same manner.
423 A man may graze his cattle inside or outside the district, but the cattle posts of the old days were within the district only. We have mentioned the rivalries of herdboys of different districts; we may add that some district heads, because of traditional values and limited grazing land, object to fencing. District heads sometimes reserve valuable trees for themselves, and it is they who give permission for the cutting down of large and shady trees or indigenous fruit-trees (though they be on the landowner's land). Honey found in trees, but not that found in the ground allotted, belongs to the district head. Some heads allow only residents to cut grass, making others pay. Hunting and water rights are not so regulated, but digging of clay is sometimes, if illegally. The
[778] preservation of large forests, a national asset, as places of the gods or of refuge in time of war is the concern of the queen, so that, for instance, Mujaji II had her cattle driven into the gardens of some people, including a district head, who had cleared part of the Leuyeni forest and had not begged pardon by sending a *mujawori* to her.

634 Some distinctive cultural and administrative arrangements of the
643 districts have already been mentioned. There are many others. All
651 district heads used to have, and many still have, certain fields cultivated for them. The queen also has such fields in her districts, and since 1927 each district head has had to cultivate a field (*mareno*) in his district for the queen, an innovation suggested by the European to enable the queen to help her people during famines. The experiment has turned out very differently. These fields are badly cultivated, for years some district heads bring no mealies, the failure only sporadically leading to the penalization of the head and his district, and the mealies are always converted into beer for entertainments at the capital that benefit only the local residents. The storage of mealies is impracticable and a system of distribution is not implied in cultural arrangements. A district head unwillingly surrenders land and sometimes expropriates first one then another landowner, so that there is much dissatisfaction and even refusal to cultivate the *mareno*.

634 In many respects district heads are like chiefs. They are often called
651 'chief' (*khosi*) and, like the queen, have medicines to safeguard them in their position of authority. A district head is not only the most important person in the district, the centre of its political and legal life, the man who is responsible for the welfare of his people, but the obligations of district residents towards him emphasize both his position and the reciprocities between ruler and subject. It is expected that his subjects shall bring him beer periodically, and sometimes it is held that he should be invited to every beer party held in his area, partly because he is responsible for order at the beer drink and partly because it is his due. All his subjects must make *marula* cider for him in the proper season, and similarly, when at certain ceremonies, held by him for the well-being of the district, beer is required, every resident must contribute. The most important occasion is at the harvest thanksgiving and the beer brought is regarded as being in return for the land given by the head to his people. On the pattern of

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services to a chief, residents must also build his village and mend his huts. These privileges and obligations are not merely theoretical; they are very much in evidence and can be observed to-day in the districts as much as, if not more than, at the capital. The first edible termites found in the district must, in the case of some of the more important heads, be brought to the district head; these ants are ritually associated with rain-making and are put into the rain pots which these heads have. 634 651

The national 'schools' are sometimes held independently by district heads; in 'biting' the first fruits (*ku lama*) and in turning the first soil, the precedence of the queen is hardly recognized. The head at Daja and the senior male line of the royal family have theoretical precedence in *ku lama* and, in contrast to many neighbouring tribes, there is little stress upon having the queen's field hoed first; in practice to-day her field is never ploughed first. Maunadala, it is said, in the old days paid an ox to anticipate the queen's hoeing and thus avoided threatening starvation; but dispensations of this nature, while recognizing a theoretical rule, throw into relief the much greater autonomy of the district here than elsewhere. The district head is solely responsible for *ku upa*, the rite that drives away destructive birds and monkeys when crops are ripe; to him the death of every resident is reported (the report being transmitted to the queen only when a relative of hers dies) and the resulting 'holiday' is held only in the district. Each district head has his own drums through which he controls dancing (*guha*), religious observances, and some of the 'schools'. The girls' puberty rite (*khrbo*) is entirely district-controlled. 634 796

The individuality of some districts is seen in esoteric customs; elsewhere by taboo, succession ceremonial, and a distinctive community life. At Khiobeni people may construct on the edge of the village a rain-shelter (*kundo*) in which fire is made; in neighbouring areas this is taboo. Work on the day following the new moon is said to have been taboo in the old days at Matsui, though the rule is never observed to-day; in neighbouring areas there never was such a holiday. The Thovela in one district have a special dance with a special ritual. As regards succession, the queen usually merely confirms, though she maintains touch through an elaborate ceremony: she is notified of the death of the head, sends the 'mother' of the district to take part in the ceremony of installation and, in the case of heads of the royal group, the *swiqiqiwi* appear. The ceremonial, however, more intimately concerns the district: there is a local 'holiday' after the death, the *guha* dance is taboo for a year, girls undergo puberty initiation elsewhere, beer is made by the district to 'open the drums', and each head of a family sends a goat or 10s., 'the eye of the chief', to acknowledge their new head. The life of the district is often distinctive. Matsui is said to be wasteful and, according to one of their praises, people there, instead of stamping, for which they are too lazy, 'burn their finger-nails roasting green mealies'. Everything is rather slack and happy-go-lucky, beer drinks are apt to be unruly, the district head is at loggerheads with his uncles, and his subjects talk disparagingly of 'this district-head business of going about and drinking beer'. Bacchanalian orgies after the harvest, slack morals, and other irregularities at Matsui contrast strikingly with conditions at Bagoni, an adjacent district. At Bagoni there is a tradition 634 184 [784]

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634 184 of thrift, strict control of beer-drinks, interest in national affairs, of pride and independence. Of course, a great deal depends upon the personality of the district head, but traditions in the district are not unimportant.

634 643 Districts are not always left to go their own way. In the last resort, as in legal matters, the authority of the capital may be invoked, and it may be invoked even against a whole district. Just as a district may collectively take action against a threat to its well-being, as occurred in the small-pox epidemic in 1938, when one district assembled and collected funds to have the witch who was causing the deaths smelt out, so it may be held collectively responsible by the capital for failure to cultivate the chief's field. This is the more striking because there is no kraal responsibility and the so-called 'spoor law' (whereby a kraal head, unwilling or unable to explain why the track of stolen cattle leads to but does not leave his kraal is held responsible, whoever the thief in his kraal might be) is not known. We have seen a district fined, never a kraal. The queen has theoretically to confirm the expulsion of a subject; in cases referred to a diviner, the 'ears' or official witness should be, but is not always, appointed at the queen's court. In practice, however, the queen seldom interposes her authority. For years now no one knows who is head at Dithejine, the balance swinging unevenly between three claimants. At Maḡarabani, Mutese, who persistently refused to do homage (*bu lowa*) to the queen with beer, was deposed; but that there were other considerations at issue appears from the fact that immediately afterwards he was installed at Ukhuda. When Thagu at Khimarela in 1936 expelled his paternal uncle's son for whom he was deputizing, nothing was done. At Raleleagu when the head died, the messenger (*dewa*) took over, ruled for years without confirmation from the capital and in 1938 was recognised (because his son became valuable as driver of the councillor's newly acquired motor car), the real heir being quietly overlooked. Not long ago the nobles at a tribal gathering carried their point that only royal relatives should be appointed as district heads on the farms that were being purchased, but the rule remained a dead letter and of the ten heads appointed in these areas eight are foreigners.

642 In its visible structure, the political organization may appear unimpressive and in its dynamics chaotic. Its efficiency certainly is and always was—for it is not culture contact that is responsible for the irregularities—of an order different from ours. Efficiency is relative to the purposes of the culture. The aim has never been power or empire, but holding subjects together on the model of the social organization. The slight regimentation of the 'schools' subserves no political or military purpose, and court life is not concerned with displays, nor is it characterised by differentiated officials and courtiers controlling a great central organization. Unlike the Sharagwe-Tonga, the Lovedu cannot deal with large gatherings of men such as collected on Coronation Day in 1937. The genius of the society is in organising relationships between people, and as long as the reciprocity and compromise and the sentiments built up by interdependencies are reasonably maintained, it does not much matter that irregularities occur here and there. The influence of the

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queen, always on the side of peace and harmony, is characteristically 642
exercised to keep alive these relationships. Important disputes—domestic, administrative, or political—are discussed with the queen and kept out of the courts, the object being to minimize animosities and to prevent public recriminations. Not external sanctions, but values internalized by the culture, are emphasized and upheld.

In the modern world the bonds of the social organization are liable to become burdens and the absence of a differentiated centralized political system a grave defect. But the old values are still the great dynamic forces. Nowhere else have we seen court etiquette so well preserved. People still remove their shoes when they enter the capital; the queen is still relatively inaccessible and may not leave her country. Mujaji was the only chief in the Union who, because of her ritual position, could not exercise her vote on behalf of the tribe when in 1937 the Native Representative Council was elected. Chiefs still come to supplicate for rain and, such is the queen's prestige and reputation for sagacity, a few years ago she adjudicated upon a succession dispute among the Dzikwa. Yet Mujaji is accorded no precedence by the European administration, in whose eyes she is completely overshadowed by her erstwhile subject, Mulilavu of the Nkuna.

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CHAPTER XI

THE GENIUS OF JURIDICAL ADJUSTMENTS

Conciliation machinery at the capital—quasi-judicial systems of appeasement—reliance in full-dress trials and sanctions upon agreement and compromise—procedure in 'blood' cases—appeals to ordeals and diviners.

692 671 The genius of the Lovedu political system is its network of reciprocities; the genius of the legal system is its procedure of reconciliations and compromises; and both the political and legal systems reflect the main emphases and purposes of the culture. *Khoro* proceedings, the full-dress trials of the Lovedu, stand out conspicuously amid the various judicial arrangements, some of which we may be inclined to call quasi-judicial, but in reality none of our legal terms are appropriate. Their *khoro* is court-like, but it is not a court in our sense of the term; their law is law-like, not the equivalent of our law. All the procedures aim, not at settling legal issues, but at effecting compromises and reconciliations. The *khoro* itself, the most imposing feature of public life and the pinnacle of the cultural edifice, relies, not on force, but on friendly adjustments. It is the courtyard of compromises, not the arena of casuistic contests. It disposes of no sanction of execution: coercion is incongruous with its purposes. Culture contact has weakened the effectiveness of compromise and thereby has rendered necessary what it denies to the *khoro*—namely, the sanction of force.

692 In this chapter we deal briefly with the organization of the *khoro* and then touch lightly upon certain quasi-judical processes. These lead us to cast a passing glance first at *khoro* procedure and thereafter at various other types of procedure which centre, not in the *khoro*, but in other arrangements such as those involved in settling 'blood' cases and in dealing with the deeds of darkness by divination and the ordeal. All these procedures are part of the legal machinery, but they can be understood only as part also of the whole social structure. A comprehensive account of them is out of the question; we have no time even for a glimpse at substantive law.

692 643 The queen is at the head of the *khoro* organization. She never sits in the *khoro*, for it is the courtyard of the men. But she is always in the background, and in theory all decisions at the capital should be reported to, and confirmed by her. Five years ago, when the queen's uterine brother still lived and was a councillor, this was no formality, but to-day only very serious cases or decisions are submitted for her verdict or confirmation. This divergence from the ideal is due to conflicts, fear of involving the queen with European authorities, and a growing desire to reserve *khoro* affairs to the men. The queen's approval is still sought, always when the dispute involves the position or status of a royal relative, often when a district head expels a subject, and sometimes when a recalcitrant party is to be sent to the Native Commissioner or when one

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of the parties objects to the decision of the *khosi*. It is the queen's prerogative to settle disputes between royal relatives, but she also privately settles differences which, for reasons of public policy or of the prestige of the parties, should not be publicly discussed, and sometimes, to avoid the hardening of transient differences into permanent hostility, even withdraws cases, especially witchcraft cases, from the jurisdiction of the *khosi*. The queen has an unshakable reputation for integrity, and acts independently, if she likes, though often she consults trusted advisers, some of whom at present are not her councillors. 692 643

The role of the queen is not unconnected with the institution of 'mothers' of districts. 'Mothers' are appointed by the queen or with her approval, and are usually her relatives, living at the capital and having direct access to her. Generally they report in the first instance to the councillors, especially to the son of the queen's mother's brother, who is the greatest councillor. The office of 'mothers', though hereditary, often changes hands because of its responsibilities and inadequate rewards, the opportunities of favourably placed persons and the requirement of residence at or near the capital. Often a widow, familiar with her husband's arrangements, takes over the position, enlisting the help of a relative, who at her death naturally steps into her shoes. Since the fees received cannot meet the needs of taxpayers, usually only old people are 'mothers', but inability to cope with long journeys forces them to entrust some of their work to available sons or relatives, who in turn may succeed to the position. 'Mothers' are often related to, but may be only fortuitously linked with, the heads of districts under their charge. A foreign chief or headman may be introduced at the capital by a friend or relative or stranger, who thereupon becomes his 'mother'. In 1912, when a colony of settlers from Basutoland came, Mashaceli, who had no previous association with them, took the message of their arrival to the queen and henceforth acted as their 'mother'. Independent foreign chiefs also have their 'mothers', who sometimes live far from the capital. 693 [87]

'Mothers' have politico-legal and other functions. They receive their 'children', the district heads or foreign chiefs, and act as intermediaries whenever formal relations with the queen or great councillors are involved. When it is impracticable for a district head to bring beer to the queen, he may send mealies, which are deposited at the 'mother's' and there converted into the tributary beer. The arrival of beer from a district is always reported to the 'mother', who receives one calabash. 'Mothers' are the messengers or ambassadors of the queen sent to settle disputes among their 'children' or to represent her, for instance, at the formal installation of a district head. Important links in politics, they are the master links in the legal system. Some 'mothers' supervise the legal interrelations of many districts with the capital. As some districts are far off, eight to ten miles, they may delegate the work, in respect of some districts or of some of its aspects, to others, such as sons, wives, sister's sons, or wife's brothers. Thus Khidima, 'mother' of Maculana, Magaga, Madumani, Galizani, Mamagududzi, and a European-owned farm, sometimes puts cases coming from the first three districts in the hands of his sister's son, but, since Khidima's own son has reached years

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of discretion—he is now forty years of age—it is to him that the court work has been entrusted. Quite recently (1938) Khidima, too old to walk far, deputed his son to settle a serious dispute at Dithejeni, a sub-district of Maculana; but the conflict which involved the interests of Maculana, the maternal uncle of the queen, and Khashani, direct descendant in the senior royal line, 'overcame' the son as it subsequently 'overcame' even the queen's *khoro*. It is thus apparent that 'mothers' have responsible duties and must be men of tact and experience.

'Mothers' often act as arbitrators in district courts. In some districts they regularly preside when important cases are decided, in others they hardly ever appear: recently established districts whose heads are foreigners need some supervision and linking up with the capital, while in old districts much depends upon the pride or prestige or ability of the district head. 'Mothers' are sent to investigate or try cases which are reported directly to the capital without reference to the district head (an irregular procedure which he resents) or which have 'overcome' him either in a *khoro* trial or in his attempt to effect a private reconciliation (*ho khobutisa*). The district head may accompany a deserting wife to beg pardon of her husband, but if the overture fails, she may present her case to her 'mother' or to the queen who usually arranges for a 'mother' or messenger to arbitrate, often quite informally, between husband and wife. Messengers become versed in handling compromises from an early age, at first as envoys (*mahorola*) merely registering consents, later as true arbitrators. They accompany the district head to the home of the disputant or sit in the *khoro* of the district, reporting the result to the 'mother', who in turn reports to the queen or councillors. Or if 'overcome', they summon the parties to the *khoro* of the capital. The procedure economizes effort and promotes amicable settlements; it induces a uniform outlook towards disputes, but not uniformity of substantive law, throughout the country. Thus Shangana-Tonga law, where it differs from Lovedu law, remains intact; the 'mother' or messenger or the *khoro* itself is concerned, not with differences of law, but with reaching agreements acceptable to the parties.

As an officer of the *khoro* at the capital, the 'mother' presents cases, summons defendants to appear, is usually present in court and may, if called upon or on his own initiative, explain the antecedents of the case. But these activities are so unostentatious, so alien to our conceptions, that it is very rare that you will notice a 'mother' in the *khoro*. To avoid being suspected of favouring his 'children', he remains discreetly in the background, his presentation of the case is unnecessary as he has already privately reported to the councillors, and the arrangements of the *khoro* are so flexible and its spirit so homely that formally introducing cases or calling witnesses to come nearer is quite out of place. In the midst of a defendant's oration or the 'chewing' of the case by the *khoro*, you may see a 'mother' intervene to say that the defendant has neglected to pay him the goat that is the 'fee of the feet' (messenger's fee) and the case is abruptly stopped, 'hung up' in the *khoro*, until the fee is paid. Lovedu judicial processes are so unlike ours that it is wholly misleading to picture the 'mother' as an officer of the court arranging the roll, marshalling witnesses

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introducing cases like a prosecutor, or advising parties as to the case to be met or the witnesses to be called. 693

The two great councillors are in a pivotal position, since 'mothers' report to them. But in the first place they are not the officials who in other tribes head the panel of assessors or 'remembrancers'. It is not necessary, though it is usual, for one of them to be present or to preside at the regular sessions which are nowadays held for convenience on Sunday morning. On week days, if the other men at the capital feel unequal to the task, the absence of the great councillors sometimes holds up a case; but many cases are tried without them. Their position enables them to do the bulk of the work, but they have no specialized functions. All cases are not reported to or through them, as many 'mothers' have direct access to the queen. Checks and balances of the system even counteract that strengthening of their powers which results from the practice of European officials to deal exclusively with them. Secondly, there are no specially appointed assessors or advisers or 'remembrancers'. Compromises within a broad pattern, not details of law and precedents, are important. The oldest men at the capital are rarely consulted, in our experience only twice in many hundreds of cases; they are the victims of the conflict within the complex of royal institutions. The queen's *khoro* consists of men, generally speaking, drawn from the capital and neighbouring villages. But any one may attend; there is no special privilege and no special appointment. Some are more welcome, some have a higher reputation for integrity or sagacity, than others, some are friends, some enemies of the councillors. The *khoro* is a fortuitous rather than a fixed body of men.

A glance at some of the personalities of the queen's *khoro*, as it was in 1937, will make our general observations more concrete. Muneri, the queen's physiological mother's brother and called 'mother's brother', more often presided than his fellow councillor, Murwatsja, the queen's uterine brother's eldest but not chief son. They were both middle-aged men, lived at the capital and were rivals. R., a man in his prime, usually attended, though some years before he had been expelled as a murderer and witch from the district of the capital in which he still lives; he also befriended S., the would-be traitor, and was so much hated that he was once assaulted in the *khoro* by a son of the queen's brother. R. often sat in the centre of the *khoro*, eloquently using his commanding voice to reprimand, cajole, moralize, and even skilfully to guide contestants towards a compromise. Madubudi, in 1937 only about fifty-five years old, but now dead, came from the valley to enjoy the *khoro* discussions. An excitable extrovert, he used to rise from his seat in order to enforce an *ad hoc* argument or to shake his fist in the face of a recalcitrant defendant, and often he prematurely rushed to conclusions, imposing a fine even before the evidence was led, but he was tolerated and gently restrained by the others. B. frequently almost shunk into the *khoro*: emaciated and consumptive, nervous and suspicious, hated and feared by the councillors, suspected of having murdered a royal relative with his witchcraft, he was wholly inaccessible to us, yet in the *khoro* his hoarse, screeching voice, as he now and then interjected a high-pitched but incisive remark, carried

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693 great weight. There was also muddled-headed old Mabungwani, who, as judgement creditor, regularly for two years came from a far-off district fruitlessly to complain that Maake, the debtor, had not yet paid him, but was still 'looking for' the fine; he took a prominent part, muddling the issues, but humouring the men; and it was a real joy to listen to him. These were but some of the striking personalities of the fifty men or more who habitually came to the *khwv*. They attended, some for one reason, some for another, as we would attend a function which is partly an entertainment and partly a responsibility. The *khwv* is not wholly a casual assembly, since men living in the neighbourhood are expected to give their assistance at the sessions every Sunday morning.

Not the men of the *khwv*, but only 'mothers' and messengers, are specially rewarded. A plaintiff, resident, say, in the district of Madumani, taking his case to the capital, should go accompanied by a messenger from Madumani to report his complaint to his 'mother', Khidima, to whom he gives three goats or their equivalent, usually £1 and a goat. By this formal complaint (*ku ḓalia*) he becomes the plaintiff (*muḓalii*): the £1 is *ku ḓalia*, serves to 'open' the *khwv*, and is handed by the 'mother' to the queen; the goat or 10s. is to 'break down the *khwv*' and will be retained by Khidima if the defendant lives in one of his districts, for then Khidima must summon him; but if he resides in, say, Matsui, Khidima must give the goat to Muneri, 'mother' of Matsui, who is responsible for calling his own 'children'. The 'mother' himself, as was usual in the old days, or a messenger of the 'mother', as is common to-day, receives from the defendant he summons a goat called *budi ya bija* (goat of the pot) or *leudu la mudzaḓa* (fee of the feet). In cases of 'blood', of witchcraft, and of offences against the tribal authorities, when they come before the *khwv*, the procedure is different and these fees are not paid.

All the young men in the district of the capital are *maharula*, envoys of *khwv* or queen. The usual work of a *laharula* is to call district heads to tribal gatherings (*khwiji*), though much of this is now done by herdboys, who every fortnight drive the cattle to the dipping tanks. The *maharula* also represent the queen at *marula* cider drinks, given to the queen by districts other than the capital, for, except on special and very rare religious occasions (say once in every few years), she does not move beyond her own district. But for our present purpose we shall consider the *maharula* as a kind of police force, though without its powers. Police, prisons, process for executing judgements are alien to the culture, but situations akin to contempt occasionally arise in the *khwv*, and, if it is a young man or woman who despises the authority of the old men, a *laharula* may be detailed to supervise the execution of a patently absurd piece of work by the offender. The object is to humiliate, the onlookers are amused, no force is used, and usually the prisoner submits before he has started the work. *Maharula* do not specially attend the *khwv* for this purpose; the *khwv* usually ignores indignities; and submission, even if merely assumed, is accepted as sufficient.

693 Another duty of *maharula* is to collect fines, imposed by custom, not
681 by trial, upon a whole district that has offended. When, for instance, in 1937 none of the young boys and girls of the district of the capital

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responded to the order to weed the queen's field, *maharula* went to collect 693
a fowl from each 'rebel'. They collected seven fowls, because most of the 681
delinquents could offer excuses which showed, to the satisfaction of the *maharula*, that they had repented. In 1938 Mahubusana complained that the residents of his district despised him. They had successively ignored his order to make *merula* cider first for himself and then for the queen and also to bring the 'money for the petrol of the queen's car'. *Maharula*, the councillors said, would be sent to exact one goat from every household. Nothing happened. Later Mahubusana brought the five main culprits to the capital and there they were told to pay 5*s*. each to their district head and to leave the district after having gathered in their harvest. 'You have despised the district head and the queen,' it was said. 'Go, then, and live where there is no chief, for here you worry the queen.' There was no trial; and a year after the 1938 harvest the rebels were still living in the district. *Maharula* are also sent to exact the fine due in those 'blood' cases that are reported to the queen. Despite apparent exceptions, *maharula* are not and never were deputed to execute upon a decision of the *khoro*, for the *khoro* is concerned with private delicts, wrongs between individuals who, in the last resort, are left to arrange restitution among themselves.

At the village of each district head there is also a *khoro*, the arrange- 692
ments of which resemble those at the capital; but, of course, there are many variations. Its competence is in practice determined by the presumptions of the district head; and the law it applies is not necessarily the law of the capital. Some district heads, having sub-districts under them, attach 'mothers' and *maharula* to the *khoro*, but usually these are only messengers for calling defendants. *Khoro* trials are usually held in 695
the district of the defendant, and the messenger or 'mother' is entitled to the 'fee of the feet', but not all district heads charge for 'opening' the *khoro*. The district head may have a special *dona*, often his elder brother, who is entrusted with legal matters and 'presides' in his absence; women who are heads do not appear in the *khoro*, but confirm decisions. Sometimes the district *khoro* is better organized and controlled than that at the capital, there may be regular judges and assessors, the word is 'passed' (*ka nama*) from the junior to the senior members, contempt is strictly dealt with, and so on. But this is unusual, the organization being much more haphazard and the procedure much less regularized. Mostly the district head intervenes at the request of one party to see whether he can effect a reconciliation: he sets out with the plaintiff to the village of the defendant rather than summons the defendant to his *khoro*, or he goes as an intermediary (*mukhomedi*) of the one party to persuade the other to accept the settlement offered. Full-dress *khoro* trials are often like heated family consultations. *Khoro* cases in which the fine of restitution is a head of cattle must theoretically be reported to the capital, not for confirmation, but for directions as to the disposal of the fine; but in practice this rule is often not observed. 'Blood' cases not reported to the capital are dealt with by the district head, whose function is something between that of an intervener and a judge. In theory 'blood' cases are not tried, and in practice district heads do inquire into and often finally settle such cases.

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695 The procedure to-day involved in witchcraft cases can be set into motion and these cases may be settled by district heads. In short, set rules as to competence do not exist and district heads are left to cope with as much as they can manage.

576 627 561 A brief discussion of some quasi-judicial processes will enable us to appreciate better, as it will introduce us to the procedure and spirit of the *khoro*. Firstly, there is the method by which especially old women deal with disrespectful or insulting behaviour of younger women. Should one or more young women play a practical joke upon or be disrespectful to an old woman, or playfully 'dance' an infant child, even their own, or prematurely try to make it sit up or walk or scold or beat it, in the presence of the grandmother or of an old woman, their behaviour is regarded as insulting. The conception is that old women in their role as midwives, rather than young mothers, have brought children into the world and the old, not the young, are the guardians of the babes. If one young woman arrogates to herself rights and privileges which belong to the old women, the latter are entitled to take suitable action. The insulted old woman reports to a few of her age-mates and in consultation they decide to punish the age-mates of the young woman resident in the same territorial unit—for example, a district. There is neither 'trial' nor tribunal. The punishment consists of three elements: the age-mates of the young women (say all those who have one baby) must brew beer with which to effect a reconciliation with the older women; in a rite accompanying the beer drink and resembling that used at initiations, the oldest woman canes her immediate junior, who in turn canes the next, and so on, including the culprits; and, finally, the culprits are read a lesson as to the iniquity of being disrespectful to their elders.

One day three young married women, in circumstances that implied disrespect, sent three old women a tiny quantity of snuff. The older women immediately fined the younger and vicariously all their age-mates living in the Christian settlement, for they were all residents there. They were told to grind snuff and restitute their wrong with beer. Five days later the twelve young married women of the settlement came to the house of the oldest woman, bringing large quantities of nuts, light beer, pumpkins, and other food; their husbands, in addition, sent a large tin of snuff and these 'gifts' were divided among the old women. Then followed the rite and the warning. On another occasion all the young mothers of a district were fined because one of them had 'danced' its baby in the presence of its grandmother. Likewise, it is said, though we have not seen a case, that the old women may fine a young father and his age-mates, if he forgets their privileges in regard to babies. But we cannot speak of regimental courts, the age-grades are not determined by the 'schools', the responsibility is territorial, and the punishment is 'beer of reconciliation' (largely replaced by food among Christians).

627 691 The second procedure, that called *ku khwelisa* (to beg pardon, to reconcile), has an enormous province and a profound significance, not only for legal arrangements, but in the whole culture. The procedure uses a *mukhwedi*, the emissary who intervenes on behalf of one of the parties to beg the pardon of the other. Its essence is not humiliation of

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the one, but bilateral reconciliation: thus people often talk of *ku khumc-* 627
jana, to beg pardon of one another, to become reconciled. If A., to whom 691
B. has lent her pot, breaks it, A. should send an old woman as conciliator (*mukhumedi*) to express regret and to ask forgiveness. But the *mukhumedi* figures in every conceivable kind of case, whether or not amenable to the courts: in homicide and adultery settled out of the *khoro*; in breaches of etiquette, such as bad behaviour of a bridegroom on his courtship visits, which cannot be submitted to the *khoro*; in disputes already before the *khoro*. It is not necessarily the wrongdoer, objectively considered, who should initiate the procedure: an illtreated wife who runs away to her parents must be sent back with a *mukhumedi*. Nor will the *khoro* necessarily order the guilty party to *khumchua*: he who must beg pardon is the junior, or the person of inferior rank.

The great province of *ku khumchua* is in family and kinship disputes, only a small proportion of which ever reach the *khoro*. The group of people concerned as a family council is determined by cultural arrangements. A quarrel between a father and son of one of his wives is the immediate concern of that house alone; no one else, not even the father's brother or a co-wife, may intervene; but the cattle-linked sister who built the house with her cattle presides and 'cuts' the case. A brother of that sister may be called in, but it is not necessary, and in any case he may only advise if his opinion is asked. If the matter concerns a wider circle, others may be called in; it is impossible to lay down general rules, since on the one hand, each cultural complex (*e.g.* marriage or inheritance) implies a different set of interested persons and, on the other, each case has its peculiar aspects. The marriage of the daughter of a house is, as regards its obligation to a cattle-linked house, the concern primarily of that house, but if the daughter is to be married to a stranger the mistress of the cattle-linked house must be consulted. If co-wives quarrel, their differences are the concern of the houses concerned, but if one of the wives has bewitched the other, the husband is a mere spectator as regards the arrangements that may be made between the parents of the co-wives; and even in a *khoro* case, it is not the husband, but the parents who are the parties who may be ordered to *khumjana*.

Ku khumjana may be likened to compounding a wrong, but it clearly has much deeper significance: it may be ordered by the *khoro*, alone or in addition to restitution; and it is quite irrelevant whether the wrong is amenable to the court. There is no wrong that cannot be submitted to this procedure. Though theoretically 'A dog which eats another cannot grow fat' (*i.e.* a murderer must always be killed), *ku khumchua* is in practice always possible, for 'He who kills another kills his brother-in-law' (*i.e.* if the victim's kin agree, the homicide may be made good by a full *munyuale* or a daughter or sister). In modern practice, most interesting cases have arisen. In one case some years ago the murderer, who had killed his victim for medicine, a heinous crime, offered his sister in marriage to the victim's elder brother; the investigation by the European authorities failed; and to-day there is a child of the marriage, and permanent links between victim and murderer because, on the pattern of

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627 bride and cattle exchanges, they have become cattle-linked kin. The
691 handing over of a bride or of *mayuale* may supplement the supposedly inadequate punishment meted out by European courts, or *ne* in substitution for the penalty such courts would have imposed if the parties had given away the facts. There is no payment to the queen, no trial, only *hu khumelwa*. The bride is not returned, as is reported in the case of other tribes, when she has borne a child in the lineage of the victim. In 1938, when the sons of A. and B. were herding together, A.'s son pushed a large rock which rolled over and accidentally killed B.'s son. A. sent a *mukhumadi*, but B. refused to accept a mere apology; he wanted 'something to wipe away his tears'. Eventually he accepted four head of cattle, which were brought to the *khoro* of the district head and there handed to him. A little later A. demanded back his cattle, saying that he had lost too much and hoping that publicity would frighten B.; but A.'s object was defeated by a device which we cannot describe here except to say that it was as cunning as it was effective.

Hu khumelwa is the predominant procedure in the districts, and everywhere it is considered especially appropriate to adultery, damage to crops, and 'blood' cases or bodily assaults; it is often the only permissible procedure in family disputes; and it is praiseworthy in theft cases. It may involve an elaborate series of acts, to some features of which we may refer. In one case a wife had committed adultery, and when the husband, after the birth of the child, had discovered the identity of the adulterer, he sent his wife to him. The adulterer, as is customary when he admits his wrong, sent the wife back with the 'goat of [illicitly] meeting one another', which he had borrowed from a neighbour. The goat was killed and the husband gave his erring wife the back leg, the portion that really belonged to him, which was an unusual humiliation. The wife went to an old woman, who took her back to beg pardon on behalf of the wife and to say that the adulterer would later send a cow with his own *mukhumadi*. The procedure in adultery or seduction is not rigid, but essentially the injured husband or the father sends a messenger to adulterer or seducer, who, if he admits the accusation, sends back his *mukhumadi* with an offer of settlement; negotiations may continue for some time and the culprit may be let off lightly, in many cases only a goat being exacted, though, to avoid publicity, more than the usual compensation may be paid. In 'blood' cases *hu khumelwa* strikingly benefits both assaulter and victim. In theft, the offender must offer the thing stolen plus a goat or even a head of cattle 'of causing [the thing] to come back'. Mudiwa, living at the capital, one day found that some of his pumpkins had been stolen in a field at Khikhudini. A little later he met a woman who, caught with some pumpkin leaves as she came from the field, admitted her guilt. Mudiwa reported to the district head at Khikhudini, who arranged that the parties met him at the woman's home to discuss the matter. There she offered a pig as pardon. Mudiwa accepted, told her to sell the pig and give him 10s. The proceedings were more or less private, those present being only Mudiwa, the woman and a relative or two, and the district head, in the role technically as judge, but really as *mukhumadi*. If the matter had been between residents of the same district, the intervention

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of the district head would have been unnecessary; but very frequently he acts as *mukhumedi* in these cases. 627 691

Hu khumchua is the only proper initial procedure in cases of damage to crops. The owner of the cattle is called to see the damage, begs pardon with a goat, and is told to strengthen his cattle kraal. If depredations continue, he may be taken to the *khwv*. To omit the preliminary procedure of *hu khumchua* is not necessarily fatal, but is regarded as being revengeful and nothing is abhorred more than revenge. If the man whose crops are damaged refuses reconciliation and makes the owner of the cattle 'pay' instead of allowing *hu khumchua*, the owner will, it is said, seek an opportunity to revenge himself, and the saying that applies is: 'It is the blow that follows, not the first blow, that hurts.' The saying is, however, of general application and is invoked in regard to any injury or wrong. Practice differs in the various districts as regards *hu khumchua* for damage to crops, and when a man is resident in one district and has his fields in another, very interesting conflicts of jurisdiction and law sometimes occur, but we cannot stop to consider them.

After formal complaint—that is, after a case is 'in the *khwv*'—*hu khumchua* may, according to the circumstances, either end the matter or be treated as a confession of guilt (*dumu mulodo*) by plaintiff or *khwv*. *Dumu mulodo* is a term used also outside the *khwv*. If the owner of cattle continues to be careless after several warnings, he may find that his goat of reconciliation will be regarded, not as a goat of begging pardon, but as a confession of guilt, and the victim will exact what he considers to be the real damage. To accept pardon stops *khwv* proceedings, and if after *dumu mulodo* the culprit makes good what the victim demands there also can be no *khwv* trial; but if he does not, the offer of pardon is a confession, not conceived as having been made without prejudice, but admissible in evidence. More often *dumu mulodo* refers to a goat which the defendant offers in the *khwv* in settlement and apology. The circumstances, especially the attitude of the plaintiff and the previous history of the case, will then determine whether the matter ends there. The *khwv* may say, 'This is your *dumu mulodo*; now pay the ox which in our [or the plaintiff's] opinion fits the offence.'

Examples of *dumu mulodo* are difficult to give as a long history is involved and, to understand them, we should have to refer to details of the culture which are not dealt with in this book. But it may be possible to simplify for presentation here the case of *Mabula* v. *Magwaba*, though it lasted six months in the *khwv* of the capital alone. These two women were co-wives of Khidai and were entangled in one of those polygynous of jealousies arising in polygyny which are the counterpart of the eternal triangles of our monogamy. The co-wives quarrelled and fought about their extra-marital lovers, and Magwaba bit Mabula on the lip. When the wound refused to yield to treatment it was said to be due to the 'bad teeth' of Magwaba, who, it was suspected, must be a *lobogo*, a person who had been allowed to live though her upper teeth had appeared before the lower. Having vainly appealed to her husband to order Magwaba's teeth to be scraped for medicine, Mabula complained to her parents. After much manœuvring in order to avoid being drawn into the conflict, 197 [26]

627 the mother and the brother of Mabula went to the parents of Magosha,
691 who, however, refused to allow the scraping of their daughter's teeth on the grounds that it implied that they were witches.

When the matter came before the *khoro*, the view was taken that, 'If a dog bites you and the wound festers, it is not wrong to ask the owner for a hair from its tail': you are not imputing witchcraft and it does not matter that the hair or scrapings may have no healing virtues, the important matter being willingness to help. Many side issues emerged, especially as to whose responsibility was the scraping of the teeth: the husband's or the parent's. Once Mukugubi, Magosha's father, by escaping from his village, evaded the attempt made by Mabula's elder sister to scrape Magosha's teeth. There were at times recriminations in the *khoro*, which showed that the *mayenzele* links were about to be broken. 'If you no longer care for us,' said Mukugubi, 'I shall pay Mabula's parents'; but Khidai replied, 'What kind of ill-bred woman is that daughter of yours, who is pregnant by a lover, and swears at me by the things inside my trousers. My cattle have provided wives for two of your sons and only I of all your sons-in-law have "gates" in your village.' An old man interjected, 'The jealousies of the child are settled by its parents. Khidai is not responsible. You, Mukugubi, must *khomelwa*.' A week later Mukugubi offered a goat of reconciliation. But the *khoro* said, 'No. This goat is *dowa malada*. We now want you to bring an ox, because the father of Mabula has come to you often to ask you to *khomelwa* and you refused.' And the father added, 'Yes, I came also to the *khoro* (a distance of eight miles) for eighteen weeks, but you did not turn up. Can I "work" eighteen weeks for merely a goat?'

Mukugubi consented to pay, but urged that he had a case against Khidai, who should have prevented the drawn-out proceedings by settling it. That was another matter, said the court, for 'The kidneys of an elephant cannot be harnessed together' (they are, like two cases, too weighty to be dealt with at the same time). We may doubt whether it was wise, in view of the polygon of conflicts, to treat as *dowa malada* the goat offered in reconciliation, but in these matters the *khoro* is generally wiser than we are.

692 *Ho khomelwa* and its elaborations lead us to consider the procedure in the *khoro*. The conceptions are interwoven, but a *khoro* trial is regarded as essentially different from the quasi-judicial procedures. It is public, unlike *ho khomelwa*, and it starts with *ho dalia* (a formal complaint to an officer of the court); there are 'opening' and 'closing' fees and compensation or restitution (*malefo*); and the constitution of the *khoro* is not based on alignments of interested parties. Before *ho dalia*, there is no *khoro* case; the matter is private. *Ho rola*, privately to ask a debtor to pay, precedes but does not necessarily lead to *ho dalia*; it may end in *ho khomelwa*. But *khoro* trials and settlement in the family or by reconciliation out of court do not differ from one another as regards the sanction of force; both rely upon consent. Because the *khoro* is public, contempt of its authority may be punished, but the humiliation of the offender is a means rather of inducing him to consent than of enforcing a judgement; we have never seen it applied as an alternative to paying the

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fine or making the restitution. The great feature of the *khoro* is its publicity. It constitutes a large part of the public life of the men and, while it lives as an institution, it will powerfully counteract the sense of frustration resulting from the intervention of the white man. 692

The *khoro* is the final safeguard of the *manyusolo* system[1] and, through that system, of the intricate social structure. It also deals with witchcraft, theft, assault, adultery, and other disputes; but its province in witchcraft and sorcery is limited and has only recently developed, theft and adultery do not lend themselves to its genius, and other cases are primarily to be settled by *ku khumelwa*. Of all disputes coming before the *khoro*, 76 per cent. are *manyusolo* cases, but if we consider only the disputes that are really submitted to trial and not merely for confirmation or registration of a decision otherwise reached, the percentage rises to 88. Yet the chief subject of litigation is *manyusolo* only if we ignore completely the conflicts that are settled by *ku khumelwa* or in the family. In our opinion, though by the nature of the case the evidence can never be complete, these latter cases outnumber *khoro* cases to the same extent as *manyusolo* cases outnumber all other cases of the *khoro*. 692 691

Of the many implications of these facts, we shall refer merely to two First of all, contrary to what is often stated concerning the Bantu, it is not that most conflicts in the society arise from *manyusolo*, but that, of the disputes having, as we phrase it, legal consequences, none are more in evidence than *manyusolo* tangles. But as the *khoro* is really a *manyusolo* court, we cannot argue from the litigation we find in it to the general nature of the conflicts in the society. The error is somewhat like concluding from cases coming before special divorce courts among us, that marital disputes are the main causes of dissension in our society. *Khoro* proceedings are essentially *manyusolo* proceedings because the complex *manyusolo* system, and the safeguarding of its intricate reciprocities, can adequately be entrusted, not to private arrangements, but to an imposing public organisation. The stresses and strains in the system are not only of a personal but of an institutional nature, involving the integration of diverse elements in the social structure. Compromises affect individuals as well as larger groups and their interrelations, and, for the solutions required, the society needs the wide perspective and wisdom of a trained body of men. They have to adjust personal difficulties, but in the context of an intricate system that is easily thrown out of gear. Herein also lies the special genius of the *khoro*.

Secondly, legal arrangements appear to be made and controlled by men, but that is because we identify law with the *khoro*, the place of the men. In *ku khumelwa* women are at least as important as men, and in family disputes no one occupies so pivotal a position as the cattle-linked sister, the legal 'builder' of most houses in the country, she who 'cuts' cases arising within the house and regulates the inheritance of goods and of widows. These 'judicial'-like activities cover vast provinces of the total culture, and they are fully recognised in *khoro* proceedings in which neither in arriving at a decision nor in safeguarding its execution can the men ignore the wishes, authority, or influence of the sister. In complicated cases, they often postpone their decision again and again until she 692 562

[1] [See cit. 582+582--Ann/45]

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692 appeals, and they rely upon her to suggest a solution and to guarantee its
562 being put into effect. Old women, sitting on the fringes of the court, are sometimes heard to mumble, as if impersonally, about the tortuous ways of the men when such-and-such is the simple solution; a man within earshot overhears the remark and applies it to the case; and more often than not, as you see the men 'jump upon' the happy phrase or formula suggested, you realize that men do not have the monopoly of wisdom. Women are the strongest pillars of the social structure and without their support there can be no guarantee that the adjustments in the superstructure will be lasting or effective; and, in a society that relies on compromise and not on coercion, this role becomes even more important. Women appear as plaintiffs or defendants as frequently as men; we have never heard either the *khwo* or a party object that an opponent was a woman unassisted by her guardian; but we have heard an old woman, the defendant, refuse to proceed in a case where the plaintiff was a young man of twenty-five years. It was a divorce case, in which the young man presumptuously had handed *manyualo* cattle, not to the mother of the bride, but to the bride's former husband. The mother took back her daughter and the young man sued for the return of his goods. The mother said in the *khwo*, 'I scorn to discuss the matter with you, a mere child. You know nothing about cases. Bring your father. I do not understand your complaint.' The *khwo* agreed. Of course, the *khwo* is the province of the men, and their place and function in it have been institutionalised; by contrast, only a few women have an institutional hold upon the *khwo*, but they are firmly entrenched in the social structure, which is the *raison d'être* of the *khwo*.

694 We cannot do more than give a general picture of a few aspects of the practice and procedure of the *khwo*. There are the usual preliminary processes. A creditor, going alone directly to the debtor, complains (*ba pele*) once, twice, perhaps many times; the complaint is not made through the village head. The debtor may ask his district head or another to intercede as his *mukhumadi*. But if nothing happens, the creditor warns the debtor that he will proceed to *ba dolio*, the formal complaint to the district head, not the village head, which begins the case. The dispute may still be settled privately with the district head appearing in the role of an intercessor rather than a judge, probably at the defendant's village. If this fails, the assistance of the 'mother' of the district may be called in, as already described, or there may be a full-dress *khwo* trial, with its 'opening' fees and 'fees of the feet'. Should the district head be 'overcome', the case may go to the capital. The parties are summoned to appear on a certain Sunday and there are present some fifty men, all of them potential arbitrators. It is difficult to distinguish judges, litigants, and visitors, and, though there is some one presiding, now one, now another of the men, even though they have been found guilty in a previous case the same day, may take the lead and decide the case.

695 The *khwo* is not unlike a family council: there are no set forms or formulas or procedures, no precise order in which cases are called or matters are discussed. While the parties to one case, unable to reach agreement, retire to the 'dung of the dogs' along the fence of the court-

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yard, where they may more freely advance personal considerations, the 695
khwi goes on to the next case. After plaintiff and defendant have spoken, the discussion may become general and heated, or it may peter out or degenerate to *ad hoc* arguments in various quarters, and no crisp decision may be given. There are many interruptions. Yet the men say that *khwi* work is arduous and requires much concentration—clearly their conceptions are very different from ours. They attach great importance to impartial justice, and bribery in our sense is rare. The danger of partiality arises from relationship and friendship; arbitrators do not recuse themselves, but often show their embarrassment by silence or slipping out of the *khwi*. We have seen cases in which a district head was fined by his own *khwi* for assaulting one of the residents of his district. Even the queen may be judged (in private) by her retinue, the nobles (*Uvamuhajulwa gi vulede*).

The problem of the *khwi* lies, not in sifting evidence or dispensing 695
justice according to law, but in adjusting personal differences within the 671
general framework of the social structure. Success is achieved when personality compromises can be harmonized with the implications of the social system. The *khwi* is not much concerned with strict law or the details of law. They do not rely upon judicial precedents for authoritative legal material. If precedents are quoted, and that is exceedingly rare, their purpose is to suggest arrangements and adjustments that are effective, not to determine a legal rule. The law is not the law of the courts; it is the 'law' of the institutions and is embedded in the institutions; and the harmony of different institutions and their 'laws' results from the total cultural configuration, not the judgements of the *khwi*. If the arrangements or 'laws' of two institutions conflict in a case, as they sometimes do, the *khwi* is powerless to resolve the conflict; for law is not of an autonomous order.

We cannot speak of examination, much less of cross-examination, of 695
witnesses. All the parties are present when evidence is given, for 'Only Europeans conceal what one says from another and allow secret manipulations of evidence behind the backs of others'. The foreknowledge of the *khwi*, the availability of the weapons of confrontation and publicity, reduces direct perjury to a minimum. Litigants know the art of presenting their cases and of skilfully twisting a story, but a man caught out in telling an untruth readily confesses the truth. Falsehood is dealt with by ridicule and laughter; it is not punished as perjury. There are no rules as to what may be admitted as evidence, but the probative value of different kinds of evidence is well understood. The evidence need not bear upon the issue presented to the court, for that issue may merely reflect a more fundamental conflict, and it is with this conflict and its resolution that the *khwi* is concerned. Hearsay and irrelevancies may furnish important clues as to the origin or nature of the dispute. Rigid proof is necessary when elementary facts are in issue, as when the sole question is how many cattle have to be returned upon divorce, and then reliance is placed upon the evidence of the two marriage intermediaries. In theft and adultery cases, despite presumptions that supplement the evidence of the senses, the *khwi* is peculiarly helpless and extra-*khwi* procedures must be invoked.

695 Besides the *khwr* fees already mentioned, there is a 'closing' fee, required only where *mumyuulo* is returned. Theoretically, one of the cattle is slaughtered and eaten by the *khwr*, but in practice this is rarely done. Much more usually does one see, when plaintiff is paid some goats or some cattle and goats as the result of a judgement, that the *khwr* orders one of the goats to be set aside as the 'goat of the shaking of the beards', which is killed for those attending the session, in recognition of all the talking they have done. The queen receives only the £1 exacted as 'opening' fee—required always in *mumyuulo* suits, rarely in theft, and never in other cases—and the head of cattle paid in 'blood cases' that come before the *khwr* of the capital. What she receives in this way can never enrich her, though it helps her to provide the *mumyuulo* of her many wives.

696 Fees and fines or restitution raise questions of execution. The *khwr* never levied execution in the past and it cannot do so to-day, but self-help is absolutely forbidden. The *khwr* reluctantly and rarely calls in the aid of the Native Commissioner, and for a litigant to place his case in the hands of a solicitor is an abomination which, whatever his rights, will turn the *khwr* against him. Execution is frowned upon almost as much as intervention by the European authorities; it is so alien that few things in the society arouse such indignation as seizure by the European sheriff. People hate to be coerced, not only in *khwr* proceedings, but in every sphere of activities, including their labour for the queen; just as differences must be settled by consent so also the queen must solicit labour with entertainments. There are exceptions, some apparent, some real: a disloyal district head may be deposed; a subject who disobeys and does not pay the fine imposed may be expelled; a witch's cattle used to be confiscated. But these are not *khwr* cases and, except in the case of the witch, there is no execution upon property or person.

The enforcement of *khwr* decisions is left entirely to the parties. But they must agree; they cannot resort to force. This does not mean that the values of the society have been irresistibly internalized or that men are supersensitive to conscience and shame. It is the continuous pressure of institutionalized obligations, the impossibility of doing without the tangible day-by-day mutualities, and the disorganization caused by failure of the long-run reciprocities, not a sense of guilt or shame, which slowly but surely force a man to carry out the compromise reached in the *khwr*. A judgement creditor may receive no satisfaction for years; he may complain again and again to the *khwr* that no restitution has been made; yet if the debtor, appearing in the court, says that he is still 'looking for' the payment, it will usually be sufficient. 'Looking for' implies willingness to pay and it rehabilitates the wrongdoer; the *khwr* may even reprimand an impatient judgement creditor, at least if he has no grounds for casting aspersions upon the honesty or sincerity of the debtor. 'The law', in their phraseology, 'does not eat the man-who-says-I-shall-pay'. Culture contact has struck a severe blow at settlement by consent; the *khwr*, in an attempt to regain prestige, clamours for the power to punish; and the parties, reluctant to invoke European aid, bolster up the crumbling reciprocities with supernatural sanctions. Most men still have great

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confidence in the *Akwy* and its methods, but some men increasingly resort to a mixture of the supernatural, the 'sending back' of the evil, and the processes of the European courts. 696

'Blood' cases and disobedience to tribal authorities, as well as witchcraft, are dealt with by procedures essentially different from those so far described. Homicide, especially accidental killing (*gwa*), is usually restituted by *ku khumchua* and by converting the criminal to a kinsman, without the intervention of the *Akwy* or payment to the queen. But other procedures were also used: a murderer might be killed in the heat of the moment by a relative of the victim, and in such a case that ended the matter; or he might be executed by order of the queen unless he could escape to one of the recognised sanctuaries in the country; or he might be dealt with as a witch. Homicide in its manifold aspects is too large a subject for treatment here, but since it is, in regard to aspects of law dealt with in this book, adequately illuminated by our next subject, viz. procedure in 'blood' cases, we may content ourselves with the remark that homicide apparently did not involve a *Akwy* trial. 682 627

'Blood' cases to-day present a curious mixture of different procedures of the past. One old element of the procedure, being incongruous with the disapproval of self-help, has completely disappeared. Old men told us that 'blood' cases were settled by the kin, not submitted to the *Akwy*. That, but no doubt also the reluctance to appeal to the European, to-day explains the emphasis on reconciliation and the encouragement of *ku khumchua* in these cases. If a 'blood' case comes to the *Akwy*, the victim gets nothing and the assaulter pays heavily; if the matter is privately settled, the victim gets something and the assaulter pays less. In the old days, if private settlement failed, the kin of the victim went to attack the assaulter's village: they reported to the queen, but she exacted no fine if in the attack a man was killed. Though this method of execution is unknown to-day, it is still said that a man who kills an aggressor pays nothing, not even to the queen, for 'He who dies on the road is not to be cried for. Let the aggressor kill himself' (*mufo-dzilemi a u lifwi, mulala u dzulazi*). This precept is also invoked to justify 'revenge' by means of medicines, but here, as in the case of aggression, it is regarded as self-defence, not self-help, just as killing an adulterer caught in the act—in which case also no blood-money is paid, even to the queen—is thought of as killing a thieving dog. These conceptions leave intact the aversion from vengeance: there is no blood revenge, no vendetta, no trace of the *lex talionis*, though a limb for a limb is known not very far off. Self-help, even in cases where it is admitted among tribes with more highly developed legal institutions, is frowned upon: one may neither kill a pig of another that damages one's crops nor drive cattle that have entered one's gardens into the fields of their owner. A man, provoked or assaulted by another, has no right to retaliate; and it is doubted whether the provocation will mitigate his offence, for no man may take the law in his own hands. Phedulí's relative had been killed by Magwale's sorcery, and in anger Phedulí struck Magwale's cow, which subsequently went lame; yet he was ordered by the *Akwy* to pay the usual compensation.

How has the old procedure merged with the new conceptions? We

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692 can give only part of the answer. The exaggerated abhorrence of self-
682 help and the insistence upon *ku khumclwa*, side by side with the
627 tendency to regard blood as belonging to the queen (phrased as 'the head belongs to the chief'), has not driven the old procedures wholly out of the field. Old men say that 'blood' cases cannot be submitted to the *khɔrɔ*, yet they are second in number to *manyualo* cases. In theory, the procedure is that the victim, having notified his district head, runs to show his blood at the capital, messengers (*makarula*) of the queen are sent, not to institute an inquiry or conduct a trial, but to collect one goat from every married man in the district of the victim; and each *leharula* takes two goats for himself and gives the rest to the queen. We have never seen this procedure applied in practice; the danger of European intervention makes it wholly impracticable. Instead, the wounded person reports immediately to the district head, sometimes to the queen, or if the wound is not serious the parties settle the matter by *ku khumclwa*. The district head often arbitrates successfully; but he can neither try nor fine nor exact court fees. If the victim goes to the queen, she sends a *leharula* (and often more than one) who exacts one goat (the 'fee of the feet') from the assaulter and one from the victim (the 'stick for roasting meat') and should he settle the matter informally, for he cannot conduct a full-dress trial, he receives one further beast (the fine) from the wrong-doer. The latter is given to the queen; the goat given by the victim is killed for the *leharula*, who takes a hind leg to the queen's *khɔrɔ*, where it is eaten chiefly by the councillors; and the victim gets nothing. But if the *leharula* fails in his mission, which in practice means that the assaulter refuses to submit to him or denies his guilt, he is summoned to the *khɔrɔ* at the capital. There is no 'opening' fee, for 'blood' opens the *khɔrɔ*; sometimes the parties are ordered to settle the matter between themselves and sometimes the offender is fined one head of cattle, which goes to the queen, and one goat, which is killed for the *khɔrɔ*. Sometimes, however, a victim reports to the queen merely to obtain a letter to the Native Commissioner.

692 These general principles are subject in individual cases to many
683 variations which reflect the transitional nature of the procedure and the adjustments that are being made by the society. We have been able to observe the cases that came before the *khɔrɔ* far more closely than those settled privately. In one case where a father intervened in a fight between his son and his son's wife, the son in anger stabbed the father; the *khɔrɔ* ordered the parties to become reconciled by *ku khumclwa*, the son to beg pardon with a goat. In similar circumstances, where a stranger intervened, the husband was ordered to clear the grass in the queen's garage. In another case the husband wounded the mother of a youth whom he found with his wife, because the mother interfered in the ensuing quarrel between the husband and the youth; the *khɔrɔ* told the youth to beg pardon with three goats but fined the husband one head of cattle and one goat. While the *zwiqajani* (whistling ancestors) were performing at a religious ceremony, one of them, very much intoxicated, blew his whistle in public and tried to drag one of the women away to the bush. A district head, an initiated man, forcibly ejected the offender, who next

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morning assaulted him, but was worsted; the offender then reported his 692
wound at the capital. A *lakwala* was sent to collect the blood fine from 683
the district head, but, not finding him, left a message summoning him to the *khwo*. There the case was discussed with only initiates of the *gomane* present. The men could not decide upon their course of action. They said, 'Let no one be angry. The district head did right, but we cannot carry out the law of the "school" (the man who reveals the *digwa* secrets must die). We cannot even impose a fine; no one knows what the fine should be. Let the matter rest.'

Khashani, working on a European farm, called his wife, whose baby was ill, to come to him. The baby died and Khashani, seeing 'medicine' on the fireplace, suspected and severely beat his sister's daughter as well as his sister. The case came to the *khwo* of the queen, which pointed out that if, as Khashani thought, his sister was a witch, he also probably was one. This did not satisfy Khashani, but his sister demanded back her cattle, and the *khwo*, attempting to isolate the struggle, said, 'We are discussing the "blood". You, Khashani, must pay your sister one head of cattle.' Khashani replied, 'That I agree to do. I shall even drive away my wife, so that I can return my sister's cattle.' The *khwo* was not much perturbed, since it thought that Khashani's threat was either bluff or the raving of a madman.

In the last case it was the victim, not the queen, who was awarded the head of cattle. The argument sometimes used by Lovedu men against such an award is better known in other tribes: it is that, if the victim is benefited, all he need do to become rich is to provoke others to fight him. And the theory held by those advancing this argument is that to spill blood is 'to break the queen's calabash', and therefore 'blood' cases must be submitted to the *khwo*. This is the view gaining ground, so that *makwala*, going to collect the blood fine, become messengers summoning the parties to the queen's *khwo*, without, however, ignoring the position of the district heads. The whole procedure is in a state of flux, but we can see in outline how the blood feud has gradually receded as the kin groups become submerged by the district organization and how, as a consequence, the procedure of reconciliation gained so firm a hold that it maintains its stand against the forces making for centralization.

Not long ago the procedure appropriate to cases of witchcraft and 695
sorcery was the ordeal (*mureu*); and though the *mureu* has given way in 683
Vuloovedu to smelling out by the diviner (*magwa*), it can still be seen 754
further east among the Phalaborwa. The test takes various forms; [124]
drinking poison, usually an extract of *nwanawa* (*Datura stramonium*), licking a medicated stick or a heated hoe, removing a stone from boiling water, floating the kernels of *mupani* (*Oncoba spinosa*) in water and observing whether they separate or come together, sometimes accompanied by an oath or followed by the washing of hands or the squirting of water (*ku phasa*). All these are well-known in the lowveld, though the Lovedu used only or chiefly the first; but on the highveld, where witchcraft and sorcery are treated as private matters, there is no legal but only a magical method of dealing with them: the evil is sent back by a doctor privately employed by the victim. The Lovedu no longer rely upon the *mureu*,

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695 because it involves too great publicity and danger of European interven-
683 tion, though they say, perhaps by way of rationalization, that the doctor
754 of the ordeal could manipulate the test. As this procedure is merely of theoretical interest, we need refer only to its salient features.

The victim or his relative privately consulted a bone-throwing doctor, whose verdict he had confirmed by perhaps two or more other doctors before he or an intermediary on his behalf made a public accusation. The ordeal or test took place at the capital and was public. Lineal relatives of accuser and accused or, according to some, two strong men chosen by them, were given an intoxicating drink by the official 'doctor of the ordeal', the spectators watching to ensure that equal quantities were administered. Those who had drunk were put in the sun and he who began moving about or became dizzy, drunken, or incoherent was in the wrong. The witch was usually executed at once, at the orders of the queen, being strangled at the river; but if she was a woman, one of the executioners first had sexual intercourse with her; and the body, tied to a weight, was sunk into the water to be eaten by animals. But the witch was sometimes delivered to the victim to undo his evil work (*ku ma bulla*), and if the illness left the victim the witch was released. Sometimes, also, suspected witches were beaten, tied up (nowadays, as we have seen, handcuffed and submitted to ridicule and abuse), and left without food or tortured with velvet stinging-beans until they confessed; this was sometimes done privately, and it was possible also to kill them without the public ordeal, the killing being reported to the queen; but usually they were merely banished.

683 The property of a witch who was killed was not all confiscated, but
754 *baza*, consisting chiefly of his cattle, was taken by the queen for division between herself and her nobles. No one else could appropriate *baza*; even the village head, if he did so, was regarded as a thief. The witch's gardens reverted to the district head, the crops were taken, not by the queen, because she could not eat the 'dirt of the witch', but by the messengers of the queen, for they were so busy in her service that they could hardly cultivate their fields. Residents in the district surreptitiously during the night took the witch's crops, but it was regarded as disgraceful to do so openly during the day. The wife of a witch was taken by a classificatory brother, and his children were adopted by the queen, who received *mungwalo* when she married the girls to her nobles (in more recent times, to commoners, because the girls often deserted). In the days of the kings, all the relatives, or, as some say, only those on the mother's side—the mother's uterine brothers and sisters especially—were killed. The queens had only a uterine brother or sister killed if they failed to leave the country. The witch, unlike a murderer, could not find sanctuary in the forest of Ḍaja; and only a witch's, not a murderer's, property was *baza*—confiscable property.

787 Since the beginning of this century submission of issues to ordeal has
695 been replaced by their submission to the smelling-out diviner (*mugome*).
[177] The institution of the *mugome* has been borrowed from the Shangana-Tonga and its whole complicated legal procedure is still in a state of flux, adjustments being constantly made especially to avoid European intervention.

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intervention. The procedure involves, first, private consultations of a doctor, followed by an intimation directly or through an intermediary, a wager by the parties, publicly made often in the *khoro*, then a journey in the company of the 'ears' (official witness) of the chief to a distant smeller-out, the actual smelling out, at which the victor may be given a buck's horn to blow on his way home, and, finally the report to chief or district head and the adjudication of the *khoro*. We are here concerned only with the legal aspects, but we must at the outset remark that the procedure, primarily used in witchcraft cases, is relied upon whenever there are evidential difficulties and, paradoxically, it has rendered theft, adultery, and other wrongs, not less, but more amenable to some form of *khoro* control. Publicity and centralized control in the phenomenal, periodical *mawe* proceedings at the capital in the old days guaranteed their effectiveness, but men could privately execute self-confessed witches. To-day, amid conflicting tendencies, *mugwae* proceedings are less public and hardly the prerogative of the queen. Witchcraft is not conceived necessarily to strike at the whole society; it is often dealt with privately; and even, after resort to the *mugwae*, agreement by the parties in the district courts may end the matter.

The *mugwae* procedure lends itself to fixing responsibility when a whole district feels threatened, just as in the old days the *mawe* was used whenever the whole country wished to ward off danger. When, at a certain district gathering, it was decided to send delegates to a *mugwae* concerning the occurrence of many deaths in the district, one young woman objected, saying, 'It is nonsense; we know the sickness is not "sent". If you go to the *mugwae* and he "beats" (points out) members of your family, the whole district will be quarrelling.' The *mugwae* pointed out the young woman who had objected, but she demanded that, if any one accused her, he should go with her to another *mugwae*, and when she appealed to the capital for appointment there of the official witness, no one came forward as a direct accuser and for that reason the case broke down. Subsequent cases in which the young woman was involved reflected how the proceedings had not relieved, but aggravated, the sense of insecurity in the district. Shall we conclude that the remedy is worse than the disease? We cannot do so, because where there are no *mugwae* proceedings, as on the highveld, the incidence of witchcraft and sorcery is not less. Moreover, *mugwae* proceedings are believed to, and do often, remove grave threats to the community. In 1938 the tributary *marula* cider was being made at the village of the head of a sub-district. On the second day the cider frothed suspiciously and after a meeting of the sub-district, money was collected and representatives of every family went to the *mugwae*, who found that the headman had poisoned the cider, and in truth everything pointed to the use of cattle-dip or locust poison. The matter was reported to the capital, where, without formal trial, the headman was ordered to leave the district. In our opinion a dangerous criminal had been successfully dealt with, but, what is more important, the feeling of security of the people had been restored.

We may now shortly examine some aspects of *khoro* control over *mugwae* proceedings. The challenge, supported by a wager to submit the truth

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695 787 of an accusation to the *magwaw*, is made before, during, or even after *khwe* proceedings, but if the dispute is dealt with by the *khwe*, the findings of the *magwaw* can be accorded recognition only if the official witness, the 'ears', has been previously appointed by the *khwe*; the results of a private consultation cannot be given in evidence before the *khwe*. The 'ears' is sometimes appointed by the district head of the person challenged, but the theory is sometimes advanced that only the capital has jurisdiction to do so. His integrity is an important factor, for he must relate to the *khwe* the details of the wager, the competence of the *magwaw*, the method by which the decision was reached and its nature, and whether or not the parties consented to the decision. The 'ears' must be a disinterested person, to avoid accusations of corruption and favouritism, as well as to guarantee that there is no manipulation of the fees entrusted to him by the parties for defraying the expenses of the expedition. Integrity and impartiality are best guaranteed where the capital appoints the 'ears'.

Often enough the findings of the *magwaw* are accorded no recognition at the capital when the parties have gone forth from a district *khwe*. This does not mean that the parties cannot agree to the verdict of the *magwaw* at the district *khwe* where the 'ears' has been appointed; nor is there any great desire to centralize control, which is sometimes encouraged, sometimes feared, and sometimes more or less an inevitable consequence of the need to obtain passes at the capital for the journey to a distant *magwaw*. The practice of appointing 'ears' in the districts is not unconnected with the danger of implicating the capital with the European authorities. It sometimes happens, when the parties come for a pass and a report is made at the capital, that the queen's councillors disclaim any interest or concern in the matter. Wherever the 'ears' may be appointed, he is given the *phitho* (thing to be hidden), any small article such as a snuff box or coin which is concealed and must be named and found by the *magwaw* as a test of his competence before the divination begins.

Khwe control is evident also in the manner in which it may refuse its assistance or dissuade the parties from going to the *magwaw*, even though it can come to no decision in the dispute. The attitude of the *khwe* may be manifested in many ways, and its aim in refusing assistance is much the same as that of the queen when she intervenes behind the scenes in the interests of reconciliation by forbidding the publicity of *magwaw* proceedings. We shall refer to a few only of the cases we have witnessed. A recruiter used to pay all labourers recruited £2, which had to be paid into the tribal fund before the tribal 'secretary' issued a pass to the labourer. For reasons we need not detail, the 'secretary' gave the labourer no receipt and the recruiter sued the 'secretary'. This is precisely the kind of case that the *khwe* finds very difficult to handle and, as the 'secretary' was a Christian, not amenable to *magwaw* proceedings, the recruiter challenged the labourer to go to a *magwaw*. But the *khwe* disallowed the challenge on the ground that the transaction had occurred in daylight, and instead ordered recruiter and 'secretary' jointly to pay the £2.

The *khwe*, by refusing to appoint 'ears', can prevent submission of a

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disputes to the *mugwao* or it may send back the parties to their district head for him to appoint the 'ears', the purpose often being to tire them out or to exhaust their resources, so that they will more easily come to an agreement. But the opposite often happens: the *khwv*, tired of the obstinacy of the parties, may tell them to submit their differences to a *mugwao*. Mudali complained that Uumme, mother of Muloi, was spreading rumours that he had caused Muloi's illness. Muloi was known to be a witch who had killed two of her brothers-in-law, sons of Makhulu, and Makhulu had with the aid of a great specialist 'sent back' a terrible illness which was rotting great holes in Muloi's body. But Uumme could not proceed against this legitimate revenge and, as it was rumoured that Mudali was a lover of Muloi, Uumme attempted to inculpate Mudali. These facts were generally known, but were not disclosed in the *khwv*. Mudali said that his accusers knew that he had no medicines and to clear his name he challenged Uumme to go to a *mugwao* with him. Uumme retorted that she resented the insult from an adulterer, and the *khwv*, fearing that the conflict would spread, advised the disputants to go back to their district head and there arrange to go to the *mugwao*. 'Ears' was appointed and early one morning we all stood ready at Mudali's village, with food for a long journey, perhaps 100 miles; messages and counter-messages passed to and fro between the villages of Mudali and Uumme, but nothing happened; and the following Sunday the case was again in the *khwv* of the capital. Uumme's people said that, as they had made no direct accusation, they refused to go to the *mugwao*, but the *khwv* retorted, 'If Muloi dies, you must not blame Mudali. Now pay him the "cutter of the tongue" (which silences the mouth), for if Muloi dies the Europeans will come.' Uumme refused, and Mudali, satisfied that his name had been cleared, allowed the matter to be dropped.

The *khwv* or the queen may dissuade the parties from resorting to the *mugwao*. Siga accused Maidi—they were co-wives—of having removed a tooth from Siga's child, who died, and of inserting it into the mouth of Maidi's baby. Maidi's relatives advised her to challenge Siga, but the queen, calling Maidi to her, said, 'I cannot support you. The witchcraft may be that even of your mother. Let the matter be.' And her advice was accepted. Similarly the *khwv* discourages unfounded accusations among members of the family, curbs the inclination to squabble, and in various ways attempts to prevent the challenge which so readily rises to the lips of angry relatives. A young married woman, accusing her mother-in-law of harassing her with familiars, fled to her parents, who, when the mother-in-law came to call her back, imputed to her the death of the children of a relative of theirs. The mother-in-law brought an action, but, as is usual when there is danger of *manyoalo* and family entanglements, the *khwv* quashed the case as nonsense (*switshele*) and sent the parties home to compose their differences by *hu khwetsha*. Tsezi, instigated by his mother-in-law, who had a family quarrel with Dali, accused the latter of sending the lightning which had struck down a tree near his village, but the district head stopped the challenge from being submitted to a *mugwao* by dismissing the case as unfounded gossip. Sagani, whose

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695 adultery with his father's young wife was exposed by her, accused her
787 of causing his son's death; but the *khosi* told him to beg pardon with a goat, which would also serve as the 'cutter of the tongue'. When uterine sisters challenged one another before the *khosi* the men ridiculed them, saying, 'Who has ever heard of uterine sisters bewitching one another'—not a very conclusive argument, but sufficient for the purpose in hand. When Mabula, the cattle-linked sister, was called to squirt water (*ku phuso*) for the sick child of her brother, she construed the summons as an accusation of witchcraft, for to call another (not a close relative) to perform this rite is one method of imputing witchcraft; but Mabula's husband intervened in the *khosi*, explained how his wife and her brother by their quarrels were breaking up his home, and suggested that they beg pardon of one another. The *khosi* agreed and averted the challenge.

Even if the parties had been to the *magome* with the official witness the *khosi* is not absolutely bound. In the old days, it is said, the *khosi* allowed argument as if the divination of the *magome* was not infallible and if the parties were not satisfied the *khosi* could on the initiative of one of them send them to a second *magome*. To-day, despite the theory that the *magome* is infallible, the old practice persists. We have seen many arguments on the merits and many reversals of the findings of the *magome*. These findings may be attacked on the grounds of irregularities in the procedure, such as separation of the parties when they were on the journey, corruption of the 'ears', incompetence of the *magome* who failed to find the *phizho* or to indicate correctly the group or totem names of all the parties, dissatisfaction of the one party with the findings at the séance, confusion of the bones by medicines 'thrown' at home, and many others. When there is a conflict between the evidence or a presumption (such as, in adultery cases, the presumption that a woman's evidence is almost as reliable as the bones) and the findings of the *magome*, there is no telling which way the ultimate verdict will go. The cases in which these conflicts have occurred are too complicated for adequate handling here, largely because the primary object of the *khosi* is appeasement of the parties and reconciliation of what appear to be incongruous institutions.

There are other aspects of the procedure that have great legal interest—for example, the principles governing vicarious representation of challenger and challenged before the *magome* and the right of the person vicariously smelt out to appeal for a second expedition of which he is a party, the rule as to the conduct of the parties on the journey, the requirement of the *khosi* that it can take cognizance, not of gossip or general rumour, but only a specific accusation by a specific challenger, and many others. We shall touch upon two further points only.

695 Firstly the *magome* is always a Shangana-Tonga and lives far away.
791 Litigants from other tribes come to Uulovedu, but the Lovedu generally say that they are going to Phafuli, on the borders of Portuguese East Africa. The theory is that the more distant the *magome* the more reliable his verdict will be. But distance also safeguards the diviner from the vengeance that neighbours might take, shifts the incidence of distasteful responsibilities from the *khosi* and eliminates strife between the two

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XIII. AT THE CAPITAL

(*a*) RE-BUILDING THE COURTYARD OF THE CAPITAL

(*b*) THE COURTYARD (KHOMO), WITH A CASE IN PROGRESS

[facing p. 208]

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XIV. THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

(a) DIAGNOSING THE CAUSE OF ILLNESS

(b) THE KHADI POURS BEER TO APPEASE THE ANCESTORS

[facing p 209]

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powerful jurisdictions, the *khwi* and the *magwa*. The *magwa*, great though his powers be, holds a precarious position in the modern world. His fees are not fixed, but the usual amount is £1 1s. 6d., though it may be 5s. or more for each person of the party. Much of his technique is directed towards preventing the consultants from giving him away to the European authorities. 'If you say I am a liar,' declared one *magwa* to the parties, 'take back your money and go elsewhere. I even challenge you to take me to the Europeans; they will agree with me, as I have a licence to divine.' In another case a *magwa* refused to find any one guilty. 'You force me,' he said, 'to smell out the witch, but you have left him at home. The other diviners who smelt out this man [the challenged person] are all wrong. And you [the challenger], if you wish to settle the dispute, must place a head of cattle as a sacred beast to wake up your grandfather.' But this finding did not persuade the parties to withdraw their case from the *khwi*, and the *khwi*, ignoring the finding, settled the matter in its own way.

Secondly, the wager is not made by way of an oath, but it is sometimes reduced to writing: 'They bet four head of cattle' (*va bejije khomu je ene*); that is all. The tiny slip of paper is kept by the 'ears'. The use of the term *ku beje* shows, as the people say, that the wager is a new conception. But we cannot be certain that the wager has been borrowed from Europeans. It fits the whole complex of judicial process: its essence is consent of the parties to be bound by their wager and by the findings of the *magwa*. If one of the parties disagrees with these findings, he is entitled to demand back the money paid to the *magwa* and ask the party to go further to another *magwa*. The *khwi* may, however, vary the bet. The victor comes to the *khwi* and blows his horn; and the women ululate and dance (*ku pehela*, which by extension also means to be acquitted or declared innocent by ordeal or *magwa*). Meanwhile the vanquished party goes home and, if he is contrite, he says that he could not help doing wrong. Next day he might appear in the *khwi*, ask for time to pay or *khumelwa* or send an old man to plead for a reduction of the bet. The victor pretends to refuse, but in the end, if the *khwi* presses him, he will agree. Or the *khwi* may, on its own initiative, reduce the bet. Everything depends on the circumstances. Where the mother of a man was alleged to have killed the wife of his elder brother (the challenger), the *magwa*'s verdict was against the mother, but as he had said that she was not a born witch, but had only purchased the medicine from another, the *khwi* awarded the challenger two head of cattle instead of the six actually wagered. The bet is often not paid in full, while sometimes nothing at all is exacted as the 'cutter of the tongue' of the slanderer. But we have seen cases in which the *khwi* has, at the suggestion of one party, raised a wager from four to six head of cattle.

This is not the place to discuss the interrelations of the tribal and the European systems. For one thing, the subject requires a volume to itself. But it is necessary to insist that in criminal matters the system of Native courts is by European law essentially an integral part of the European structure. In 1934 Mujaji was given criminal jurisdiction in respect of offences punishable under Native law, but fines are limited to two head

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692 of cattle or £5; and so many offences, including grievous and indecent assaults, arson, and pretended witchcraft, are excluded that, when the queen received the letter granting jurisdiction, she exclaimed, 'Is there anything left to us?' In practice, as we have seen, a good deal is not so much left as quietly taken. Moreover, fines imposed can be enforced only by the process-in-aid also available in civil cases. Civil jurisdiction, as granted by the Europeans, is more generous; it includes civil claims arising out of Native law brought before the chief by Natives against Natives resident within the area of jurisdiction. But, it need hardly be said, the alien conceptions of civil law and criminal law and their distinctions are only faintly understood. The chief has no power to proceed to execution against the wishes of the judgement debtor, for where the judgement debtor (or others at his instigation) resists execution, and seizure in the opinion of the messenger might lead to a breach of the peace, the messenger must report to the judgement creditor and it is he, not the chief, who if he so desires may apply to the Native Commissioner for process-in-aid. The *khwv* is not a court of record, but there are provisions as to appeal to the Native Commissioner, whose functions in hearing the case, as if it were a case of first instance, are not merely to determine the appeal, but also to act as a court of first instance for purposes of recording evidence.

This is a bare outline of the formal aspects of the situation. The sociological implications are fortunately infinitesimal compared with what they might have been if Native Commissioners had not been wiser than the law they administered. Their policy has been not to interfere. Moreover, the procedure of the *khwv*, by its insistence upon agreement and compromise, not only does not rely upon, but is inconsistent with, execution or the sanction of force. Compromise and physical coercion are contradictory principles which cannot co-exist. Litigants sometimes reluctantly resort to European courts and their processes-in-aid, not because European law has castrated the *khwv*, but because culture contact has cut some of the sinews of reciprocity.

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CHAPTER XII

THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

Anatomical conceptions in relation to the science of drugs and of healing—cardinal categories of the causation of disease—training for the medical profession—divinatory dice as a method of diagnosis.

LOVEDU therapy is linked, on the one hand with law, and on the other 755
with medicine, magic, witchcraft, sorcery, and religion, but it is more closely interwoven with these last than with the first. If disease and death are the main objective of witchcraft and sorcery, disease is also the occasion of most religious rites, medicine the means of restoring the health of the human body and law the guarantee of the well-being of the social organism. Law and medicine are both largely concerned with the results of dissension between men. Open strife, which leads to social evils, is examined by the *khrrr* and resolved under the guidance of its wisdom; secret malice, which causes death and disease, is diagnosed by the bones and treated by the doctor; but for the detection of the deeds of darkness the *khrrr* calls in the aid of the doctor. The *khrrr* relies upon public discussion and its genius effects contact and reconciliation between one litigant and another, while the doctor uses private divination and his art inspires the consultant with confidence against his secret enemy. The social psychology of the one is the counterpart of the psycho-therapy of the other. But we must not think of them as essentially different worlds, the one primarily natural and the other primarily supernatural. The medico-magico-religious is to the Lovedu rather a tangible world of mundane arrangements and subject to 'natural' forces than a cosmos, inscrutable in its configuration and governed by 'supernatural' destinies. In truth, Lovedu healing is based to some extent upon observed relations between cause and effect though more largely upon practices and beliefs which, though they will not stand the tests of our science, constitute the psychological therapy of the society. We are far too apt to discount the value of their empirical body of knowledge, instead of using it to construct a sound scientific approach to medicine. We can also do better than scorn as superstitious absurdities those indispensable techniques of medicine which, because our medical profession takes little account of them, enable the charlatan and quack to flourish among us.

To understand Lovedu conceptions of the causation of disease, we 827
must orientate ourselves from their knowledge of human anatomy. It is indeed very meagre. All they know has been gleaned indirectly from the slaughter of cattle and goats, for they practise neither embalming nor dissection of corpses. As a result, though they have names for all the more important organs of the body, they are not always sure of their correct location. Nor have they much idea of physiological function. They know that the stomach and intestines are digestive organs and that the bladder contains urine, but lungs and the diaphragm are vaguely connected with 827
breathing. The womb, ovaries, and testicles are definitely reproductive 842
organs, but in medical practice this function is obscured by the role of an

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[827] internal snake believed to be intimately bound up with fecundity and
842 childbirth. Every one is said to have a snake in his stomach. It is not a real snake, yet it is conceived of as having a head and of being able to
753 crawl up to a man's neck (causing what we call indigestion) and running back again when he coughs. When a person has stomach-ache it is often said, 'The snake is biting,' while dysentery is referred to as 'red' or 'white snake', according to the stage of the disease. The most important function of this snake, and one that forms a common subject of converse-
842 tion in connection with barrenness, is, however, its reproductive one. It is believed that semen comes from a man's snake; if his snake is 'no good', a child will not be born. The snake of a woman is sometimes identified with the womb and for conception it is necessary that this snake should accept the semen. There are two possibilities which prevent conception: either the snake's head may be wrongly oriented or it may catch up the semen, but spit it out again. In the first case the remedy is to 'turn round' its head by medical treatment, in which very often the womb of a scapegoat is used. In the second case, since the snake rejects the semen unless the bloods of husband and wife agree and the snake of the man may be as much at fault as that of the woman, it is usual to include both husband and wife in treatment for barrenness. If six to nine months elapse after marriage without conception having taken place, steps are at once taken to set the matter right.

826 Though the Lovedu have no knowledge of the circulation of the blood,
753 they assign to it properties which lie at the basis of their medical theory. Blood is so generally believed to be the root of most ills that a Native describing his symptoms always says, 'I am pierced by blood.' Rheumatism, stiffness after exercise, a pain or swelling in any part of the body, is attributed to blood that has collected there or blood which is 'boiling', making the body hot and feverish. Swellings of all kinds, including goitre, are therefore always cupped to get rid of surplus blood, and blood-letting as a cure for headache and other ills is as popular with the Lovedu as it was in Europe not so long ago. The beating of the heart is not
827 believed to be continuous: it is associated with sudden fright and with illness; but, though it is known that often the heart beats loudly when one is not ill, they have no idea why it should do so. Veins contain blood, but go by the same name as sinews and muscles, all of which are believed to give strength to the body. Occasionally, though infrequently, individuals are to be found who have other ideas. Thus David, a Christian who has often worked in towns and has a mind of his own, has his own theory as to the function of the heart, a deduction from his observations on dying fowls. He believes that the heart beats, not to circulate, but to exclude the blood, and the moment the heart stops beating the blood enters it, causing death to the fowl or person.

753 A considerable list of terms for different diseases indicates that distinctions are recognized, but it is easy to be misled into believing that the Natives' knowledge is greater than it really is. Some terms are peculiarly Native without any corresponding category among us, but many, like smallpox, measles, mumps, fever, consumption, migraine, syphilis, epilepsy, show appreciation of causes or symptoms which fit into our scheme of

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classification. Practice is characterised by vagueness and a very wide and 753
loose, instead of a specific, use of many of these terms. The term *khitshipidi* denotes primarily a swelling or tumour containing white matter. In practice we have found it applied to scrofula or glandular swellings below the ear, which were cut open and squeezed, to slime coughed up and said to be internal *khitshipidi*, and to general aching of all the teeth or tenderness of the gums with no sign of matter. Similarly the term *gobe*, bleeding of the nose, is often applied when there is no bleeding, but general debility, in which case the trouble is thought to be caused by blood in the body that should, but has not, come out. Such false correlations are due not merely to wrong conceptions of cause and effect—any evidence suggesting the presence of blood suffices to incriminate that arch enemy of health—but also to careless observation and loose reasoning. This laxity in medical conceptions is in marked contrast to the logic and coherence of other arrangements of the society. Inaccurate observation 787
and undeveloped symptomatology must be attributed to the extensive 755
reliance, firstly, for diagnosis of all but the most everyday illness upon the divining dice, and, secondly, for curing upon what in the last resort is the psychological rather than the physical.

Lovedu therapeutics includes a number of treatments that have un- 757
doubted curative value, but many more are based on purely magical assumptions. On the whole, those which we should consider to be of some medical value are chiefly home remedies of the humble non-divining herbalist. The higher one goes in the medical scale, the more divorced from scientific principles become the treatments. Simple ailments are dealt with very much as among Europeans: sniffing up water is used for colds, the milk of a certain euphorbia is supplied to draw out deep-lying thorns; splints of strips of wood are used for broken limbs or 752
sprains; teeth are extracted by being levered up by means of an instrument like a poker, which is inserted between the roots, a method said to be no more painful than the clumsy use of European forceps. Very detrimental to the speedy recovery of wounds is, however, the practice of scraping or washing off all matter before each application of healing powders. This destroys the new young tissues, delaying for months the healing of sores that normally takes weeks or even days. Use of enemas is 757
unknown and emetics are not nearly as common as among the Zulu. With the Lovedu as with us the commonest treatment is the drinking of medicines. Instead, however, of the bottle of medicine we receive, a Native is given a small bundle of roots or twigs cut into even lengths to take home and boil in water which is drunk or used for making a soft porridge. Sometimes the medicine is bruised and a cold infusion made. There is none of the careful measurement of quantities characteristic of the mediaeval apothecary or of prescriptions found on Egyptian papyri, but the amounts used are not wholly undetermined, for in practice the smallest pot is used and 1 to 2½ pints of water are added; the dose seldom exceeds a few mouthfuls taken once or twice a day for a few days only. If this is not effective, something else will be tried. Wet cupping is a common home remedy, as the numerous scars on head and shoulders of people testify. After scarification, a cupping horn is applied, the narrow

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

304 757 Scarification, except in the mutual inoculation and blood mixing of husband and wife prior to their first sexual intercourse after marriage and after the death or miscarriage of a child, is a treatment that is directed less at the evils of blood than towards a strengthening of the body or part of the body by the insertion of medicine. It is used in curing headache, for [752] sprains and broken limbs, and for all 'strengthenings', such as that prior to taking a child out of the hut for the first time or the 'fixing' of one's body against witches. For general strengthenings, incisions are made on all the joints and on other parts of the body, such as head and neck depression, which are considered important. Scarification is, with the drinking of medicine or eating of powders, quite the most common form of medical treatment; it is used in the home as much as by diviners and forms part of many other treatments, such as the vapour bath. By far the most 751 interesting form of scarification is, however, '*ku themela*' (vaccination) against smallpox in which matter from the pustules of affected persons, mixed with other medicines, is inoculated to introduce the disease in a mild form. It is done on the dorsal side of the wrist or on the forehead, a pattern which supports the claim that it was known prior to the advent of the European; moreover, the ingredients of the serum used by Euro- [71] peans are not known. Possibly the treatment was borrowed from Arabs, who were the first to study smallpox and measles. The old method was [64] still widely practised in the 1938 smallpox epidemic, for, though it was realized that it 'called' the disease instead of curing it, people noted that, despite European vaccination, there was still much illness.

757 Steaming and the vapour bath also form part of the practical elements in Lovedu medicine. There are various forms of steaming and smoking, all of which go by the same term. To 'loosen' a cough, chips of a certain [783] root may be placed in a pipe with a live coal and smoked; to purify a person after a death, chips are charred on a potsherd and the smoke [844] inhaled through a reed; before being taken out of the hut, a new-born child is held naked in the smoke of burning chips or root and bark; boils and other swellings are brought to a head by the application of the steam of boiling roots. To cure fever or general weakness of the body after an illness and for purification of husband and wife after the death of a child the procedure is more complicated. Red-hot stones are put into a large pot of medicated water and when it bubbles and boils the patient, naked except for a cloth passed between the legs, is covered with a blanket and steamed. After much spluttering and shouting, he is taken out, sprinkled or washed down with cold water and then either scarified on the joints or subjected to *ku hata*—that is, a river stone is pressed on the joints and is later taken back to the river. This treatment is considered too drastic

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for a really weak patient. Sprinkling and *ku hana*, combined very often with other treatments, are also used alone. When there is an epidemic of coughing or dysentery, it is said 'a wind has come' and a doctor is called to sprinkle the people to ward it off. *Ku hana*, pressing a counter-irritant to the affected part, is used for toothache, when large pieces of heated bark are held to the cheek; for bruises, which are treated by the application of hot boiled leaves of certain trees; after childbirth, when hot porridge placed in a small flat basket is pressed daily to the stomach to ward off pains, and for many other purposes. But the hot poultice or emollient is not known.

Characteristically, the above-mentioned treatments are used both on occasions where they might be of real therapeutic value and for purifications and strengthenings where they could not. The principle of inoculation, which immunizes in diseases such as smallpox, is widely applied to effect cures and to further magical ends with which an empirical relation in our sense is wholly obscure. The relation must be sought, not in the objective link between cause and effect as we see it, but in the Lovedu conceptions of disease, their causes and symptoms, and in the cultural pattern of the methods by which evil may be cast out or symbolically laid upon a scapegoat. This is by no means as foreign to European thought as might at first be supposed, being used to this day among the more backward peasants both in Europe and in South Africa. A cure for headache among the Lovedu is to tie a piece of medicated string or sinew round the head for a day, after which it is cut and allowed to fall with the evil it has absorbed into a hole. To cure gout you scarify the leg to insert medicine, wiping off the blood with the leaves of a growing *mapapale* bush (*Euclea sp.*) to leave the disease on it. The frog is a common scapegoat. We once witnessed how, in the case of pulsating fontanelle of a baby, considered to be a grave danger, some of the medicine inserted into the scarifications, made around the throbbing spot and on other parts of the body, was placed on a green-and-white frog. The frog was stood on the fontanelle, where it puffed itself up by rhythmic inhalations not unlike the beating of the fontanelle and finally, as a scapefrog, to which the evil had been transmitted, it was taken back to the river. One method of curing convulsions is to shave the hair in two 'paths' which cross in the centre of the child's head and to make a bark cockroach, smeared with medicine, run along each path till it drops off. In curing barrenness and in initiation into the cult of possession, a goat, after being made to lie beside the patient or having its nostrils blown into, is killed and used in the treatment.

Lovedu medicines appear to us to be a jumble of science and magic. Fully 80 per cent. are of vegetable origin. There is hardly a plant in that rich lowveld vegetation which is not used in the pharmacopoeia of some herbalist or doctor and it is significant that new plants are constantly tried out. The pattern of supposed relations that are believed to exist between symptoms and diseases, of the unscientific analogies which we call sympathetic magic, and the use of roots and barks more frequently than leaves or flowers and fruits, limits the value of this testing out of medicines. Nevertheless, many drugs have effects which either obscure or

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278 cure the symptoms, and whether for that reason and its psychological
757 effect or because of a truly curative value, men have great faith in the
755 medicines. There are undoubtedly ingredients in Lovedu medicines which cannot be empirically related to either symptom or cure, since they operate mainly by a technique of analogies which we relegate to the magical world. Such are animal products like hair, skin, excrement, and ovaries used in a variety of ways—for instance, for barrenness and indigestion; minerals like ironstone used for strengthening babies; and sea or river products, sand and shells, indispensable for keeping witches out of the village. But to Lovedu men and women the use of such ingredients in no way differs from the use of a herb: both are thought to have curative value and for them our distinction between magical and scientific treatments, between cause and effect and false analogy, does not exist. Just as a herb may have properties for curing disease, so, for example, the backbone of a python is effective in curing general debility or backache. The bone is pounded and the powder inoculated into scarifications along the back, by which means the immense power of the python is thus imparted to the patient. But note the sequel. So powerful is this medicine that the patient, when his time has come, will have difficulty in dying. His eyes will remain alive though the body is dead until once more the python powder is applied by being burned under his nose that he may inhale the smoke. This strengthening and the reversal of its influence are like injection and desensitization in our medical practice.

758 When we pursue Lovedu conceptions as regards the nursing and treat-
ment of patients, we have once more to regard them from their
[515 point of view. Cleanliness and hygiene are very remotely related to health.
777] Flies are freely tolerated because it is unlucky to kill them, not because, as is held in some other tribes, abundance of flies means riches in cattle. Invalids are not given a special diet, so that instructions by European doctors that a mother should feed her ailing baby on vitamin-containing foods or fruits are ignored unless medicine is given to be mixed with the food. It is equally fatal to appeal to the curative powers of nature: an invalid will impute unwillingness to help, ignorance or even sinister designs, if you tell him that nature will heal him and give no medicine. It is medicine and medicine alone that is thought to heal. But even medicine is never allowed much time in which to do its curative work. If one drug is not effective within a week it will be changed for another. Often a number of medicines are used at the same time, so that if one is ineffectual the other may heal. In every case we attended we found Native treatment was being given at the same time as, and often to the detriment of, our own. Nor would our protests be of any avail. Even in hospitals there are secret chewings of herbs and surreptitious steamings. Though it is admitted that certain medicines may not 'agree' when used together, use of the wrong medicine is not thought to have any harmful effects. At the most, a medicine merely does not heal; it never definitely harms the patient. Inexactness in the quantity of medicine taken is accompanied by a laxity in the carrying out of doctors' instructions which, though of no consequence where Native medicines are used, may do immense harm if the medicines are European. A careful

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comparison between the instructions of Native doctors at consultations and 758
the actual manner in which these were carried out showed great discrepancies between the two. There are certain general principles known to all and on the whole people trust to their knowledge of these and the powers of the medicines themselves rather than slavishly following instructions.

The sick like to be in the open or in the sun, but it is for comfort and warmth, not because the curative power of nature or the need for nursing is recognised. An invalid generally spends the day lying wrapped up in his blanket in or near the courtyard or in the sheltered storage enclosure. This open-air sick-room, sunny or shady as the needs of the body dictate and protected from wind, is, in the absence of light, well-ventilated rooms, the best possible place for the health of the patient. At night, however, or when the patient is too ill to move, the sick-room is the kitchen hut, where the evening meal is cooked, and it is generally foul with smoke and full of people. A patient suffering from a bad cough is given a potsherd of sand to spit into. If at all possible, a patient goes outside to relieve himself, but if he is too weak to walk a broken pot is provided as a commode. Very sick people are given soft porridge without meat or relish, and great pains are taken to persuade patients to eat lest they lose strength and waste away. The treatment in diseases such as smallpox, measles, 757
and chickenpox, which one generally gets once only, is peculiar and shows how values and procedures used in other spheres of culture may become interwoven with medical practices. The illness is dealt with as if it were a stage in life like puberty or circumcision. When the first symptoms appear, the patient is isolated and a stick, placed across the hut door, warns people off, for *muridi* (shadow) will aggravate the illness if the patient comes into contact with certain people. After some days, when the rash has disappeared or the pustules no longer contain white matter, he is smeared with fat and ochre, whether he feels better or not, and allowed out. The treatment is called *hu tha*, the term used for going through the circumcision initiation. But there is another aspect of the treatment. The pox pustules are scraped daily with soaked bark of *mutsere* (*Bridelia sp.*), the purpose as phrased being to cause the white matter to come out and to prevent the pustules from going deeply into the endodermis, thus leaving pock marks

'Transition' diseases, as we may call those dealt with upon the pattern 753
of *hu tha*, lead us to consider some general conceptions underlying Lovedu medical practice and causation of disease. These conceptions remind us of the Greek theory of humours which long dominated European medicine and were at the basis of mediaeval physiology. Physical and mental qualities and dispositions were attributed to the four chief fluids or cardinal humours of the body, viz. blood, phlegm, choler, and melancholy or black choler. Choler, probably derived from the Greek word for bile and from which we get our word 'cholera', was, for instance, the humour causing irascibility of temper. The Lovedu attach less importance to temperament and have based their cardinal categories, not upon physiological fluids, but upon conceptions associated with shadow (*muridi*), mingling (*makhuma*), heat (*hu fesa*), and sex. These do not

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753 constitute an exhaustive list, and their application extends over a wide field, which we might call the magico-religious.

Murudi (shadow) is conceived of as an evil power, but of its many properties the most emphasized is the property of aggravating disease. It is as if certain real evils cast a shadow which may infect those upon which it falls. If they are normal, healthy people, generally speaking they suffer no discomfort themselves, but they may act as carriers of the shadow, and by contact with others, especially those who are ill, they may transmit the evil as if they were intermediary hosts, weakening the patient and aggravating his illness. The host may transmit the shadow to both persons and things. A person who has attended a funeral or who has lost a close relative is infected by the shadow of death. Twins have [845] such great shadow that if they come near a sick person he will die: hence twins must be killed and are still generally killed, despite European law and the example of Christians to whose grown-up twins no specific evil can be attributed. A woman who has had a miscarriage has *muridi*. [843] Pregnancy up to but not after the end of the third month infects a woman with *muridi*, for a clear distinction is drawn between the two stages of pregnancy: before the end of the third month the foetus is amorphous, not a human being; after it, the foetus takes human form, the woman 'has grown', and a miscarriage is regarded as a death, so that people come to condole and there is a mourning period ended by the [removal of] 'dirt' rite (*khitshila*), just as for the most important adult. After childbirth a woman has *muridi*, but this is not the reason for her isolation. She remains in the hut till her child is strengthened, lest she bring to it shadows from outside. Girls over puberty and non-suckling, childbearing women, though having no definite *muridi*, are a potential source of danger to the sick, and men have not infrequently refused to allow us to wash their wounds with water drawn by such women. It is not at all clear, however, whether it is menstruation that is feared or the danger of possible early pregnancy. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife brings about a [832 mild form of *muridi*; hence, if a very young child is ill, husband and wife 843] sometimes abstain from intercourse. *Muridi* from sexual intercourse is believed to affect the meat of slaughtered cattle or goats unless certain precautions are taken, and causes stomach trouble to those who partake of it. Men who are sleeping with their wives are therefore not allowed to approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced or to help skin it without first smearing their hands with leaves of *thetbe* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) or other medicine. Here again, so it seems, the danger is not the actual intercourse, but the possibility of an unformed foetus in the womb. Thus, in the early stages of his wife's pregnancy, Nagambi was forbidden to approach slaughtered animals, but later, when pregnancy was advanced, the restriction fell away, even though he was still cohabiting with his wife.

753 A person whose upper teeth appear before the lower or whose molars 826 appear first is full of *muridi* and should be killed. In the area surrounding the royal village every child is brought to the queen for examination on the appearance of its first teeth. The mother carries with her a small basket of eleusine and, if all is well, it is said that the child has 'danced

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with joy' (*u pebedɛ*); if not, there are no ululations of joy and, though 753
to-day the child is allowed to live, it must be treated by a doctor. When 826
several children have been brought, beer must be made by their mothers for the older women, the queen attends, and there is much joy. If a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order is not killed, he is called a *leshɛga*. He must be most careful never to bite any one, for the wound will not respond to healing treatment. But it is believed that matter taken from the teeth of the *leshɛga* may be applied as an antidote. It will be remembered that in the case of *Mabula* v. *Magosha* the parents of a *leshɛga* who had bitten her co-wife were ordered to beg pardon and to allow the 'scraping' of the teeth of their daughter. They had denied that she was a *leshɛga*, but the court decided that, *leshɛga* or not, neither she nor they could refuse something that might help the wound.

Muridi is, on the whole, dangerous, not to its primary intermediary 753
host, but to others. Its source is conceived to be usually a person, but 751
it may also be places, such as cross-roads and large rivers which become infected owing to the number of people crossing them. Nor is all *muridi* equally dangerous. Precautions are taken to protect the sick against its influence; a sick person is smeared with medicine or a stick is placed to bar entrance to his hut, its warning against entering without permission being a function also of the stick barring the door of the hut of a new-born child. Allied to but not the same as *muridi* are *leridi* (monstrous shadow) and *leṭala* (sinister spoor, the word for an ordinary track being *muṭala*). A warrior who has killed an enemy has *leridi* and, unless purified, he stands in grave danger of becoming mad or extremely quarrelsome (one of the worst social sins). If two men have had sexual relations with the same woman and one of them is ill, the other must on no account come near lest his track (*leṭala*) cause him to die. Similarly, the husband's mistress should take care to remain away from the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth.

Makhuma, from *hu khuma*, to mix together, is a conception similar to 753
muridi, but the evil, a kind of illness, infects the immediate host, who cannot transmit it to others. Critical changes especially constitute the source of the evil which mingles with or contaminates or infects the person who has just undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baleful emanations. In all the initiations strengthening medicine is given the novices as an antidote to the *makhuma* to which they are subject after the initiation: for instance, the initiates in the boys' circumcision lodge are given black medicine just before the change from west to east to protect them from being injured (*hu khuma*) after entering the ordinary world. One may *khuma* if, after an absence from home during which a death has occurred, one eats food without some precautionary measure, such as chewing a piece of ant heap (*khiṭhoni*). The treatment given after a death is chiefly to prevent the onset of *hu khuma* among relatives. A woman who has lost a child will cause her next child to *khuma* if she allows it to drink before her breasts have been doctored. Cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if women enter the kraal, and measures to fortify them are always taken

[See cat. 116, pp. 195-96 -- Analysis]

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining [787] bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figthɛla*) [789] unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than 326 *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ɖɛre* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to 766 rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ɖɛre*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are 754 sometimes called *mashɔthɔjɔ*, because they *rɔthɔja* (cause to be cool,

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against 754
sorcery: when the doctor made Nagambi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *khileso* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*hu phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they 782
stand up (*oa ɛmɛ*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. 833
Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain 753
circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*levoya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*hu gɔba*). The *levoya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *levoya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Pheduli, whose wife's death was attributed to *levoya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *levoya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstrusting woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafa*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafa*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *ɖɛre* or *vuhwɛdɛ vya vasadi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 30 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose [845
child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless 847
cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *ɖɛre*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Ɖɛre is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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833 753 *ḍere* if the circumstances of the personal relations of the patient justify such a diagnosis. People thought that Maḍaradani's cough was *ḍere*, but when he insisted that he had no lovers it was diagnosed as *khileso*; Muladà's debility was probably due to chronic malaria, but his friends suspected that he had taken no precautionary measures before resuming co-habitation with his wife, who had miscarried after seven months. *Ḍere* is distinguished from *lefiha* (consumption) by its rapid course and the fact that *lefiha* (*hu fiha*, to breathe) is not caused by women. *Ḍere* [847] can be cured only in its earliest stages, an ingredient of the medicine being a portion of the abortion or, in the case of intercourse with a woman who has lost a child, can be prevented by steaming and mutual inoculation. The prevalence of *ḍere* suggests that abortions are common and that effective abortifacients are in general use. In reality, however, innocent women are accused as soon as a lover falls ill, and rather than be thought murderers, they often give him medicine purporting to be a portion of the abortion mixed with sand to be used as a cure.

753 769 Disease and healing are in the last resort connected with the guardianship of the ancestors. If they are annoyed and relax their vigilance, their descendants may be rendered susceptible to disease, or medicines used cannot have their full effect. Ancestors, however, do not merely ward off disease or assist cure; they also actively cause illness. The crying all day of a baby may be due to the spirit of a grandfather pinching it in order that it should be given his name; sore eyes in children are often, and in adults sometimes, attributed to ancestors; barrenness or difficult birth is laid at their door, and sometimes they seize the whole body of a person because they wish to 'possess' him. But ancestors never cause death: even if at first an illness is said to be due to them, should death supervene, it is attributed to witches. Complaints of living relatives, especially of the father's sister, may also cause illness.

754 By far the most important of all causes of ill-health, however, is the evil work of witches and sorcerers. Certain illnesses, such as *khileso*, are characteristic of sorcery and can be contracted in no other manner. But any disease may be caused by witchcraft and witches may avail themselves of the opportunity offered by any minor illness to enter and aggravate it. Diagnosis depends on the course of the illness. Dysentery is regarded as due to natural causes; but should it not respond to treatment or should the patient suspect an enemy, a witch will be implicated. During the 1938 smallpox epidemic, the head of a district which was more hardly hit than its neighbours called a meeting of residents. Men declared, 'Smallpox kills people here; they merely get ill and recover elsewhere. There is a witch in our midst.' Money was collected, three men sent to a diviner, and, in the end, two women were accused. A specialized cause of illness is legitimate vengeance-magic used against theft and called *khidɔba*, which makes the finger of the thief swell up or the stolen goat bleat in his belly.

753 It must not be imagined that the Lovedu do not recognize a large number of diseases as natural. Many illnesses 'just come'. Such are all minor ailments like coughs, colds, stomach disorders, and also other more serious diseases like dysentery and malaria. Too much beer is

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known to affect the stomach, many kinds of spinach to cause diarrhoea. 753
Epidemics of smallpox, measles, coughs are thought to be brought by 'wind' (*phɛfo e ḍile*) and steps may be taken to combat them by sprinkling with medicines the inmates of the village. Usually an epidemic 'just comes', but on occasion one hears that a witch has 'sent' the wind. Ancestors, too, are thought to exercise some controlling influence over [769] wind; in most libations they are asked, 'Prevent for us these winds'—that is, as we might phrase it in our prayers, 'Guard us from disease.' Diseases are never classified as natural or non-natural solely according to their nature or symptoms. Any natural illness may also be 'sent' and, 753 though natural death is recognized as possible, in practice those closely 754 affected always attribute death to witchcraft or sorcery, though outsiders may give other reasons and some even say of an old man dying, 'The gods have called him to rest.' Of the thirty deaths, including a number of old people, that came to our notice, none were, however, thought to be natural. Contagiousness (*hu fɛdɛla*) of certain diseases, such as venereal diseases, leprosy, whooping cough, measles, is recognized, and it is known that consumption may be transmitted by parents to their children, as one of its names, *lehɔpɔla la tata-mulɔgɔ* (cough of the family father) signifies.

There must, of course, be a body of professional men and women 759 trained in and practising the art and science of medicine, but there are also many who have an extensive knowledge of home remedies. This is not unexpected in a society in which ordinary mortals live close to, and know a great deal about, nature. Every one is familiar with plants and their properties, which is one of the bases of pharmacology, with the meagre conceptions of anatomy and physiological relations, and with much of the intricate system of causation of disease. There are many men and women who know some special medicines or types of treatment, inherited usually from father, mother, or spouse, and kept secret, not because the knowledge is a source of material benefit, for the remedies are generally given free, but because it lends some recognition and prestige. Mamutho, despite all our efforts, divulged her medicine for inflamed eyes to us only as a parting gift. Madinji treats sprains and fractures; Khiebe specializes in mutual inoculation of the newly wed; and Khapani knows roots for dysentery. These are herbalists, not doctors, but some herbalists are so well-known for the efficacy of a medicine they have that even diviners send patients to them. Knowledge of these remedies, however important, does not make one a doctor (*Ḍaga*): that appellation is accorded only to those who are initiated bone-throwers or as herbalists have achieved general recognition as dispensers of many medicines and treatments. Muhale's wife, though no bone-thrower, is a good midwife and wields expertly a blood-letting awl. But a herbalist, even if called *Ḍaga*, remains *Ḍaga-tshubya*, a doctor without horns (power), because he does not divine; he can prescribe for recognized diseases, but he cannot diagnose in other cases for which the divining dice are necessary. From our point of view, the herbalist diagnoses and prescribes along scientific lines; to the Native he is a novice unable to deal with witches or the more serious diseases.

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The distinctive characteristic of the doctor with 'power' is that he is a diviner. That must necessarily be so in a society in which pathology is the science of diseases, the nature and causes of which lie so largely in magico-witchcraft conceptions. Special techniques are called for in place of what we call diagnosis and bedside manner. The diviner's function is, however, more than that: he must be called in about the details of every religious ceremony to discover the wishes of the ancestors; he decides where, in order to avoid the danger of the witch, every village must be built; he makes the witch-proof fence. Besides the bone-thrower, to whom we shall refer as doctor and who is consulted at every turn, there are two other classes of diviner, the *lelɔpɔ* doctor and the *mugɔme*, both foreign introductions from the East. The *lelɔpɔ* doctor is often a tribesman, the *mugɔme* always a Shangana-Tonga, preferably living outside Lovedu. The spheres of these classes of diviner are different: the doctor heals disease and is the general medical practitioner in its wide Lovedu sense; the *lelɔpɔ* doctor, almost always a woman, initiates the 'possessed', and often is also a general practitioner, divining with bones and healing disease, especially barrenness and ailments of children; and the *mugɔme* is, as we have seen, the forensic physician, and if he is famous he keeps no medicines, though otherwise he combines smelling out of the guilty with a general medical practice. Both *mugɔme* and *lelɔpɔ* doctors claim direct inspiration from the ancestors, but the doctor reads his bones by rule.

As it is difficult to persuade outsiders to divulge their knowledge, the profession of doctor, in theory open to all, is in practice more often than not handed down in the family, from father to son or daughter, maternal uncle to nephew, husband to wife, or even wife to husband. Interest and inclination determine who the pupil will be. To acquire a working knowledge of the bones, with which people are generally familiar to some extent, may take only a few months, but it is useless knowledge unless one has medicines and experience, which may take years to acquire. Ambitious doctors spend their lives gaining these perquisites, buying from one, begging from another, colleague; many travel from tribe to tribe or go periodically to Johannesburg, where good money is to be made. There are many specialists: Ramaoulana, like his father before him, is a noted rain-maker; Mambye is a master of *madabi*, by which he changes people into animals or hangs organs of the victim of his vengeance-magic on pegs in the hut; Mashao makes the hedge of the *vyali* lodge witch-proof; Rathavala strengthens the queen for office; Mulebye doctors the boys' circumcision lodge. A doctor who has not inherited cannot easily acquire such specialized knowledge: the price is high and the secrets not readily given away. The greatest doctors are said to use human remains in their most potent medicines, and to satisfy this need there are *zwigevtgwa*, murderers who waylay and kill people at night. During our stay, people, even at public gatherings, discussed and warned against the activities and haunts of these murderers. The wife of Thagu, the doctor, one night came home very drunk and next morning discovered part of her genitals excised. She accused her husband in the district *khɔrɔ* and, though he denied the crime, he paid the fine. As

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Thagu is not a great doctor, people surmised that he wanted the flesh, not for himself, but as the price of a medicine he bought from a renowned doctor. 755 791

A good doctor, unless, as is most common, he grows up in the profession, undergoes a long period of *ad hoc* training of 'walking about' with doctors. Maḋarabani, who hoped by becoming a doctor to save his family the expense of constantly calling in medical aid, began by going about with doctors he knew, from time to time persuading them to show him a few medicines; he put his knowledge to successful use in his family and started collecting a set of bones, buying those he could not pick up himself. Gradually he acquired the elements of divining, finishing up his training at the feet of a Shangana–Tonga *mugɔme*. Tuition in divining teaches one the various combinations of the dice; really to 'know' the bones one must drink their soup in a ceremony called 'cooking the bones'. It is the only cooking the dice undergo, so that it is taboo to use bones that have been cooked as food; it completes a diviner's training, and it not only creates a bond between dice and diviner, but gives him insight to see what is obscure to others. The ceremony varies from doctor to doctor, but consists in essence of three main features. Firstly, a young cockerel or, according to older custom, a goat is killed, its flesh is cooked with the dice and the broth is drunk by the pupil. The cock quickens perception both of bones and diviner, for it heralds the dawn before man perceives its approach. Secondly, the novice is given medicine (by inoculation or as a drink) containing *inter alia* the heart and nose of the vulture and wild dog, as well as sometimes the heart of the cooked fowl, so that he may sense things from afar. And, thirdly, the bones are buried at the cross-roads overnight 'to gather the news' and next morning are unearthed. When a male passes, a bone representing a male, when a female passes one representing a female, is taken out, and a beer drink is given so as to ensure many passers-by. Thereafter the novice can tell, in a test to which he is submitted, how the bones have fallen without looking at them.

Possession, in the ordinary manner of the cult, but by a spirit who in life was a doctor, constitutes the initiation of a *lelɔpɔ* doctor. He may divine during possession when the possessing spirit speaks or chants, or he may throw the dice when not possessed like an ordinary doctor. If during possession the dice are thrown, it is merely for effect, for they are hardly looked at. It is claimed that *lelɔpɔ* doctors read dice without training, being guided by their spirit; but in practice we found that either they had for months attached themselves to another doctor or, as members of a divining family, had become familiar with the bones prior to possession. The *mugɔme*, like the *lelɔpɔ* doctor, is guided by a spirit which manifests its desire that he should become a diviner by making him ill, but, unlike the *lelɔpɔ* doctor, he is not actually possessed. The *mugɔme* is the master diviner, but in fact he seldom throws the dice more than once or twice before proceeding to divine 'by the heart'. His initiation comprises the curing of his illness, apprenticeship to another *mugɔme* and the cooking of the bones. *Lelɔpɔ* doctor or *mugɔme* and guiding spirit are closely associated. A *lelɔpɔ* doctor never uses a goat in healing, without setting

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755 aside pieces of meat for his spirit, and a *mugome* always has his special
791 shrine where he reports all money professionally earned. An ordinary doctor sometimes has a shrine where he places horns of goats received or hangs medicine bags when he prays to the spirits, but many do not have these things. To a doctor his divination is like a craft that he has learnt, and he gives offerings only when scarcity of clients is attributed to the displeasure of the gods. When about to divine, he begs the bones to tell him the truth, not the ancestors for guidance.

787 The divinatory dice constitute the chief diagnostic method. The
755 Lovedu set is fairly stereotyped, consisting of about forty pieces, most but not all of which are bones; the bones and *hakati* shells (oval-shaped stones of a fruit) of the Shangana-Tonga *mugome* are somewhat different. Dominating the usual Lovedu set are four flat pieces of ivory or bone, two male and two female, which fall in sixteen different combinations, the cardinal positions. Each position has its own name and its own praise referring, though vaguely, to its meaning; and it is these four pieces from which the general configuration of influences or prognostications is read. There are other sets of four: pieces from the ventral surface of a tortoise, each with two easily distinguishable sides, and shells, two Oliva standing for males and two Cyraea standing for females. Having thrown the dice, the diviner looks first at the ivory pieces and gives the praise of their disposition, which indicates the general situation, say, dissension, loss, or complaints of the father's sister. But this general situation must be related to the lie of certain other bones, particularly *malope*, the knuckle-bone of the steenbuck (*Raphiceros campestus*), from which, as representing the chief, the diviner next orientates the situation. The procedure thereafter involves linking this situation, on the one hand, with events or specific prognostications of good or evil and, on the other, with people playing a part in these events. *Thakadu* or *mudimo*, the talus of the antbear, represents the ancestors, who, like the antbear, live underground, shows whether they are angry or not, and is diagnostic of the health or life of a person which in the last resort lies in ancestral hands. *Dau*, the phalanx of the lion (or in some sets *ŋgwe*, the phalanx of the tiger) which is also a pointing bone showing direction, *phiri*, the knee-bone of the hyena, of which there may be two, male and female, and *tshweni*, male and female kneebones of the baboon, all stand for the evil power of witches and their familiars. The baboon bones, in addition, indicate, by the side on which they fall, danger or illness on a journey, suitability of the spot for building upon and, in case of barrenness, whether or not a child will be born. Every set contains two morula pips with functions less specific, depending as they do upon the whole configuration of forces or events, and a river pebble, *lemtja la gwena*, the thing swallowed by a crocodile, which is diagnostic of *khileso*, the illness caused by foreign substances which sorcerers cause their victims to swallow with food or drink.

To bring these evil or good influences into relation with specific people, to determine who is ill or who is bewitching the consultants, the diviner turns to certain astralagus bones, capable of falling on four sides and representing people. Two or three sheep bones stand for important

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or respected persons, such as district or village heads, and goat bones, 787
numbering two to six, for mere commoners—a real separation of sheep 755
and goats. If there are two goat bones, they represent male and female; a third represents a child; four bones extends the range to male and female children, and the further two bones differentiate widow and bachelor. Different totems are shown by bones of the animals revered. Lovedu sets have two (male and female) *maḓavu* (rietbuck) bones standing for the Crocodile totemic group; two *phala* (rooibuck) bones for Khalaga and sometimes also Lovedu; two *golove* (wild boar) for Lovedu, two *phudi* (duiker) for Khaha and Koni; two *shɔshɔ* (bushbuck) for the Tshadzi of Mavulana; and in areas in which there are Phalavorwa and Thavina also two *nogo* (porcupine). Elephants and lions are represented by the bones of these animals. These totem-indicating bones vary greatly according to the people with whom the diviner comes into most contact. Many diviners have one or two extra pieces, such as a shell or a stone found in a strange place. Malematsha, for instance, has a piece of chalk from France, where he served in the labour battalion during the Great War.

The detailed rules of divination are far too complicated for treatment in a general ethnographical study, but a few general principles, common knowledge to all in the society, may be mentioned. Firstly, it is the side on which the bones fall rather than their disposition to one another that is important. All the pieces can fall in two ways, either positive, dorsal, or negative, ventral surface up, while in addition the astralagi have two narrower surfaces, one, the concave side, with a deeper cleft than the other, the convex side. In the normal position, with dorsal side up, the power the bone stands for is said to be active, the person it represents well or walking in the direction it is lying; in the reverse position, with ventral side up, it is sleeping, powerless or dead and hence, when the people represented are witches, a good sign, for they are then on their backs and harmless. An astralagus lying on its convex side with the cleft up shows laughing, happiness, talking, or even quarrelling (much talking), and with convex side up, anger, complaints, sadness. Secondly, the significance of these positions and particularly of the combinations of the sets of four bones varies according to the purpose of the divination: a particular position means one thing when it is illness, another when it is a building site that is in question. Thirdly, despite intricate rules, divination is in the last resort not an exact science, but an interpretation in which the diviner's ingenuity, his knowledge of human nature and his estimate of the interplay of motives in the society play an important part. In this connexion, the praises of each bone and of various positions have an unsuspected function. These praises are not trade secrets and are fairly generally known; to be word-perfect is unnecessary and parts may be recited or omitted, while half may be uttered at one moment and the remainder much later. This occupies the mind of the client and gives the diviner time to think and orientate himself. Moreover, interpretation abounds with metaphorical expressions, as does the parlance of European fortune-tellers with club-men and diamond-girls. Many Lovedu diviners, imitating the *mugome*, use a peculiar chant, half Shangana-Tonga, half

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787 Sotho, a jargon difficult to understand and reinterpreted by the doctor or
755 by some one of the party more conversant than the client with the procedure.

The procedure in divination is a subtle process combining suggestion, free association of ideas, and techniques of leading the client and inspiring confidence in the diviner. On opening the bags, the doctor pours out the dice and watches how they fall, but he does not always vouchsafe anything at this stage. Before casting his dice, he chews a piece of root (*khirugulu*), which he blows out on to the bones: both he and the bones are thereby given insight and power. Then, taking them in both hands and uttering a praise by way of encouragement, he casts them on to the floor or on the mat provided. At this stage he reads the cardinal positions, perhaps elaborating on the general trend indicated, and suggests what the client has come to consult him about, often in so doing eliciting some information. Thereafter the client himself throws the bones, speaking to them as dictated by the doctor; the practice of bringing a piece of rag breathed upon by the patient is not known, but the consultant may be directed to mention the patient's name. The client will have to cast many times till the trouble has been thrashed out. The next step is for the doctor, after suggesting a remedy, to cast the bones and interpret their reply to the suggestion. Whatever the cause of the illness, the first suggestion is always placation of the ancestors and thereafter medicines and treatments. At each throw only some of the dice are studied, the position of the others being irrelevant to the immediate purpose. Sometimes it takes long (often as we have seen, over two hours or a whole afternoon) for the bones to give a clear indication and, if they fall in unreadable combinations, various causes may be assigned: the bones may not have been properly 'washed'; or a condition precedent to effective divination may have been omitted, such as in one case we witnessed, when the consultant's people had not yet held the removal of 'dirt' (*khitshila*) ceremony after the death of a child; or the bones may unaccountably 'refuse'.

To illustrate the procedure, we give an actual case of divination simplified by the omission of the praises. Ramatiti, the doctor, had just finished divining for Dumedi when Dwagu, Dumedi's friend who lived some ten miles away, came upon the scene and, handing over his 1*s*. to the doctor, asked that the dice be thrown for him. Ramatiti poured out the bones, looked at them, but remained silent. He then chewed a piece of *khirugulu*, took the bones in both hands, spat on them and, mumbling a praise, cast them. 'They have fallen *muferegere*' (a position meaning dissension), he said, uttering the relevant praise. 'You have been greatly troubled,' he continued, enlarging upon the greatness of the trouble. 'The tortoise bones lie *mutagola*' (indicating long illness), he added. 'You suffer from "blood" and intestinal trouble. Do you have dreams?' 'Yes,' replied Dwagu, 'chiefly about dead people.' '*Tshwene*' (the baboon bones), went on the doctor, 'are full [lie on their convex side]; your sickness is on the chest.' Thereupon Dwagu was given the bones to throw and told to repeat after the doctor a praise of the bones: 'Tell us you spy with eyes that see, tell us why we are afflicted; whether it be a god or whether it be

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a witch, tell us.' When the bones had fallen Ramatiti asked, 'Do you know any *gwena* [man of the Crocodile totem]? Are your in-laws Crocodile?' 'No,' replied Dwagu, 'I know only neighbours, not relatives, who are Crocodile.' After Dwagu had denied that he had quarrelled with these people, the doctor warned him not to drink beer with them, and when he objected, 'But we are always drinking together', the doctor said. 'It is they who have given you *khileso*.' Dwagu was doubtful, but replied, 'I remember that once, when I came out of the *gomana* "school", a son of those neighbours gave me monkey nuts and afterwards my stomach was upset.'

Dwagu threw the bones again and the doctor asked him if he were troubled by matter in the ears. Dwagu admitted that both his ears were affected and added, 'That is how the trouble began, and I have tried many remedies in vain.' The doctor now had a substantial clue. 'The ears are causing blood on the chest', he said. 'Has a *lelɔpɔ* doctor tried to cure you?' 'No,' Dwagu replied. 'Only a woman who was one day called for my mother.' The bones were once more thrown to determine whether the woman would succeed if she were called again. The *malope* bone lay on its back and with *dau* and *phiri* upside down, showing the power of the witches to be broken, and *golove* (wild boar) in its normal position, the doctor declared that Dwagu would recover. But, though it was silently passed over, the diviner was mistaken in thinking that his client was of the *golove* totem. Again Dwagu threw the dice and the question asked, viz. whether he should offer to (*suma*) his dead father, was answered in the negative; but though *phiri* (hyena) and *tshweni* (baboon) lay powerless, the positive position of the lion (*dau*), associated with witches, indicated that the stomach-ache would remain. 'Have you bilharzia?' inquired the doctor. 'No.' 'Well, then, do you enjoy your beer?' 'No,' was the reply. 'But one calabash fills my stomach; I can't drink much.' Another throw, this time by the doctor, was favourable to the medicine mentioned as a cure. 'But,' asked the doctor, as he scrutinized the bones, 'what child at home is ill?' When Dwagu said it was his, the doctor congratulated himself on his perspicacity and could not resist following up his success.

Dwagu thus had to cast the dice about his child. The doctor diagnosed *xwiso* (sores), a vague term covering external rashes or sores of all kinds, as well as internal trouble, and a common complaint of children. 'Yes,' replied Dwagu. 'The sores are in its mouth,' adding a full account of the complaint. The *khilume* goat bone (indicating a young male person) was lying positive, so the doctor said, 'It is a boy,' but again he was wrong. Unperturbed, the doctor now threw the dice, having suggested the cure, 'Dung of witches (metaphorical for the insectivorous bat) and mice and moss hanging from trees. Burn one portion holding the child in the smoke and smear its body with the other portion. Tell us, you spy with eyes that see. I say let the fowl (child) be well.' But the bone standing for a small girl fell on its back: the medicine would not succeed. Again the doctor threw, mentioning different ingredients, but similar treatment, and this time the bones were propitious.

The doctor is an important person in the society, not because his

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787 practice brings him wealth, but because disease is a matter of ever-
755 present interest. He is paid chiefly in beer, which provides entertainment for friends and neighbours, payer and payee, and enhances his prestige. The family doctor usually receives nothing at all, but is called to beer that is drunk in the family. Diviners receive the 1s. or fowl for divination and perhaps, if they are mercenary or have taken great pains about the medicine, 5s. for opening the medicine bags; but payment for treatment is made only for successful cures. A patient should on recovery not shave his head before bringing beer to the doctor, when the 'hair of his illness' is shaved, perhaps with medicine by the doctor and taken to a hollow tree, where it is left with the words 'Sickness remain there'; but this rule is, as often as not, observed in the breach. The correct charge for curing barrenness or epilepsy is £1 or £1 10s., yet we have seen many cures of barrenness for which only beer was given. The means of the patient and his relationship to the doctor are material factors. *Lelɔpɔ* doctors are usually mercenary, requiring a goat for most of their treatments and fining patients who shave their heads without permission. *Mugɔme* are the wealthiest doctors, receiving anything from £1 to £7 at one sitting. Many set up temporary villages along the roads to catch clients, and one living in Portuguese East Africa has a lorry for transporting clients from the Transvaal lowveld to his home. The *mugɔme* exacts full payment before he divines; other doctors have to wait until the cure is effected. A doctor never goes to court about his fees, but he sometimes threatens to cover up the holes where he dug the medicines to call back illness upon the patient.

When medicines are not effective, it is etiquette to acquaint the doctor with the fact before going to a second doctor, but this etiquette is not always observed. Health is the quest of every one at all times, and disease is the most persistent and dangerous enemy of the individual; for the causes of illness are incalculable and even the most harmless disease may let in the witch to strike at his victim. The office of the doctor is both important and honourable, for he is the guardian of the people's welfare. There is no oath that binds him to loyalty and integrity, but these things are expected of him; he even preserves the secrets of his clients and, though the *mugɔme* advertises himself, such action by a doctor is regarded as derogatory.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Ancestral caprices and complaints and rites to appease them—the universe of the ancestors a replica of the everyday world—relations of magic, morality, and religion—possession by spirits as a religion and socio-psychological phenomenon.

NATURE spirits and hero-gods have no place in the Lovedu scheme of things. There is, however, Khuzwane, the creator, who made all things, including men, and left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when these rocks were new and soft. But no one knows what has happened to him and no one ever thinks of him. The gods of the Lovedu are their ancestors, deceased fathers and mothers who guard one in death as they did in life. Each family has its own ancestors, and religious observances are thus peculiarly a family concern.

Ancestors have various attributes. They are one's protectors and no harm can befall one unless they, the ancestors, are neglectful. Witches, powerful as they are, can neither enter the village nor cause sickness without their connivance; hence the procedure in divination, even in the clearest case of witchcraft, of inquiring whether the spirits should be appeased. Disease cannot enter nor epidemics break out if only the ancestors are watchful enough and well-disposed. Again and again one finds this idea expressed in prayers; 'Protect us from epidemics [winds]', they say; while the queen in a prayer at her harvest ceremony put it even more positively: 'As regards life, we have been very well, but now we are being killed by that epidemic which you have allowed to come', referring to smallpox. There can be no success without the co-operation of the ancestors. Medicine cannot help nor doctors heal if the ancestors are not with one. This idea, reminiscent of our 'By the will of God', is expressed in the phrase, 'We do not say our doctor, [will heal]; we say our doctor and the ancestors'. It appears also in a prayer we heard on behalf of an absent son working in town, when a goat, dedicated to his grandmother (father's mother), who had made him ill two years before, was being given the new corn: 'Here is the child; here he is, mother. We ask that you let him be happy and cool (give him health). Tell all the other spirits [certain names mentioned], and we who remain, *we say our thing with the gods.*'

The phrase '*vadimo lalane*' (spirits, sleep) which rounds off so many prayers, and the constant fear of waking up (*hu dzosa*) the ancestors, causing them to stand (*hu ema*) and cause trouble, appear at first as a peculiar contradiction, as though people do not wish their gods to be watchful. The term *lala* is, however, idiomatic, expressing peace, things being as they should be, as in the phrase, '*Ha va mulao; shago la lala*' (There was order; the country slept), implying that the rains were good and all was well; while *hu dzosa* in this sense means stirring to anger rather than waking up from sleep.

The ancestors are responsible for the fertility of the crops. True, nothing could grow without rain, for which the queen is responsible and

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769 which royal ancestors only can withhold; differences in the harvest
241 between one area and another are often attributed to fights between the
782 witches of the two areas, and even variations in yield between one man's field and his neighbour's may be due to witchcraft. Yet one finds in prayers many a request for a good harvest, even though there are no special ceremonies devoted to this end. A man pouring a libation for a sick child said among other things, 'Give us corn; when we plough let us also reap. Why are you stinting us?' And it is significant that the only regular religious observance is the harvest offering of beer made of each year's new corn in villages where there are shrines or dedicated animals. When any one dies, there is thought to be danger that the fertility of the [764] crops will depart with him or her. Hence, when a gourd of seeds of every kind is placed in the grave together with a firebrand and calabash of water for the journey, some of the seeds are scattered over the body with the words, 'Do not depart with all the corn and seeds,' and very often the grain belonging to the deceased is treated with medicine in order that it may remain fertile.

769 Above all, the ancestors complain, a fact which lies at the basis of
782 Lovedu religion, for by far the greater proportion of religious rites are those performed in response to ancestral complaints. One might at first think it strange that the gods, in life just ordinary, well-disposed people, should in death be so liable to bring trouble upon their kin. Sometimes it is thought to be a sign of love: when Masilu's grandmother had made him ill because she wanted a goat dedicated to her, his mother said, 'No wonder his *gogo* seized him. She was always so fond of him.' But chiefly it is the nature of ancestors to complain; as the Lovedu phrase it, 'When people sleep (i.e. are dead), they ought to complain' (*Hɛ vathu va khi lala fase va swanɛ̀ɛ̀ hu velɛala*). When there is illness, they are, as it is phrased, 'seen in the divining bones'; it is they who sometimes 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult childbirth, and sometimes, but far less than among the Nguni, their complaints cause dreams. Our close friend [787] Walter, coming to seek work in Johannesburg, dreamt disturbing dreams of his dead father, who appeared to say that he was needed at home. He thereupon returned home and, when he arrived, his mother took him to a doctor, whose bones declared that the dead father was annoyed at not having been told of the journey to town and had to be appeased (*hu phasa*). Walter was well educated, but he had failed in his last examination and felt doubly frustrated. He had great ambitions of reforming the political system of the tribe, from which his education had divorced him, and in town he was dissatisfied that nothing was open to him but the unskilled work of his uneducated compatriots.

769 An ancestor may complain about the way he has been buried, and if he
782 has died far from home, may demand to be 'brought back home' in a
778 ceremony in which, besides the dedication of a beast or goat, a goat is killed and eaten, its bones being buried as though it were a person. But this 'bringing home', involving the making of a shrine, applies only to those dying at a distance and does not resemble the 'bringing home' of the Zulu, among whom it is part of death ceremonial. At times the gods complain of neglect. But in the majority of cases no definite reason for

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the complaint is either given or required; and frequently no special spirit is mentioned. It is enough to know the cause of the trouble and what rite is necessary to placate the gods. Even complaints of neglect are usually put positively: 'He complains that you should give him (his shrine) a libation'. The ancestors desire mainly to be remembered: they want their beads worn, their name revived, a beast or goat dedicated to and named after them. They also like to be told about journeys undertaken or marriages, in much the same way as the living, and to be approached with a libation. Yet, unlike the Nguni, they never complain of being hungry; nor are the gods said to drink the libation or even its spiritual counterpart, but are merely pleased to be given their due. There is no such thing as resting secure because you have done all that is necessary for the gods; there is always some ancestor who can cause trouble, and it is best to wait and see what is wanted. Moreover, the ancestors are wayward; there is no knowing what they may desire. Mambeuli asked to be buried at Khikhuti, but after his death he caused sickness, saying, 'Why did you bury me in the valley in the sun' (instead of in the ancestral grove), and a black sheep had to be sacrificed on his grave. Similarly, Mulogwane, brother of the queen, who in 1934 became a Christian on his death-bed, withheld rain in 1935 because they had buried him in a Christian cemetery. Religious rites among the Lovedu tend, therefore, to be addressed to those spirits that cause trouble and in the absence of illness there may be no rites at all.

Certain objects which were once in the possession of the ancestors are used in religious ceremonial and are thought to have special powers of protection and healing. These objects, consisting of ancient beads of glass or native-worked iron or copper, native-wrought assegais, hoes, axes, iron rods with spiked heads, are handed down in the family and carefully cherished. Very often when a daughter leaves to be married, she is given a few beads to take with her for use when she is ill. Such charms are called *thugula*. Illness caused by an ancestor can generally be cured by a ceremony known as *hu phasa*: a mixture of ground grain and water is poured over beads or other *thugula* objects in the presence of the patient while a prayer, scolding the spirits and asking for health, is made. The beads are then worn by the patient till he recovers. After *hu phasa* on beads for any one, he may wear them at any time with protective results, and small children generally wear many old beads. Maseriba called hers 'my hospital' (*spitele aa ga*) to illustrate their powers to us in European idiom. Patzere says, if he does not wear the crocodile bone that was his father's, he gets ill or dreams much of dead people. Association with the ancestors, not anything inherent in these objects, gives them their powers, for we have seen an old Boer gun brought out as a *thugula* at an offering. Yet for a charm to heal it is not essential that it should have been in the possession either of the complaining ancestor himself or of his family. Sometimes the gods, through the dice, mention beads or other objects not known in the family at all. It is then concluded that they have been lost and steps are taken to procure them from some one else or from the queen, who has many. Then when they pray, it will be mentioned: 'We are replacing the lost bead.'

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769 Offerings may be poured on the ground or on *thugula* objects. Some-
782 times, however, the ancestors desire a shrine or a dedicated animal. The
825 queen herself and some others have dedicated cattle, male or female, according to the spirit represented; a few families have sheep, while the majority have goats. Fowls are neither dedicated nor killed for the gods. But we have one instance of a dedicated snake, that in the Relela family, to which in 1939, at their burial grounds in the depths of the forest, libations were offered when the *vyali* initiation began in that district; the conception is wholly alien to the Lovedu, though the Relela have been so long linked with, as to be indistinguishable from, them; and the snake, said to whistle, is described as like that dreaded monster, the 'mountain snake' which is often thought of as a mamba but strikes terror like the omen it is. The use of these different animals is traditional in, and bears no relation to the wealth of, the families concerned; some have a dedicated animal, others merely a shrine, while many have both. The dedicated animal receives the name of an ancestor, father or grandfather in the case of the head of the lineage, or of any complaining spirit that has demanded such *thugula*, and it is believed that his spirit (*muya*) has entered into it. Some dedicated animals are credited with abnormal powers: Mamujaji's agitation one day, while being driven to the dip, correctly presaged unpleasantness with the dip inspector; Malegudu is the fiercest bull in the land, like the warrior whom he represents. Though some people unceremoniously pour beer-offerings down the throat of dedicated animals, it is generally claimed that, unlike ordinary animals, they readily drink beer, but the claim is contradicted by the mealie leaves put over the beer to coax the animal to drink. In 1938, when Malegudu, called from the herd to drink the harvest beer, remained immovable, every one was afraid to approach him, but it was considered sufficient to throw the beer over him from a distance, so that by licking himself he might partake of the offering.

778 Shrines, which are to be found generally on the left-hand side of the entrance to the sleeping hut of the chief wife, vary in appearance and contents. A shrine may consist of a small mound of earth, containing the
[824] bones of a sacrificial goat; it may be a sacred plant or tree, usually *ʃiʃigwaɳi* (*Hypoxis villosa*) or *leɔmɛ* (*Hæmanthus sp.*) and *muʈabu* (*Ficus capensis*), a black river stone, a long stick, or even a piece of a certain kind of ant heap (*khiʃhoni*). The queen's own shrine is a mound under which are buried the bones of a goat slaughtered some twenty years ago when it was set up. Mashishimali's shrine contains no bones, but consists of a *ʃiʃigwani* lily and a river stone, both visible above ground. Ramatiti has three shrines and one dedicated goat, all of which have arisen out of illness caused by ancestral complaints. Of the first, the shrine of his father, nothing is visible above ground; it consists of a buried piece of ant-heap, used instead of a goat because Ramatiti is not the chief son, who should have the dedicated animal, and a black river stone which keeps the spirit cool and appeased (lying down), as well as the three plant substances
[824] *muʃɛra*, *lesogo* (*Alipedia sp.?*), *vulevaja*, which are placed in most shrines to make the ancestors 'forget'. The other two are mounds containing the bones and heads of goats, one representing his mother, the other, like the live goat, his mother's brother, his wife's father.

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In the actual working religion of the Lovedu the commonest and most 788
conspicuous rite is *hu phasa*, consisting of a prayer and the pouring on to earth or *thugula* of a mixture of ground, sprouted grain and water, a mixture colloquially referred to as *muṭazwa lesclo* (the rinser of the winnowing basket). More rarely *hu phasa* is merely spitting out water in the courtyard to the accompaniment of such prayer. There is no formulated distinction in principle between the two forms; the Lovedu say that the dice decide which is to be used. We found water squirted in illness caused by complaints of the living; in some cases of difficult birth; where in the initiation of a possessed woman the spirit was begged to manifest itself; and in one exceptional instance water was squirted on the face of a corpse addressed in prayer before it was buried (usually the [764]
corpse is merely addressed when the grains are put into the grave). The efficacy of *hu phasa*, which is also used magically to render witchcraft ineffectual, appears to lie in its 'cooling' effect. *Hu phasa* is performed in connexion with a large number of cases of illness and bad luck and is the recognized approach in asking for blessings on a journey or an undertaking. Hardly a week passes without some one in the neighbourhood having to *phasa*, and generally the prayer in these cases takes the form of a 'scolding' (*hu rohana*), in which the spirits are asked why they are causing illness and told to be satisfied. One does not *phasa* without also using charms in the mixture to make the spirits forget, and the officiator may be male or female, whomsoever the dice have indicated. Rites of thanksgiving, except for the customary harvest beer, are almost unknown. We came upon such a rite only once when the bachelor brother of Madinji returned home after an absence in town of thirty years and she performed *hu phasa* in the presence of the family, saying, 'Spirits of Mambeuli, this is one of your fowls. We thought he was lost; now he is back. Keep him as you have kept the rest of us. If he goes away, let him soon remember and long for his home.'

The only regular offering is the annual harvest beer given to dedicated 782
animals and shrines, though even this may be neglected: the village may 778
be moved without the shrine, or the dedicated animal die without being replaced. We ourselves witnessed the setting up of a shrine and dedicated sheep after twenty years' neglect in the chief house of Sedena. Much 241
more formal than ordinary rites of *hu phasa* is the harvest offering, which 782
may take place any time between July and November, for there is here no rule that the queen should take precedence. The officiator is a woman where possible, the *khadi*, who is specially called to come, and real beer, called *muphaba* and made of eleusine, is prepared for the ceremony. If eleusine is not available, red kaffir corn (*makhaha*) may be used, but no other grain is acceptable to the spirits. In its preparation, which is in the hands of old women or girls below the age of puberty, care must be taken that the eleusine is stamped, not ground on the grindstone, and that none of it is tasted before the gods have been given some. Ordinary beer is tasted to see if it is ready, but *muphaba* is smelt or tested by stirring with a twirler. Though the married women of the village play no part in the religious rites on such occasions, it is the duty of the chief wife in whose courtyard the ceremony will take place to smear with dung the place

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241 where they will pour and to carry the beer in the *khirudwana* basket used
782 in honour of the gods. The occasion is one of joy. The women have already in all likelihood sung *lenugu* songs special to the occasion amid joyous trillings while preparing the beer and, since in addition to the special beer of the gods much ordinary beer will have been prepared, a wide circle of relatives, including those of the wives, will have been invited.

When the queen held her *thugula* ceremony in August, 1938, Didi was despatched at eight o'clock in the morning to fetch home Magovo, the cow dedicated to the queen's mother, for the harvest giving should take place fairly early in the day, though in practice the rule is often observed in the breach and we have seen ceremonies take place after midday. As it is not easy to drive home one cow of a herd, all were driven and put into the *khoro* where every one had gathered. When Magovo's hind legs had been tied, the chief wife of Mulogwane, deceased brother of the chief to whose family the queen is *khadi*, appeared carrying in a basket a calabash of beer and the queen's mother's beads (*mudala*, the well-known 'beads of the water'). Pouring some of the beer in a wooden platter, she handed it to the queen, who, holding the beads in her hands, placed it before Magovo with the words, 'Here is beer, Magovo of Muhale (one of the earliest kings), beer of the new corn. We say, Stop this epidemic (winds) to which you have exposed us. Here, too, are your beads. We see neither people (subjects) nor riches; we see only that poverty which you have left for us.' The cow sipped a little of the beer, whereupon all prostrated themselves in greeting (*hu lisha*), while one or two women rent the air with their joyous trillings. Sometimes (but it was omitted on this occasion) the beads are placed round the neck of the cow and left there for the whole day.

The dedicated cow having been untied, all now repaired to the courtyard of the chief wife of Mulogwane, where they sat round the shrine, the queen and sons and daughters near by, wives further away, while the small children were made to kneel on the lower side of the shrine, hands together and palms up. Pouring out beer on the mound, the queen said a prayer similar to the previous one, adding that the gods must tell one another and not leave any one out. Then, drinking a little herself, she placed the calabash on the ground for the next person to take up and drink. Each one in turn placed the gourd on the ground for the next to take up, till all the relatives had drunk, when it was returned to the queen. She drank once more, saying, 'He who gives to the gods must not remain hungry,' and laid the calabash upside down on the mound. The small children lapped up the beer from the ground, and trilling and *hu lisha* marked the end of the ceremony.

241 Now pots of beer for the crowd that had gathered were brought out and
782 general drinking began. After a while the men took out the drums and began dancing an old dance, the *matagwa*. Thereafter the women began
533 the sacred *lenugu* songs, to which men and women danced in a ring in the
535 courtyard of the chief wife. The queen herself beat the big drum. It was now near sunset. Suddenly a wail like the bleating of a sheep was heard; another, then another, in the direction of the bush behind the

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village. It was the *zwiḑajani*, ancestral spirits come to join in the joy and revelry of the living. They opened the next song and joined in the singing of the women, all in the whistling language which people make out by its tone. Later more beer was brought out and when the *zwiḑajani* began a new song no one took any notice. 'If you are drinking beer, what are we to drink', came the wails of the *zwiḑajani* and a pot of beer was brought to the bush by councillors. Dancing and singing continued till the small hours of the morning, when the sounds of the *zwiḑajani* disappeared in the direction of Maulwi, the burial grove of the dead queens, and the revellers, happy and drunk from beer of the *thugula*, retired to bed. The spirits visit only important members of the royal group and a few other families, but beyond this there are no differences between the harvest giving of the queen and that of other people.

Ritual killings of all kinds are insignificant by contrast with the beer offering. There are, first, killings specially for the ancestors, but they are so rare that many people have never seen them. Secondly, there are occasions when the killings, clearly ritual, are not thought of as an offering or sacrifice, because nothing is given to the ancestors. And, thirdly, there are killings, not associated with ancestors or religion, in which small pieces of meat may nevertheless be set aside to 'tell' (*hu nama*) the gods of some event or to propitiate them. *Hu nama* is a conception somewhat different from our 'offer' or 'give'; it has two connotations as used in ordinary life: it is either merely to inform a superior or, by extension of this idea, to send him a share of something good one has, such as a leg of an animal slaughtered or a calabash of the beer one has brewed. In approaching the gods, sometimes one and sometimes the other conception is uppermost.

The killing which most clearly contains the conception of an offering and the primary purpose of which is propitiation of the gods is the slaughter of a black sheep for rain at the grave of a royal ancestor: the victim is immolated, small pieces of meat cut from all parts of it are set aside for the gods, and all the bones are collected and buried in the grave, together with the stomach contents. Equally stressed, however, is the eating of the meat without salt by the assembled crowd. At the installation of a district head, a beast, referred to as a *thugula*, is killed and, in so far as it is killed in a special manner and morsels of meat set aside for the gods to be cooked and later eaten without salt by children below the age of puberty, it is the vicarious submission of a gift to the ancestors. But the major portion of meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones collected, for a hind leg is sent to the queen. So little is the 'goat of killing' in marriage ceremonial regarded as an offering or sacrifice that we sought for it in vain in the context of a killing for the ancestors. Yet pieces of meat are laid on the shrine and a prayer offered, though the rest of the meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones kept. Still further removed from an offering is the goat killed on a death to provide a skin for covering the body: its meat is eaten without salt, and all who partake of it must sleep in the hut of the deceased, but nothing is given to the ancestors and no prayer is offered. On the other hand, though the *lebpo* doctor, when killing a goat to treat a patient, sets aside pieces of meat

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782 for his ancestors, this killing, primarily medical in purpose, is not to propitiate and has no religious significance.

An interesting though unusual killing among the Lovedu is the 'bringing home' of a spirit. Maborɔmɔ, an uninherited widow living with her three children in a village of relatives, had had much illness in the family which, after consultation with many doctors, was attributed to her husband's brother Pheduli. Pheduli had been stabbed to death in a Johannesburg compound and was now complaining, 'I want to be brought home with a head of cattle.' All his relatives were asked to be present and contribute their share of corn, because 'We are placing a beast to be Pheduli'. On the day of the ceremony a young black and white bull-calf was caught and held, and, when beer (*muphaba*) was poured down its throat, the *khadi* uttered a prayer, saying, 'Drink and tell all the other spirits these matters.' Then they repaired with the same calabash to the courtyard, where all the children were called to sit near: the *khadi*, praying for health, poured the beer on a spear, battle-axe, and horn which had belonged to Pheduli, and the children drank what was left in the calabash, each one placing it in turn on the ground. The doctor, who, supervising his side of the ceremony, had been busy in a hut preparing his medicines, now came out and asked that the dedicated calf again be caught. Mixing a powder, said to consist of *mufera* and other medicines to make spirits forget, he told the *khadi* to smear it on some of the hairs at the end of the tail and to tie a knot. He himself then smeared the whole tail and body. Repairing to the courtyard where the *thugula* objects still lay, the doctor took out a bag of powder, which he shook up to 'smoke' the objects in its dust. Then he dug a hole where the beer had been poured.

Meanwhile the meat of a goat which had been killed was cooking in a pot. Before the killing (which we did not witness), medicine, we were told, had been smeared on the goat while the doctor uttered the words, 'Sleep, sleep here, and look after your people.' The meat was eaten without salt by the relatives as well as a few others who were present and the bones carefully collected. A dog seized hold of one and was chased by all till the bone was retrieved. Having placed the bones in the hole, the doctor inquired, 'In which direction do the Lovedu look when buried?' The *khadi* pointed to the north. Then, taking the head of the goat, he placed it facing north on top of the bones and said, 'We people all look in that direction.' He took out medicine, which he gave to the *khadi* to pour on the bones, smoked them with his powder, and ordered that the hole be filled with the stomach contents mixed with earth. The *khadi* then beat down the earth and made a small mound. Dancing and the
[533 singing of *lesugu* songs now began and continued all night till at dawn the
535] *khadi* took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) thrice, saying, 'As for us, we are going, we are returning home. And you, may you remain in peace.' In the beer that was provided for this festive occasion was put some medicine, 'the powder of death', generally used after a death, lest people *khuma*; for the burial of the goat symbolizes the burial and bringing home of their ancestor, just as the dedicated goat symbolizes the immortality of his spirit.

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The immortality of Lovedu spirits is of practical importance in their working religion only for two or three generations back; beyond this they are hardly remembered. The spirits that cause most trouble are one's grandparents, and in religious practices these tend to be the most important. Both sides of the family, that of one's father and that of one's mother, are equally important; both cause trouble and both must be placated; and this is an accurate reflection of the social structure, of relationship reckoned bilaterally, and of the cattle links. The configuration of the ancestral world is no different from that of the ordinary world. It is therefore not surprising that all four lines of grandparents are recognized. Even when a spirit in the line of the father's father is being placated, the line of the father's mother may also be mentioned: thus we have heard an officiator in a *phasa* ceremony calling, not only upon his father's younger brother, the spirit troubling its granddaughter, but also upon his father, father's father, elder brother, mother, and elder sister. Dedicated goats to male ancestors tend to, but do not always, run in the male line. As in social or political arrangements, the male line may recede before the female; it may even, as far as ancestors are concerned, become almost completely obliterated. In the Matsui family, for instance, the father's father's line is neglected, except for *hu phasa*, when they cause illness, but the father's mother's line is all important. It is to the latter that the beast Mamujaji is dedicated and it is to this beast that the new corn is given every year. This emphasis reflects the links with the queen which the family wishes to emphasize, for Mamujaji, the ancestor of the father's mother, was mother of Mujaji I.

The coherence of the social and the ancestral worlds is seen even in regard to the implications of the *munywalo* system. Biological relationship not socially recognized is of no importance in religion, and not only can the biological father of an illegitimate child or his relatives never cause illness, for the 'gods follow the cattle' (*medimo e tɔvɛla dikhomu*), but the queen's ancestors cause illness in children of any of her wives, whoever their father may be, and it is the queen who is often required to *phasa* for them. In the gathering together in worship of all relatives the social system is similarly reflected. When after many deaths or much illness in a family the dice order a *mukhoɛo*, a religious gathering of all relatives, not only the lineage but relatives on both sides (*mulɔgɔ*), including those by marriage, meet. Each brings a basket of corn as a contribution towards the beer for the occasion, but a relative who is on bad terms with the others will, of course, simply stay away.

Not only the scheme of institutionalized social relations, but the nature of these relations in ordinary life is reflected in religion. The fact that the gods were known in life is largely responsible for many of the outstanding characteristics of Lovedu worship. We must not expect a behaviour pattern of humble worshipper to omnipotent god. Awe and trepidation characterize the attitude to the mysterical secrets of great *digɔma*, but they constitute a category poles apart from the ancestors and *dithugula*. People pray to ancestors as man to man, scolding them or reminding them of their duties to their children. The following prayer, uttered when Pheduli was brought home, is typical: 'We say, here is your corn, Pheduli.

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for
[788] an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*mudimo wesu*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me ox liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's
753 daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite un-
788 expectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of the girl, *phasa* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognized as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phasa*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Hu phasa* in these circumstances recognizes psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mabudu* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not

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immediate and usually not consciously phrased, yet in the total complex of the culture all things are interconnected, albeit in ways that are not easy to see clearly. The gods help good and bad men alike, they send illness whether one is careful or neglectful of the observances due to them, and the after-life is the same for all. But we should be careful not to deduce too much from this. The position of a sister and her privileges are sanctioned by the gods, as is also the respect due to old people. In general the gods are not upholders of custom, yet on one occasion in 1937 two *zwidajani* cried all day in the bush at Maulwi because some women had broken the taboo against cutting wood there. The chief concern of the gods appears to be to look after their own interests. They complain when they dislike the manner of their burial, but they are undisturbed when twins are not buried in wet soil, even though this has a disastrous effect on the whole country. If they were disturbed about custom in general, instead of things directly affecting them, they would complain of many disturbing changes in these days of culture contact; instead, one only finds that possessing spirits dislike European things and that at offerings European utensils are generally not used.

Another outstanding characteristic is the almost entire absence of any speculative element. The Lovedu are not concerned with such things as the life hereafter and the mode of life of the gods; theirs is essentially a practical religion in which rites are of far greater importance than attitude of mind, action than belief. Its rites are directed to practical ends, such as recovery from illness and the procuring of rain. In vain does one inquire into the meaning or reason of a rite, for the reply always is, 'The bones tell us to do these things,' and the practical end is phrased as determined by the bones. There are considerable differences from one family to another in the conduct of religious rites and the nature of shrines and, since religion is primarily a family concern, few people know what their neighbours do. Not uncommonly one finds a practice said to be impossible by some people accepted as normal by their neighbours.

Lovedu religion is not distinct from magic. The very terminology of the two is identical: *thugula* is a shrine, dedicated animal, or a sacred object once in the possession of the ancestors, but it is also any charm of bone or herbs concocted by a doctor. *Diphaba* are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget, as well as to ward off witches from the village. *Hu rerelela* means both to pray and to utter a spell. *Hu phasa* is used both to approach the gods and with medicines when sending back disease to a witch; one may also *phasa* on the charms in the village gate on the arrival of beer in order that more may come to the village. In a sacrifice for rain, the magical rites are of as great importance as the purely religious; and *hu phasa* in case of illness is thought to have a compelling force. It cannot fail; if it does, there must be some other cause, for an ancestor can never refuse to be placated by the *phasa* rite.

The merging of religion with magic and medicine is everywhere evident, but nowhere is it more prominent than in the cult of possession. This cult is not indigenous; it came with the Thovolo and, since its first reception some thirty years ago, has gained considerable popularity.

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771 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-
794 Tongs and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion.
177 Among Shangana-Tongs, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult
753 is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body' and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolatela was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthwasa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature.
[828] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwasha in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), or *muncbcbcbc* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit
755 wishing to manifest itself, a *lelɔpɔ* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known in the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the
794 spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.

755 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to
535 enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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possessed, they often say they have come to 'play' with the others and 794
they may even cause slight ill-health on this account. Hence quite often 755
when a possessed person does not feel well, he will ask for the drums, 535
saying he must dance. *Lelɔpɔ* dancing consists of fast movements of the foot to the accompaniment of drums or tambourines and rattles. At a seance of *malɔpɔ a zwikwe*, those who speak *Thɔvɔlɔ*, the large hemispherical *gɔma* drum is used in addition to the conical drums. All are, however, beaten with the hands, the elbows being placed on the drumskin in a peculiar manner. *Malɔpɔ*, who speak Sotho or Lovedu, use only the conical drums in the ordinary manner.

If the dance has a great fascination—after a seance one finds even small children practising the steps—the dress worn by the possessed adds to the attraction. Cloths of different colours are worn round the waist [292] and tied at the back; round the legs are usually leggings of the outer shell of the *diṭuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) fruit filled with pebbles to rattle as one dances; on the head is a cap of fur or brightly coloured wool or a head-gear of black feathers, while very often a spear, battle-axe, or stick is brandished in the hand. These are the *zwiṭhamo* of the spirit, worn only during possession. The nature of the dress of each possessed person has been indicated by the spirit itself, and people do their best to comply, lest the possessed person dies. Once at a seance the spirit of a woman asked that a beast or, failing that, a goat be 'placed' for him. 'We'll do our best,' the relatives replied, 'but remember we are poor and it is a matter that will take time.' The spirit, angry at this unwillingness, retorted, 'If you don't comply, I'll take away my person [in whom I manifest myself] and go and sleep with her. Tell Makhade (elder brother of the possessed who learnt the profession of doctor from the spirit) I'll take away my profession from him.' 'We'll do our best,' urged the relatives, 'but don't go away in anger.' In spite of this power, possessing spirits have nevertheless to take cognizance of public opinion and the desires of royalty. The spirit of the wife of a royal relative asked for a man's loin-cloth, which women possessed by male spirits occasionally wear, but he refused to allow it on the grounds that for a woman to wear man's attire is unbecoming. An old woman therefore addressed the spirit, saying, 'People here don't like it,' and the spirit was satisfied.

A short description of an institution which contains all the elements 794
of an ordinary seance must suffice to illustrate some of the main features 755
of the cult. When the doctor, called to conduct the initiation, has arrived 535
with his or her attendants, drums are fetched from the district head, and 786
other disciples of the doctor invited to be present. Nothing can, however, be done before the spirit of the doctor descends upon her. To allow this, they retire to a hut and lie down as if to sleep, while an old woman puts down some pinches of snuff on the ground and calls upon the spirits to come. In a few minutes the doctor groans and quivers and the spirit signifies its arrival by a song of greeting. It calls for its *lelɔpɔ* clothes and the doctor is dressed. Soon the spirits of her attendants also arrive and treatment, which consists in making the novitiate dance, is begun.

When Betty was being initiated, we arrived early one Saturday evening, attracted by the noise, to find a picturesque scene. It was winter and

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794 five little fires had been lit in the vicinity of the courtyard of Betty's hut.
755 In the centre were three women dancing to the music of drums and
535 rattles. We sat down by the nearest fire and found ourselves with a group
786 of old women. For people had arranged themselves, naturally as is their manner, in age-groups round the various fires; young married women at one, small boys at another, girls above the age of puberty at a third. The dust rose high; what had sounded pleasant enough at a distance became, as one sat in its midst, an almost unbearable din; while in the flickering and uncertain light of the fires the dancing took on a frenzied effect that lent to the scene a wildness and weirdness seldom met with except in travellers' tales of darkest Africa. Never again in our frequent attendances at *malɔpɔ* dancing did we recapture that first sense of weirdness so largely due to its novelty and our own ignorance. That night the dancing stopped at 1.30 a.m. but by dawn it had begun again, continuing with intervals of rest during the whole of Sunday and Sunday night. Betty danced most of the time; if she rested too long, the women urged her on, saying, 'How do you expect the spirit to come out if you don't dance?' All this time she was being treated with medicines: black powder mixed with butter fat was smeared on her legs, white froth of medicine churned with a porridge stirrer was applied on various parts of the body, some being administered also internally, and infusions were given her to drink. No food was eaten either by Betty or by the women whose spirits were upon them; the very sight of porridge makes some *malɔpɔ* vomit and the only sustenance allowed while dancing is beer, if there happens to be any.

Late on Sunday afternoon they called her mother's brother to try to induce the spirit to manifest itself, for doctors had indicated that the troubling spirit was on the mother's side. Taking a calabash of water in his hand, the mother's brother knelt near the dancing girl and spat mouthfuls of water out on the ground, saying, 'Come out, spirit, that this person also may be well. She remains ailing, and when we go to doctors they tell us it is a spirit. Come outside that this person can be well [cooi].' Sometimes, instead of *hu phasa* with water, mixed grains of all kinds are thrown over the dancer and the words used are, 'We are giving you everything to come.' It may even be that something, which can be overcome only by magical means, is holding back the spirit, as when, on one occasion, the spirit was said to be bewildered at the cross-roads, not knowing which to take. All the roads except that leading into the village were magically 'barred' and the spirit, thus guided, came straight in and manifested itself. Difficult as it is for a spirit to come on the first occasion, once initiation has taken place, it becomes a simple matter. To make a spirit manifest itself, a person has only to dance in the manner of the cult or to lie down while some one calls on it to come. The spirit may also come of its own accord at any time without being induced.

794 Early on the Monday morning Betty, showing signs of exhaustion,
755 began to stagger in her dancing, and people knew the spirit must be near. Her movements became more frenzied, she put up her hands to her head and dragged her feet uncertainly, and then fell to the ground. Several women who had been expecting this, caught and carried her, still quivering and groaning, into the hut. 'Good day, grandparent. Come nicely,

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grandparent,' they kept saying. After a few moments Betty began a song, 794
one usually sung on the arrival of a spirit, giving the name of the spirit 755
upon her—namely, Mamaile, her mother's mother. Those present sang the refrain to the accompaniment of rattles. Staggerings and fallings, groanings or growlings are always signs of an approaching spirit; sometimes the possessed person runs away for a short distance. A goat was now brought into the hut. Its body was smeared with medicine, some was poured down its throat and, after the patient had breathed hard into its mouth, it was taken out and killed. Under supervision of the doctor, small pieces were cut from all parts and placed in a bowl, while the stomach contents and portion of the liver were set aside to be used in curing the patient. The experts say that the sickness from which the ancestor suffered before its death and which presumably causes the patient to suffer, goes into the goat. Before proceeding further, the doctor took the bowl of meat to the hut entrance, where, after setting aside half of it, she placed it with a little snuff on the ground, praying to her spirit. Later this meat was roasted and eaten by small boys. The stomach contents were smeared on various parts of the body of the patient; the small pieces of meat were roasted, mixed with a black powder, and administered on the end of a stick to all four of the possessed people present.

The doctor now busied herself charring chips of various kinds of bark in a basin in which some of the goat's liver had also been put. With this the patient was smoked three times under a blanket till she coughed and spluttered. This took a considerable time, during which the other possessed women sang songs in turn. Mabelowa, who is possessed by a man, called for her pipe in which some hemp was put and evinced great astonishment when her fellow wife, her attendant when she is possessed, struck a match to light it. This was a European innovation unknown in the days of her spirit. Similarly, when a potato was brought, all the possessed women examined it with wonder, asking each other whether it was edible. While the meat of the goat was being cooked with medicine in three pots for those present, the possessed women sat outside on a mat, an honour accorded to their spirits. They sat, silent and dignified, saying nothing. A fowl was killed in order that its leg might afford a medicine bag for the patient and the chips of bark used in smoking were ground to a powder to be used by the patient when eating of the first-fruits. It might be mentioned that the doctor carried home with her the hind leg, shoulder, and breast of the goat as her share, while the other meat was regarded as a reward to the crowd for its share in dancing and singing.

For some time people sat and talked to their friends while the doctor 794
worked with her medicines and the possessed women sat quietly in the 755
shade. Suddenly we became aware of a kind of pantomime in which the 535
initiate, directed in song by the doctor, was made to play-act all the work of women. She went to fetch water and wood about 20 yards from home, swept the courtyard, imitated hoeing, the stamping and winnowing of mealies, cooking and dishing up, finally serving food in the correct manner to the small boy whose mother she had married (Betty had married her father's sister). Last of all she was taken to the drums and

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794 shown how to dance in possessed fashion, all, it was said, lest when her
755 spirit left her she should be lazy and not know how to work. Betty
535 walked as in a dream with a wooden, expressionless look and at times appeared so exhausted that we feared she would not be able to lift the stamper when imitating stamping. This mime-show is not performed in all initiations, nor is a goat always killed, for the methods of doctors differ considerably and the patient's relatives may have no goat. Often the patient is set to dance and treated with medicines till she falls down with the spirit upon her.

794 It was now three o'clock in the afternoon, and, the initiation being
755 complete, the doctor thought it time that the spirits departed. She
535 ushered the possessed into the hut, where they all sat down, offered them
533 each a pinch of snuff, took a rattle and began her farewell song, the whole company (for the hut had filled with spectators) joining in the refrain. Next the initiate sang her farewell song, mentioning what she wanted as her accessories—several white cloths, a woollen cap, and a spear to hold when dancing. When all had finished singing, they took off their *zwiṭhamo* (clothes), which their attendants (for each possessed person has some one to help him when his spirit appears) put into bundles to take away, and lay down to sleep. After three minutes the doctor grunted and groaned as departing spirits are apt to do, sat up and began dressing in everyday clothes. The others followed her example and went outside. The patient, but a short while before so exhausted, came smiling out of the hut and scolded the people for letting her oversleep in this shocking manner (appearing to have no knowledge of her initiation). Then all washed their faces and urinated in the hedge, as women do on rising in the mornings.

794 Initiation into the cult is said to make the person well again, and all
755 into whose history one inquires claim to have been cured. Betty herself
784 had no further trouble. If, however, they become ill again, it may be a second spirit, for many people have three or four. There is, however, no further initiation; the second spirit is merely called upon to manifest itself. A second or third spirit may take possession without causing any illness, merely announcing its arrival and making known its wants when the person is possessed. After initiation the spirit manifests itself when it has some complaint or desire, when the person has broken some taboo, or when specially induced by dancing or prayer. A possessed person has to keep certain taboos: he may never eat such firstfruits as pumpkin leaves or green mealies, *morula* fruits or beer made of the newly-harvested corn without medicine given him at his initiation and renewable every year or every two years; any new thing undertaken, as when a possessed woman becomes pregnant, must be reported to the spirit. Some *malɔpɔ* may not be beaten with a green stick, lest the spirit descend upon them; others may not touch European medicine. Many of them run away from Europeans even when not actually possessed, and one man had to keep his books securely locked in a suit-case lest his wife should see them and become troubled by her spirit. The very mention of the word *lelɔpɔ* in the presence of some may cause the spirit to come. Observances are not the same for all and taboos to be observed depend largely on the doctor who

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does the initiation. There are no special burial rites associated with the cult. There is, however, a vague belief that injury to a snake in the village may in some cases harm a possessed person, an interesting belief in view of the fact that there is so little trace in Lovedu religion of the Zulu idea that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in snakes.

There is a special relationship between a possessed person and the doctor who initiated him: every year when the medicine needs renewal, beer or *morula* cider is prepared, the doctor, who comes with a number of disciples and attendants, is called and there is a great dance of the possessed often lasting several days. This is 'dancing for medicine' (*hu vinela tshidi*). Some possessed people have to be specially doctored before drinking the first *morula* cider and the *morula* season is always a time of *lelɔpɔ* gatherings; others are required to contribute corn at harvest time for a large *lelɔpɔ* dance at the home of the doctor. These gatherings, at which a goat may be slaughtered in addition to the cider provided, add greatly to the prestige of the doctor. There is sometimes considerable jealousy between *malɔpɔ* doctors, who, with those initiated by them, may form rival schools. Some doctors refuse to allow their followers to dance with those initiated by other doctors without special permission. At one seance, at which there had been some unpleasantness, the doctor smeared some powder into incisions on the neck, tongue, crown, and sides of the heads of her disciples. Then, taking some medicated water in her mouth, she squirted (*hu phasa*), saying, 'I "place" you. Don't you dance any more. I don't like dancing every day without my special permission. Any *lelɔpɔ* who dances where you are dancing will break her leg or be badly hurt.' The remainder of the water was given them to drink.

An interesting feature of the cult of possession is that many people when the spirit is upon them speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thɔvɔlɔ or Kharanga. Investigation into this matter, however, shows that this is not as startling a phenomenon as it might appear. When possessed, a person for the most part sits silent unless he is a doctor. If he speaks at all, this is in monosyllables, for all his wants and messages are conveyed in song. *Lelɔpɔ* songs are stereotyped and known to many because the uninitiated have to join in the refrain when rattling the accompaniment. In these songs there is usually a number of foreign words, though many consist purely of meaningless sounds, such as '*We le wee eva o wee wee wee wana wee*'. Often peculiarities in the pronunciation of vowels are interpreted as Thɔvɔlɔ. When the refrain begun (*hu suma*) by the possessed person has been taken up by the chorus, he continues with the song or interpolates his own words, usually Sotho with a few foreign words interspersed, till he wishes to stop. In this way he makes known his wishes. It quite frequently happens that no one understands the gibberish of the possessed person, and doctors generally have an attendant who interprets what they wish to convey. There are, however, numerous well-known words in general use by people when their spirit is upon them—for instance, *mufoto* or *movoto* for *lefɔla* (snuff), *bula* or *mvula* for *meetse* (water), *va ga mbaya* for *va ga ntiya* (they may beat me), *kaya* for *hae* (home). But many possessed people speak pure Sotho, and it is recognized that a newly initiated person may not

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know Thɔvɔb. The Lovedu themselves are not critical, and the usual reply when one expresses any doubt about the genuineness of the possessed or the possibility of fraud is, 'If they were not really possessed how could they speak a strange tongue?'

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It is not our purpose to discuss the psychology of possession among the Lovedu. We should, however, point out that it is in no way associated with abnormalities of character or with crises in the life of the individual. Its symptoms are not of a nervous nature, such as indicate *ukuthwasa* among Nguni; there are, except when the spirit descends upon them, no twitchings; uncontrollable hiccups are unknown; members of the cult are not hysterical or mentally unbalanced nor can they be distinguished in their daily activities from others. There is no change in the personality of the individual when his spirit is upon him, although some of them sing in a low voice when possessed by a man and others dance in a peculiar way. Nor is there any difference to be seen between one possessing spirit and another in the same individual: when his second spirit comes upon a possessed person, it often continues the conversation where the first spirit left off, and the only indication of its arrival may be its own announcement in a song or perhaps gulping movements and a gentle falling back of the patient. Finally, of interest psychologically was the farewell dance of all *malɔpɔ* just before the *vyali* initiation for girls in September, 1938. Their songs and dances were taboo during the period of the 'school' as they were not allowed to compete with those of the *vyali* which had not yet ended in October, 1939. We must not conclude from this or from the fact that Christians do not become *malɔpɔ* that possession is imposture. There are wide avenues for fraud, but most *malɔpɔ* are genuine victims of mass-suggestion. The cult, though open to men, is confined largely to women. It is not associated with gifts of prophecy or the finding of lost objects, and there are no revelations concerning the Beyond.

The bearing of the possessed when not dancing is quiet and dignified and detached in contrast to the diabolical manifestations of the possessed in Europe in the Middle Ages. It appears to be neither a paranoic nor a compensatory phenomenon. We dare not relate trance experience with neuroses or psychoses, for we need to orientate ourselves, not from our own, but from a wider relativistic psychology or psychopathology; the mental reflects the cultural configuration and the disposition of drives in the mind must be viewed relatively to the disposition of forces in the culture. The whole cult among the Lovedu is remarkably stereotyped; behaviour under the influence of the spirit, the songs, the things demanded by spirits, conform to a type. Even the possessing spirits themselves are stereotyped, being almost always grandparents.

It is our impression that if any one in the least degree suggestible were made to dance without sustenance for several days in the noise and excitement of seances, he would be liable to fall down exhausted and respond in the traditional manner to the attentions of the women. But not all initiations are successful. In one case witnessed by us, the young woman quite obviously did not want to become possessed: she danced in a half-hearted manner and, under the pretext of tending her baby, kept

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away as much as possible from the doctor. In another, the patient began to stagger towards the end of the second day, but, though every one expected the spirit to arrive, nothing happened and so the doctor left. The reason for failure in this case may have been (but we are not sure) the loud complaints of her brother that no one in the family had ever been possessed before.

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CHAPTER XIV

WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY

Techniques and manifestations of day and night witchcraft—distinctions between witchcraft and magic—smelling out of witches by the forensic physician—social incidence and psychological aspects of witchcraft.

754 *VULƆI*, as the Lovedu use the word, comprises both witchcraft and sorcery, but the distinction between them, as accepted by many modern ethnographical writers, diverges considerably from the distinctions made by the Lovedu. In order, therefore, to preserve Lovedu conceptions and terminology, it is necessary, firstly, to use a single word—namely, witchcraft (*vulɔi*), and, secondly, to distinguish night-witchcraft (*vulɔi vya vusiu*) and day-witchcraft (*vulɔi vya matsiare*). *Vulɔi* is distinguished from other forms of what we should call magic, not so much by the methods employed, though some of them are confined to witches, as by intent and results. *Vulɔi* is anti-social; it is illegal and aims at harming people from motives of jealousy, revenge, frustration, or anger. Though witches are believed to have a kind of compulsion to do evil—their fingers burn to bewitch—they are never unconscious of their own evil deeds and powers, as has been reported by Junod for Shangana-Tonga and Stayt for the Venda. The witch knows his own powers and uses them to obtain his own ends. Knowledge of witchcraft does not inevitably involve its practice; the child of a witch may refuse to kill people while using his powers to increase his crops, and it is even possible for a witch to protect some one he likes against the machinations of others.

There are important distinctions between night-witches or night-witchcraft, on the one hand, and day-witches or day-witchcraft, on the other. The night-witch is a 'born' witch, taught in early infancy by his mother. He works chiefly by night, but can also work by day. The day-witch is any ordinary individual who, by means of medicine obtained from some doctor or witch, tries to kill his enemies. He has no knowledge of witchcraft beyond the medicine obtained for some definite end. There is a certain amount of vagueness about the distinction between day and night witches, and in practice, when any one is accused of witchcraft, there is never any inquiry into which type of witchcraft has been used. Nevertheless, the distinction is essential for an understanding of Lovedu witchcraft.

The night-witch is able directly, and without the aid of any medicine, to effect his evil purposes. He can enter a hut through the smallest crevice. But his absence from home will never be missed, because he will throw his slumbering companions into a deep sleep or even leave a hyena in his own image; but the soul is never sent out to do the work, as among the Azande. When one wakes up from a dream in a sweat or fright, it is a sign that night-witches are near, and in consultations with doctors such symptoms are often described by patients as very relevant to the diagnosis

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of their illness. Night-witches are not often seen by people, but there is 754
certain medicine which can be put in the village fence to keep a night-witch rooted to the spot, unable to move till you come and find him. As soon as he is addressed, he will scurry away. Those who have seen witches, always describe them as naked, perhaps because people always sleep naked wrapped in their blankets. The most effective way of keeping witches at bay is the placing of medicine (*diphaba*) round the village fence, which either makes them forget their errand or makes the village appear like water or a forest.

Night-witches cause all manner of illness in ways unknown to ordinary people. They may pour blood over you, then next day you are ill; your blood is not right and soon you die. They may cut off portions of your body to insert millet or sand, which causes intense pain. If your bones ache and you feel tired without knowing why, it may be that a night-witch has made you hoe in his garden all night or beaten you all over your body with sticks. Sometimes he even makes you ride a bicycle all night. Besides killing, night-witches are fond of causing barrenness in their enemies. They are great destroyers of crops. After you have ploughed, they go into your field and pick up all the seeds so that nothing grows, or they rob your field of its fertility to increase that of their own fields. They also send their familiars at night to milk your cows or let them out of their kraal to cause damage that may bring you to court. Night-witches form a sort of fraternity: they all know one another and meet at night to drum and dance for amusement. They also fight one another: those of an area in which the crops have failed will send wind to break mealies and trees in another area or worms to destroy the crop. The destructiveness of such contests is a reality to some, for in one district in which many worms appeared in the mealies, so we heard, a public meeting was held and one man accused Shangana-Ṭonga witches, whom he said he had seen the previous night. Often a real battle against foreign witches takes place in which wounds are received that the witch does his best to hide during the day. Witches have even been known to die from wounds received in battle at night, as sometimes admitted by themselves.

Night-witches employ familiars (*dithomya*) such as the hyena, the snake, 759
the *muishond* (*Pœcilogale albinucha*), and, to a lesser extent, owls and 825
the striped *muishond* (*Ictonyx capensis*): both kinds of *muishond* are polecats or skunks. How the witch tames these animals is not known, but they become so intimate that they come at night to ask for food and call the witch their mother, but there is no sex relationship between witch and familiar as is reported for the Pondo. Two actual cases were reported to the queen while we were in the field in which 'sent' snakes had been killed; one of these had been found to contain porridge and relish, certain proof of its association with a witch. The difference between an ordinary snake which also bites and a 'sent' snake appears from the circumstances: if, for example, others walk along a path before you and escape, but you get bitten, then the snake must be 'sent'. For 'sent' snakes are real snakes; the Zulu practice of smearing medicine on sticks to turn them into snakes when your enemy passes is not known to the Lovedu. The most fearful of all familiars is, however, the *khiḍuḍwane*, a 754

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754 human being who has been killed by a witch to be his slave. The *khiḍuḍwane* is not an ordinary corpse, though witches do call corpses out of their graves in order to cut off portions of their body for medicine, a procedure that can be prevented by magical protection of the grave. Only a person specially killed for the purpose can be a *khiḍuḍwane*; when they bury him, it is only his shadow that goes into the grave; the real person has been enslaved and put in a large earthen pot or in a cave. At night he hoes for his master, cuts poles for building, or goes on nefarious errands. If you meet a *khiḍuḍwane*, you faint at the sight, and even after medical treatment your body may feel dried up, as though it has no blood.

That the fear of *zwiḍuḍwane* is very real to the Native, and backed by what is to him convincing evidence, is shown in the case of Madume. In November, 1937, Madume, a man residing near us, died. Ever since his wife's death he had lived with (*hu gaula*) a woman whom he had never properly married and, after his death, it was rumoured that he had been killed by the mother of his son's wife for the sake of her daughter, who was jealous that her husband's father should be fonder of, and show more favours to, a concubine than to his legitimate daughter-in-law. The mother of the girl had first, so it was said, wanted to kill Madume's wife, but her daughter had argued that it would be better to kill Madume himself, since he might pick up some other woman and they would have the same trouble over again. How much of this story had actually been given by the diviner and how much was sheer surmise we were never able to discover, but a month after the death people began to be afraid to go near his village at night, as he had been seen standing at his gate. The concubine, afraid to remain at home at night, went to sleep with neighbours, whence she would return at dawn to do her household duties. One morning when it was just getting light, she rose to go home. On her way she suddenly ran shouting into the nearest village and fell in a faint at the entrance. People rushed to help her and called in Madume's sister [757] to revive her in the manner usual in such circumstances: by holding smoking chips under the nose to cause sneezing (*hu ɛtsemudisa*). She told them she had seen three *zwiḍuḍwane*, a man called Khishweni who had died long ago in the neighbourhood, and two children, dancing and singing on the road. From this evidence the conclusion was immediately come to that Khishweni must have been killed by the same witch as Madume, since both were walking about, and so great was the fear of going out at night that the women of the neighbourhood could not be persuaded to attend a girl's initiation ceremony which had begun before this episode.

775 Contact with Europeans has led to the conception of *khipogo* (spook) which must not be confused with *khiḍuḍwane*. A *khipogo* is the ghost of a dead person, but the sight of a *khipogo* does not, like that of a *khiḍuḍwane*, make one faint or dry up; it only makes one's heart jump in fright. Such a ghost can be laid by means of medicine (*diphaba*) on the grave. Children often run to their mothers with scared faces and bated breath to say they have seen a *khipogo*, sometimes even in broad daylight.

754 Night-witches can be male or female, but the great majority are female.

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There is nothing corresponding to the witch-substance found in the stomachs of Zande witches. A witch is said to imbibe witchcraft with its mother's milk, yet it involves learning, a process begun on the second or third day after birth, when its mother throws it up against the wall, to which it clings like a bat. On one occasion the anger of a grandmother that her grandchild had been 'taken out' of the hut (*hu thusa*) without her presence or knowledge was construed as due to a sense of frustration because this had prevented her from teaching the child witchcraft. The dullness at school of a certain girl whose mother was said to be a witch was ascribed to the difficulty of simultaneously learning two things: witchcraft and books. Since witchcraft is learnt from the mother (though one sometimes hears that the mother teaches her daughter, a father his sons), brothers and sisters of one mother cannot accuse each other of witchcraft without involving themselves; that such accusations do occur shows how theory often gives way to practical considerations. In one such case, where a woman brought her son to court for beating her and her daughter, the son accused his own mother and sister of killing his child. His sister asked, 'If I and my mother are witches, what about you?' When he replied, 'My mother stinted me, giving only you the knowledge,' the court laughed, saying, 'Boy, you're mad. Where have you ever heard of a man accusing his own mother of witchcraft?' But the boy insisted on going to a *mugome*, though the court warned him of the consequences of breaking his relationship with his cattle-linked sister, whose cattle, if called back because of the imputation, could no longer serve as a bond for future marriages. Night-witchcraft is learnt, but unlike day-witchcraft it can neither be learnt from an outsider nor be bought. Yet one hears of such transactions, more especially among Christians, who aver that payment consists of the blood of a close relative, usually your own child. Jeremiah associated the beginnings of his stepmother's witchcraft with the death of her own child, followed shortly afterwards by that of her step-daughter.

The day-witch is almost always a man, since women cannot easily buy medicines. He is distinguished from the night-witch by his use of medicine and spells. Spells have no fixed phraseology, but consist in telling the medicine what to do, mentioning the name of the person. Very often the medicine works as well without the spell as with it. The day-witch employs no familiars, belongs to no fraternity, does not inherit his knowledge. He is called a day-witch, not so much because he works by day, for he may work at night too, but because of the technique he uses. Whereas the night-witch himself goes out and steals your mealie seeds, the day-witch puts medicine on the soles of his feet and walks through your field; and while the day-witch introduces substances into your body by means of medicine, the night-witch employs a stoat to take up its abode in you and eat all your food. Certain techniques are associated with day-witchcraft, though it is possible for any night-witch to use also all the methods of the day-witch, simply by getting the right medicine.

The day-witch can cause illness or death by *hu lega*. *Hu lega* means to try, to tempt, and hence, by extension of meaning, to challenge or to

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754 send misfortune by means of medicine. The witch may mix your footprint with medicine or put a medicated thorn in the path you usually take, to cause pain in the leg, which gradually passes into the rest of the body and kills you. He may cause your death by pointing a medicated finger at you, or using water you have washed in or clothes you have worn. Hair and nails are, however, not much used in witchcraft and only a few people, more especially women, are careful about their disposal. To point at a man in a menacing way, or to say the words, 'You will see' (*u ḑɔ vɔna*), suffices, should evil befall him, as ground for an imputation of witchcraft. In a violent quarrel between a woman who had a child by her lover and the lover whom she had jilted because the liaison was causing trouble with her husband, the angry lover flung out the challenge, 'You've got a daughter who is my blood, yet you love me no longer. You will see!' A few weeks later the child became ill and died. The mother, overcome with grief and fury, carried her dead to the lover's house and threw it down, saying, 'Here is your meat. Cook it and eat it.' This phraseology suggests, though no one believes, that witches eat human flesh; it was construed merely as a dramatic accusation and created quite a stir; but it was considered justifiable in view of his threat. The *mugɔme* to whom the matter was taken pointed out, not the lover, but the woman's own husband as the culprit. When the latter, refusing to accept the verdict and to pay his bet, was required to leave the area, his wife, a staunch believer in his innocence, accompanied him. Use of *malego* by ordinary people is witchcraft, but its use by doctors against one another is legitimate. Doctors often 'try' their skill against one another: one doctor, we were told, turned himself into an elephant for the purpose of attacking his rival; not to be outdone, the latter became a bird and flew away.

754 821 Sending lightning, to cause lightning to strike (*hu tiisa ḑadi*), is a common means of harming one's enemies employed by day-witches. To say of a person, 'He knows lightning', is tantamount to calling him a witch, for, unlike the Zulu, the Lovedu have no socially recognized lightning doctors. The Lovedu distinguish two kinds of lightning—natural or 'lightning of the bird' and 'sent' lightning. The former comes with rain and is caused by the lightning bird, which has blue feathers and looks somewhat like a goose with large feet. These birds get no food unless there is lightning and then their food is the *zuhululu*, the blue-headed tree lizard. When the bird strikes a tree, it leaves its urine as a white substance at the root; then doctors come and take the soil into which it has soaked to be used as medicine to cause lightning or for curing burns. Natural lightning, in theory and according to the diagnosis of the dice, is believed to strike only trees or rocks far from villages, never animals or people; but some say that it is dangerous to men in autumn, when it follows the sweet sorghum spat out on the road. 'Sent' lightning, on the other hand, strikes near the village, killing cattle or people. It comes with little or no rain and is more terrifying than that of the lightning bird. Lightning is judged almost solely by its results: if it does no harm it is natural; if it strikes any one or destroys anything in the village it is *ḑadi ya vathu* or *khiḑadi muthwana*, 'sent' by people.

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Doctors frequently 'try' one another by sending lightning. A lightning 754
witch may either fly himself or may smear medicine on a dove or a red- 821
winged locust which, when it thunders, is able to 'go with the lightning'
and strike where its owner wishes. Use of the lightning bird itself for this purpose is impossible. A man who himself strikes as lightning must be scarified with medicine containing some portion of the lightning bird, and when learning to strike may be taken to a high desolate place where he is taught accuracy by being required to strike one of a number of aloes in a row. An informant once saw a man with black-and-white stripes all over his body and two branches tied to his hips; he concluded that this must be a lightning witch (*cf.* the striped hyena with its mane of upright hair on neck or along back, or the striped polecat, which bristles up its tail in anger). One who controls lightning is able to prevent it from striking him by cutting or piercing the flash with a medicated axe or spear, telling it to go elsewhere. Lightning frequently strikes villages and people in Uulovedu and in many instances some accusation is brought before the court. Huts may be magically protected against lightning. If a witch strikes a protected village, it is believed that he will 'fall', change into a person, and can then be caught. There are no taboos against milking or working during lightning, but the day after it has struck the whole district has a holiday.

Day-witches use several other techniques. A very common form of 754
day-witchcraft is *hu lesa* (to cause to eat), the introduction of medicine into beer or food, which on being swallowed turns into an indigestible piece of meat or other object that makes one ill. Most people one meets have at some time or other suffered from *khileso*. To pour real poison into food (*hu shela khitaba*) is a modern though still very uncommon method of killing. *Hu fahelela* (*hu fa*, to die, *hu elela*, to cause to go for) is to cause a person to leave home, e.g. for European employment, and die far away. This is done chiefly by day-witches, but also sometimes by night-witches; it is, however, neither common nor well-known. Modern conditions, with increased tribal contacts in European towns, have led to a tremendous increase in day witchcraft. New methods and medicines for *hu lega*, unknown in the tribe before, are being introduced. Some even go so far as to say that the sending of lightning is a relatively recent thing from Nareni.

There are many practices bordering on witchcraft, indistinguishable 754
from day-witchcraft in technique and method of procedure, but con- 789
sidered legitimate and therefore not witchcraft in the true sense. Some of these are so close to, that they are sometimes looked upon as witchcraft. The deciding factor in such cases is always the result: if it causes death it is witchcraft; if it does not, or if it is done with an object that is recognized as legitimate, it is not witchcraft. *Hu dabeka* is essentially legitimate. Its technique consists in changing the nature of things, making medicated pieces of the skin of an animal turn into the animal itself, changing a person's sex, and one of the best-known doctors in Loveduland is skilled in *madabi*. It is a technique confined to men, employed to make a woman marry you or to frighten her into coming back to you when she has run away. No one has ever heard of a woman sending

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754 *madabi*.[1] A woman ran away from her husband to live with another.
789 Whenever she was cooking or doing her household duties at her new home, monkeys and other animals appeared at the village till, frightened out of her wits, she ran back to her first husband. *Madabi* are often sent
[845] in connexion with childbirth. Sometimes the sending of *madabi* is looked upon as witchcraft. Malaji changed the sex of Muhale's daughter so as to make the birth difficult each time she was about to bear a child, because the child was his, but the girl no longer loved him. We were not allowed into the hut, but the midwives, whom we knew well, testified to a real change, though probably because certain types of difficult birth are conventionally so explained. Eventually the birth took place, but shortly afterwards the baby was dead. This was considered to be witchcraft, the case was brought to court, and a large fine imposed. Only the doctor who used *madabi* can undo or reverse its power by *hu dabekulla*, but other doctors may, if there has been any injury, heal it with medicines.

789 A practice similar to *madabi*, but differing from it in object is *maḑilebɔ*. At the time of the Swazi raids, Ranwagu, instead of hiding in the forests, put his faith in *maḑilebɔ* (marvel, wonder). When the enemy came, his village turned into water and they could not find his cattle, though they heard their lowing. Masia, who was wanted by the police during the whole period of our investigation, was able, when chased by them, to disappear even in the open; he would hang like a bat on a plough to look just like a spanner. When eventually he was arrested, he averred, and many people agreed, that it was because he was tired.

Khidɔba is a technique used against thieves and it is both public and legitimate. Some kinds of *khidɔba* are known as a home remedy; some are obtained from doctors. By means of medicine used on *ledzigtri* grass
[824] (*Hyparrhenia Tamba*), one can cause a severe and painful itching in the finger of the thief which may compel him to confess. Likewise, by *hu dɔba*, a stolen goat may be made to cry out in the thief's belly, as happened in a recent case, probably of compulsion neurosis, in which bleating was taken as conclusive proof of his guilt. Another method of *hu dɔba* causes the eyes of the thief to protrude till they fall out on to his stomach; if his mother then cries on seeing him, he may die. *Khidɔba* strikes the thief even when he hides or sells the stolen goods. Besides these measures, taken to bring a thief to book after the theft, one may by anticipation pro-
[824] tect one's property by means of a piece of *leṭaṭe* rush (*Mariscus sp.*) split at one end to resemble the mouth of a snake and smeared with coloured medicines. When placed at the hut entrance or on the border of your field, it turns into a snake and bars the entry or exit of a thief. A doctor we knew used to have serious talks with his son about the fortune he would make if he knew this medicine, especially in Johannesburg, where theft is common and victims pay high prices. The only recognized cure

[1] The word comes from *dalo* plus *inbi*; *dalo* (well being), is a noun from *hu lala* (to lie down, to be peaceful), and *inbi* means bad. *Dabi* should be calamity, but it is used only in the sense of excessive rain (causing evil). The plural, *madabi*, means misfortune or pain or disease legitimately 'sent'. The verb is *hu dabeka*, legitimately to send misfortune, and its converse, *hu dabekulla*, means to neutralize or remove the effects of *madabi*.

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of the power and effect of *hu dɔba* is by asking for pardon, when the doctor who gave or used the *khidɔba* will be asked to *dɔbella*, i.e. reverse the effects of his medicine. He will usually charge a large fee (even an ox), which he shares with his client. 789

Use of medicine on a grave which causes the death, not only of the witch who killed the deceased, but also of other members of his family is not considered to be witchcraft. This is called *hu tsikɛla* or *hu dicla lewiga* (to work on the grave) and is done in various ways: the corpse may be smeared before burial, or the seed of a certain plant from Rhodesia sown on the grave, and when it grows the witch will die, or medicine and the stomach contents of a goat may be poured down a hole to reach the body in its grave. This is the usual sense in which *hu tsikɛla* is used, but sometimes it is conceived of as a kind of *hu dɔba*, against a thief with the purpose of wreaking vengeance, not only on him, but also on all those who have eaten of the thing stolen, whether they are innocent strangers or guilty accomplices. It kills, unlike *hu dɔba*, which merely injures. As in *khidbɔa*, this form of *hu tsikɛla* is more or less public, for the villagers and neighbours must be previously informed, so that they will have an opportunity to confess. The other and more usual form of *hu tsikɛla* is directed against witches who are murderers and for that reason it is not public, for it is conceived that the witch might take counter measures or bribe a bad doctor to 'call back' the medicine. It may be sent to a definite person discovered by consultation with the bones, but the name of the person will not be mentioned in the spell lest the witch take counter measures. The spell is not in set terms, but it usually runs as follows: 'You Mufuba (the deceased in the grave whose death is to be avenged), we are to-day working on your grave. We call all those who killed you to follow you to the grave. We do not say only one of them. We mean all who are of them [the whole family]. Do you also call them, so that all of them should follow you.' 789 754

A death is sometimes ascribed by the bones to *hu tsikɛla*; and in one case the suicide of a girl, who was said to have bewitched her husband's people, was found to have been caused by such medicine. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is possible for a witch, who gets a doctor to *tsikɛla* for him, to be struck down by the medicine intended for another. It is curious that, though he knows that the medicine seeks out the true witch, he will risk such a procedure, but the explanation is that, though a doctor might be deceived—his bones confused by the witch's medicine (*khiɣalaŋaga*)—the medicine cannot be, and that the fatal effect of *hu tsikɛla* is diagnosed *ex post facto*. Thus in one case where a woman died, her sister went to a *tsikɛla* specialist; but subsequently the sister herself and some of her relatives died. When a great *mugɔme* was consulted, he said that the sister had sent *mutsikɛla* to people whom she hated and that, not finding the murderer there, it returned and struck down the sender. *Mutsikɛla* will continue its deadly effects unless 'stopped' by the doctor who sent it, though there is a medicine (*lesɛlo*) which may be eaten by all those who think they are in danger of vengeance-magic to neutralize its effects. It is recognised that the witch may retaliate in the case of vengeance-magic, though this is considered unusual and almost always ineffectual. 754

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754 There are many other specialized techniques, but for our purposes it
832 will suffice to refer briefly to love-magic. Love-medicine was not known
789 to the Lovedu, and its use is generally said by the older people to be witchcraft. Nevertheless, this magic, introduced from the towns, where, especially among Zulu and Xhosa, it is common, is used by many young men in Ulovedu to-day. One method, scarification of the forehead or use of medicine in your snuff, makes all the girls love you; blowing a medicated pipe of the *mukhure* shrub (*Ricinus sp.*) morning and evening, while calling the name of a certain girl, will make her come to you soon; and there are various other medicines. Love-magic to cause hysteria in girls is known as a Zulu practice, but is not used in Ulovedu. It would be looked upon as witchcraft.

754 These borderline methods, sometimes called witchcraft, sometimes
761 not, and often referred to as 'good' *vulsi*, bring us to a consideration of what constitutes *vulsi*. All witchcraft is socially disapproved, anti-social, but this criterion is not always sufficient to distinguish between witchcraft proper and practices bordering on witchcraft. Swearing at people, or scolding them violently, when the cause hardly justifies it, is liable to call down upon them forces which lead to death or misfortune to them or their family. It is called *lesola* and is reprehensible; but it is not *vulsi*; nor is *mahava*, illness caused by the ill-feeling of a father's sister or other relative. The conduct of a woman who, having had an abortion, causes her husband's death through neglecting to give him the medicine necessary to ward off such disaster is strongly disapproved of, but it is not witchcraft, even though it causes death.

Since many borderline practices are judged by their result and become witchcraft when they cause death, it might be argued that this criterion must be distinctive. It is, however, not enough; causing death to a husband by abortion is, as we have seen, not considered to be witchcraft, nor is the murderous *khigwegwa* a witch, even though he secretly kills people at night and sells parts of their body to doctors. Furthermore, many accusations of witchcraft have arisen where there has been no death, but only sickness or loss by lightning. The only difference between the killing by a *khigwegwa* and that by a witch lies in the method employed. The killer uses ordinary weapons; the witch kills by means of medicine or some peculiar powers not known to ordinary people. The distinguishing feature of all cases of witchcraft is the use or supposed use of medicine or witch-power. Intent is another feature by which one judges an action. Where a woman causes the death of a husband through abortion, her conduct is anti-social and the act is done in secret, but it differs from witchcraft proper in the absence of intent to kill. Fear of the consequences of adultery is the main force deterring her from correct behaviour; and it is argued that, if she really wishes to kill she need not employ so roundabout a method.

754 The conclusion we may draw is that, for an action to be witchcraft, it must satisfy, not one, but all the following three requirements: it must be disapproved of, anti-social; there must be an intent to kill or to harm; and it must be thought that either medicine or the mysterious forces of night-witchcraft have been used. Secrecy is not peculiar to witchcraft; it is

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not a distinguishing feature, because it is characteristic also of most magic: one does not want witches to know the steps taken to counteract them.

Only a very small proportion of cases of witchcraft lead to an open accusation and legal procedure; for going to a *mugome* involves a long, expensive journey, and *khoro* proceedings do not stop the witch, who may indeed redouble his efforts. In many cases of illness diagnosed as due to witchcraft there is nothing definite said about the person responsible; the disease is cured, the cure itself usually involving magic to 'send back' the illness to its owner. The verdict of the dice is necessarily vague. Usually only the totem and sex are given and the client himself, with his knowledge of his own friends and enemies, decides which of them is meant. The dice may indicate a totem to which none of the client's friends or enemies belong; but even if he thinks he can place the witch, one illness would hardly end in an accusation. Even death need not necessarily lead to an accusation; the grave may be treated to 'send back' death to the witch, but there are many cases in which there is neither accusation nor treatment of the grave.

To cause a witch to desist, the victim or some one on his behalf more often, after consulting a doctor privately for instructions, may resort to *hu chela*—that is, shout out an indefinite warning from his courtyard, if possible within earshot of the suspected witch. There is no fixed formula, but usually the gist of the warning is as follows: 'People of this village, I want you to know that you must leave my "person" alone; you must not kill him. If you kill him, I shall get a doctor to kill all your relatives. If my "person" has done any harm to you, I will pay for him; if he has done no harm, you have no right to make him ill. To-morrow I want my "person" to walk. If he dies, you will see.' In one case a girl suffered from epilepsy and her father, standing in the courtyard, shouted, 'The person who bewitched my daughter, I know him. I shall kill him with an axe. I speak not to the villages of Pheduli, Mungadani, and Ratshegu. I mean this village of ours.' In another case, when a snake appeared at the *vyali* initiation and a diviner had indicated two men as the culprits, an old woman, the herald at the capital, in the presence of the women in the courtyard, called out, 'The person who has sent these snakes will feel pain. The *goma* of the queen is not to be "tried" (*hu lega*).' Very often there is a threat that, if the sick person is not cured, the injured person will go to a *mugome*. The procedure is said to shame (*nyachwa*) the witch, or he may take fright and withdraw the witchcraft he has sent.

Sometimes, when you have a witch in the village, so that strengthening of the fence would be of no avail, you *fera* him, i.e. cause him to forget to act and be 'cool', just as you *fera* the spirits to keep them satisfied. More usually, however, you just move away and establish your own village somewhere else. Thus, when Rasodi's daughter lost her baby and the doctors all agreed that the husband's people were responsible (some said the husband's mother, others mentioned another relative), they quietly moved away, having been warned not to talk much about the removal, lest the witch got to know.

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754 683 787 Accusation of a specific person may lead to *khɔrɔ* proceedings,[1] which involve, as described elsewhere, the appointment of the 'ears', who receives a goat or 10s. from each party as well as provisions, a wager of a head of cattle, or £1 10s. or more, and payment, the vanquished eventually to reimburse the victor, of £1 10s. or more, as the fee of the *mugɔme*. Occasionally in practice, if accused does not demand to have his innocence proved, the accuser does not go to court and the matter is left. All victims of witchcraft do not act in the same manner. One man proceeds to a specific accusation the very first time he is harmed, another only if the same witch has been responsible for many evils; if the witch is a great rival or personal enemy, the victim more readily resorts to action, but a commoner, unless he is prepared to leave the district, will be careful to avoid accusing his district head or a relative of the queen. A victim never makes an accusation without previous private consultation with a number of doctors and often even a *mugɔme* as well, and the accusation is conveyed to the witch, either directly by the victim or indirectly by his intermediary, and usually in metaphorical language. In case of illness, the witch may be invited to 'come and *phasa* for our patient' or, in case of death, to 'come and shave us', duties which only special relatives can perform; or, more directly, he may be asked 'to come with us to consult the bones'. The accused will then demand to go to a *mugɔme* to clear his name; if he does nothing, but merely remains inactive, his accuser may proceed further and take the case to the *khɔrɔ*.

When proceeding to a smeller-out, the parties have no definite destination. They set out in a north-easterly direction, where *megɔme* abound, usually with the intention of going somewhere very far away. After a day or two, however, they grow tired, or the official witness complains of the heat, and they find some one nearer. The witness has on his person an object called *phitho* that has been given to him by the court or at the royal village. This the smeller-out has to name and find, and it is said that, unless, in addition, he is able to give the totem of every one in the party and clearly to distinguish between accuser, accused, and official witness, they will pass on to some one else. How far this is carried out in practice we shall see later. It is sometimes said by Europeans that smellers-out have spies who bring them the information necessary for their divining. This would, however, be impossible: not only do people come from all directions or tribes, sometimes as far distant as Mapulaneng beyond the Olifants River, but it would require an elaborate system of espionage that could hardly be kept secret from the people in the conditions that obtain in Bantu society. Moreover, the methods employed by smellers-out make such a system unnecessary. There is no doubt that *megɔme* are clever, and we have ourselves been amazed at the manner in which, under test conditions, a *mugɔme* was able to name and find an object hidden on our person. But it must be borne in mind that they use a trial-and-error technique based upon the responses of the audience. Of course, the presence of a European is always a disturbing factor, but in our experience, after the first few responses, the *mugɔme* begins to speak more and more loudly and quickly and a situation of free association of ideas and great suggestiveness arises. The consultants

[1] [Accusation of witchcraft, see Cat. 116, pp. 203–4. — Analyst]

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become less guarded and the *mugɔme*, skilled in his art, is able to draw 754
conclusions from their reactions. A good deal of vagueness is permissible: 683
the term *mukhalaga*, for example, can refer to a number of different 787
totems: *mukhalaga* proper, *mukhalaga munyai*, *mukhalaga ḍou* (elephant), and this applies also to other aspects of their divination. An actual example, albeit a case of theft, not witchcraft, will elucidate the methods employed.

Mudana accused Bodile, his half-brother's son, of stealing £9. The 787
case had been tried first at home, and then at the Native Commissioner's, where it had been dismissed owing to insufficient evidence. The parties decided to go to a smeller-out. On the second day of their journey, when they were resting under a tree to enable the official witness to take off his jacket, a small boy standing some way off said to them, 'There is a *mugɔme* over there.' He was a decoy watching the road to direct people to a diviner who had lately arrived and set up a temporary village of rough huts. Deciding that it was too hot to go further, the party followed the boy and sat down outside the village fence. A man approached them and, after ascertaining how much money they had to offer, showed them into an enclosure of old sacks. At the entrance stood the diviner himself, holding a stick under which the four of them were made to pass in single file. Diviners are said quite frequently to test their clients in some such manner; sometimes they are made to jump over a furrow and it is said the guilty man usually falls in.

When they had seated themselves on the ground, the diviner asked first of all for his money. The official witness handed him £1 5s., but he insisted on 10s. more, because, he said, it was a difficult case—one that had been much tried in other courts. Stick in hand, but without the use of any divining bones, the diviner began asking the party to respond (*hu vuma*). '*Ya vuma*,' they replied, and he proceeded with his chanting in a mixture of Sotho and Shangana-Tonga in sing-song phrases, at the end of which the clients had to assent. 'You have come from home on a matter', he began. Pointing to the official witness, he said, 'You have accused this boy (pointing to Bodile) of witchcraft. No. I'm making a mistake on purpose. You have not come for this reason.' Looking into a large shell, he continued, 'You have come on a different errand. You have come about money. The sum concerned is £30. No. It is £15. No. It is £10. The owner of the money sells hemp.' Continuing in this manner in short phrases, to which the party responded '*Ya vuma*,' and, suggesting first this, then that, he eventually said, 'I don't like to cause brothers by the same father to fight. Your quarrel is a vain one. The money was stolen by a woman of the Crocodile totem living near your village. She has not yet used the money.' Pointing to Bodile, he said, '*You*, why do you want to kill *him* [Mudana], and you [Mudana] be careful. They may kill you with medicines they have just bought.' Turning to the official witness, he demanded, 'Give me my *phitho* (hidden object). What kind of thing is this which is hidden from me? It is a snuff-box. No. It is a half-crown. No. It is a penny. No. It is European iron. If you think I am telling lies, take out of your left-hand pocket the thing which you have been given.' The official witness took out of

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787 his pocket the battery of a torch. He doubted the competence of a diviner who had been so vague about the nature of the object—'European iron' can be any metal object—but the main thing was that Bodile and Mudana were satisfied and so the party went home, relieved that it was an outsider who was found to be the culprit.

Objectively considered, this seance may appear naïve, but the parties, and even an outsider who was present, did not think so. There was no initial and formal identification of accuser, accused, and 'ears' which one expects from theoretical accounts; but forms and procedures are never set, and it is not unusual for these identifications to emerge later as the divination proceeds. It is by theoretical standards necessary that the *mugɔme*, as a test of his competence, should name the totem or other groups of the consultants, but in this case the parties did not even notice the omission, as they were satisfied on the main issue. The *mugɔme* erred somewhat as regards both the sum involved and the relationship of Mudana and Bodile; but the parties were impressed that he was only £1 out and, although they were not brothers, they were related through brothers. The wide connotation of terms and indefiniteness of conceptions lend themselves, as meanings and rigid categories in a European language cannot do, to manipulation by the *mugɔme* and ready acceptance by the parties of suggestions. In the *khɔrɔ*, the vanquished party often complains of the vague or incorrect indications as to totems and of other unsatisfactory features, but unless the 'ears' agrees, the *khɔrɔ* usually dismisses these objections, since, if he had really been dissatisfied, he would have demanded back the money from the *mugɔme* and proceeded to another. But it is necessary to add that the *mugɔme* often backs up his art with a very high-handed manner or behaviour. Some even beat witches that they have smelt out. It is usual for the diviner to shave one side of the head of the witch and to take from him his jacket or any other object of clothing he would like to have. To the accuser is given a buck's horn to blow on his way home as proof of his success and, when he enters the royal village to report, he is met with joyful trillings of women.

754 The attitude of people towards convicted witches depends largely upon the nature of the crime, but also upon the number of relatives of the injured party living in the neighbourhood. If he has harmed a number of people in the area, or if the injured party has many relatives to side with him, the witch may be forced by public opinion to leave the area. Malaji, who had caused the difficult birth and the death of the child of his lover, became very unpopular when the witchcraft had finally been attributed to him; from being one of the cheerful young bloods in the district, he became reserved and restrained, and shortly afterwards he left to work in town. But he was not ostracized by any one except the relatives of the injured woman and, when he returns, if we may judge from other cases, the whole matter will have blown over. On the whole, the attitude of the general public to a convicted witch is one of unconcern as long as his efforts have not been directed against them personally. People are accustomed to living in an atmosphere in which any one of their friends or relatives may turn out to be a witch. The atmosphere is

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illustrated in a proverb the sense of which is that you may be the unsuspecting victim of the witchcraft of your closest friend, or, more literally, Bɛlɛgwane, the enemy, does not care; [so intimate with him are you that] you eat with him, [yet] he is the foe that eats you (*Bɛlɛgwane mulala a khi vone; u la nayɔ, gi mulala was hu la wɛna*). And people chased away as witches from one area or tribe never have any difficulty in being accepted into another. 754

Considerations such as the return of cattle are often strong enough to deter a man from chasing away a wife who has bewitched some one in the village (he would never chase away a wife merely for bewitching outsiders). When once we asked a man why he kept a wife who had been found guilty of bewitching her fellow wife, he replied, 'She is my witch' (*gi mulɔi wa ga*). Being fond of her, he merely built her a separate village. Some people who have never been publicly accused of witchcraft are nevertheless known to be bad witches. In such cases, people may fear them and try to keep on good terms with them in order to avoid evil consequences.

One of the most fruitful studies in regard to witchcraft is the investigation of the relationship of the people who bewitch one another. Two main categories must be distinguished, viz. cases in which relatives bewitch one another and cases in which the evil is sent by non-relatives. The Lovedu maintain, and the opinion is borne out both by one's general impressions and by the facts, that witches injure mainly those with whom they are in close contact—that is, relatives and neighbours—and that it is difficult to bewitch a stranger. And it is remarkable that of fifty cases of witchcraft observed by us as they came before the *khɔrɔ* and given in the table below, 70 per cent. involve close relatives. Not all relatives are apt to bewitch one, but both men and women are equally liable to harm either men or women. A mother never, it is believed, bewitches her own children, and there is even a saying to the effect that a *mugɔme* who points out one's mother is not able to divine (*mugɔme u a tia vummahu a u khɔmi hu laula*); and, although brother and cattle-linked sister sometimes hate one another, openly as well as secretly, they cannot harm one another, it is said, because they would use 'the medicine bag of the [same] mother'. Similarly neither a son nor a daughter can bewitch the mother. 754 578

The most prolific single source of witchcraft is the conflict of co-wives (24 per cent. of all cases). Their relationship in the polygynous family is a difficult one; the houses are independent, not subservient to one another, yet they are in close contact, and the insistence upon compromises occasions many mental conflicts. Spouses also bewitch one another, but wives kill or injure their husbands more frequently than husbands kill their wives; it is said that a husband who has only one wife will never bewitch her, except perhaps among Christians, who can have only one wife. The conflict of spouses is an aspect of a wider institutional conflict, that between relatives-in-law. If they have irksome obligations towards one another, the society insists that their relationship shall be characterized by mutual respect and helpfulness and that their difficulties, especially *munywalo* difficulties, are to be resolved as far as possible by the methods and procedure of the *khɔrɔ*. These factors explain why, [595]

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754 578 despite the many sources of tension between them, the cases are not, as one might expect, overwhelmingly predominant: only 20 per cent. of the total given in our table are cases of wives or their relatives bewitching husbands or their relatives, and only 16 per cent. husbands or their relatives bewitching wives or their relatives.

What is even more arresting is the fact that easily aggrieved relatives who, as it is phrased, are 'very sensitive' and readily nurse grievances, never or rarely bewitch: such are cattle-linked brothers or sisters, father's sisters, fathers, father's brothers and grandparents. It is even clear from what we have already said that they are believed to have repressed complaints, but they cannot project as witchcraft the displeasures or misfortunes or failures upon those who must, but do not, respect and humour them. They can and do cause illness, but it is not by way of witchcraft, and the resolution of the conflict is by pardon and *hu phasa*, through the gods, not through *vulɔi*. In other words, witchcraft is a reflection, not of tensions as such, whether open or repressed, but of tensions within the framework of cultural mechanisms for avoiding their being projected as witchcraft. They must be studied in the whole configuration of institutions and social values: the permissible or approved remedies, the interposition of the hierarchy of age and rank between competing individuals, the compromises and reconciliations that are insisted upon, and the extent to which mental drives are conditioned to the cultural pattern or allowed outlets or are blocked by culturally stressed values.

The incidence of witchcraft between strangers is much more intelligible to us, because it arises in situations of conflict that are not very different from our own. But the percentage of these cases (30 per cent.), even when we include the 10 per cent. of cases between distant kin who are neighbours rather than relatives, shows how largely the social structure is built upon the kin.

754 578 595 The following table represents a very broad analysis of fifty cases of witchcraft that we observed as they came before the *khɔrɔ* and that may be simplified for statistical presentation:

Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (*a*) House or co-wife against house or co-wife	Co-wife	Co-wife	1	Jealousy about lovers; neglect by husband	
	Co-wife	Co-wife and child of co-wife	2	Jealousy about children and husband's attention	
	Co-wife	Child of co-wife	2	Disagreements about *munywalo*	

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (*a*) House or co-wife against house or co-wife—*cont.*	Co-wife and her mother	Co-wife's child	2	Favouritism of husband and other mixed motives	
	Inherited wife	Co-wife and her children	2	Use of cattle of one house by another and questions of prestige	
	Widow	Fellow widow's child	1	Property arrangements	
	Wife of brother	Wife of another brother	1	Complex jealousies	
	Son of co-wife	Chief son and his wife	1	Status and position	24
(*b*) Wife against husband	Wife	Husband	2	Friction, favouritism of other wives, position	
	Wife and/or wife's mother	Husband's adulterine child or lover	4	Sexual jealousy and neglect of wife	
	Wife	Husband's sister's child	1	Disagreement about marriage of children and *munywalo*	
	Wife	Husband's brother, his wife, or his child	2	Position, jealousy	
	Wife's mother	Husband's child	1	Disagreements	20

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
(*c*) Husband against wife	Husband	Wife	1	Pre-marital seduction and *munywalo* trouble	
	Husband	Wife's adulterine child	2	Husband impotent; sexual jealousy	
	Husband	Wife's sister	1	Husband jilted	
	Husband	Brother's son's wife and her mother	1	Revenge for misfortune (illness)	
	Husband	Wife's brother's daughter's husband	1	Wife's brother refused his daughter as wife to witch's son	
	Husband's mother	Wife		Unfaithfulness of wife	
	Husband's mother	Wife's sister	1	Wife's sister jilted witch	16
(*d*) Parent and own child	Son	Father	1	Son wished to oust father from position as district head	
	Father	Son	1	Son cohabited with young wife of father	6
	Father	Son's wife	1	Son cohabited with inherited wife of father	
(*e*) Uterine brothers and sisters	Elder sister	Younger sister	1	Younger sister jilted elder sister's husband	
	Sister (and mother)	Brother's child	1	Brother resents power of sister, and *munywalo* trouble	4
Total relatives					70

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
II. *Strangers* (*a*) Sexual conflicts	Girl	Lover	1	Lover jilted girl	
	Boy	Lover	1	Lover engaged to her cross-cousin	
	Adulterer	Married woman's child	2	Loss of fine and right to woman or child	
	Commoner (orphan)	Girl of noble birth	1	Refusal of marriage by parents who had adopted orphan	10
(*b*) Various conflicts	Man and his mother	Whole village	1	Status, loss of prestige and amenities	
	Woman	Distant male relative	1	Refusal to implement economic arrangement *re* partner-ploughing	
	Widow	Distant male relative	1	Indirect economic rivalries	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Stranger held cattle that came from witch as *munywalo*	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Envy of sewing machine acquired in town by neighbour	
	Man	Driver of car	1	Jealousy *re* privileges secured because he could drive car	
	Male friends	Man	1	Man's popularity with girls, owing to dancing ability, resented	
	Woman	Rival	1	Rivals for councillor's attention, sexual and otherwise	
	'Mother' of *khɔba*	*Khɔba* initiate	1	Initiate who is to marry cross-cousin wanted by witch as daughter-in-law	
	Shangana-Tonga	Lovedu man	1	Competition for job in town	20
Total strangers					30

It will take us too far afield to discuss the nature of the conflicts in detail in the various cases. But a few observations are perhaps necessary.

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754 578 Firstly, the cause of the conflict is not necessarily the one assigned by the parties, though the objective situation is often seen by others. Sometimes very trivial causes are given, but they have to be interpreted in their total setting. Secondly, as regards non-relatives, it is said that nobles are sometimes 'seen in the dice', but they are never publicly accused by mere commoners; it will be noticed that, on the other hand, there is one case of a noble accusing a commoner. Rich people who are not nobles enjoy no special immunity; unpleasant people, especially those who are quarrelsome, ambitious, or competitive, are often accused. Conflicts arise owing to close contacts, but may continue after the parties are separated, and witchcraft may be sent any distance, even as far as Johannesburg. Thirdly, the table does not give a number of types of cases; they are merely the cases that came before the court, many of them being dismissed as nonsense. Finally, although the motives are complicated in most of the cases, it is possible to say that jilted love or refusal of sexual advances is an important factor in about 32 per cent. of the cases recorded.

But we must not think of Freudian repressions, for sexual affairs are given recognition in the institution of *vudabu*. We must consider lovers' conflicts in the cultural setting. The sexual urge is not repressed, but the lover whose advances are rejected, though he has opportunities elsewhere, feels aggrieved. The girl, whose choice of a marital partner is limited, seeks extra-marital adventure, but it must be clandestine and occasions difficulties, and the situation between lover, husband, and wife is an uneasy one in which ill-feeling readily arises. The man who has a child by a lover has no institutional claim on that child, and he may be given away by the woman and have to pay a heavy fine, with the result that he is angered. There are also dangers in sexual intercourse and, if a man or woman suffers as a result, he may take revenge. In other words, the conflict situation must be ascribed, not to repressions, but to the incidents of the whole cultural system. Similar considerations apply whenever we analyse any of the other situations of conflict. It is far beyond the purpose of this book to undertake an analysis of the psychological aspects of these conflicts, but we would say that witchcraft is to be explained mainly, not by psycho-pathology, but by a relativistic psychology, arising out of the values and institutional configuration of the culture.

When a man is ill he will immediately, if he has an enemy or has had a quarrel, think of the possibility of witchcraft. This impulse is encouraged by the technique of the dice, which, while indicating the totem or sex of the witch, leaves the client to decide to whom among his friends, enemies, or relatives these must apply. A person with a grievance or an unpopular person is more likely than others to be thought responsible for harm. When some cattle of the queen, usually used by Mudumi for ploughing, were traded to a European, he complained most bitterly. A week later when lightning struck a storage enclosure in the royal village Mudumi was immediately suspect. Some of the cattle belonging to Setemane's inherited wife had been taken by the police, together with those of her husband, in settlement of a debt. She grumbled continuously about her loss. A year and a half later, on the death of a child of her fellow wife, she was suspected at once and, after consultation of the

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bones, her husband chased her away. A person with an unpleasant face very often earns the reputation of being a witch, even though nothing has been definitely attributed to him. A very old person, too, is apt to be thought a witch; his long life is attributed to his bartering the lives of younger relatives for his own. Just as people with grievances are suspected of witchcraft, so successful ones are thought to be specially liable to being bewitched—those who reap better crops than others, successful hunters, those favoured by their European masters. On the other hand, their success is also liable to be attributed to witchcraft on their part. 754 578

It has been said that witchcraft is a reflection of the intense hatreds of which the Bantu mind is capable. True, the European is appalled at the seriousness of the crimes attributed to witches for the most trivial reasons. The mother's brother's wife kills the child of her husband's sister who is living with them because he eats too much: 'he finishes our corn'; because a woman no longer loves him, a man not only causes intense suffering to her during a prolonged birth, but also kills the child; jealous of the large crop reaped by his neighbour, a man sends lightning to destroy his whole harvest. These things do not, however, present themselves in this way to the mind of the Lovedu. A Lovedu argues, not from real cause to effect in such matters, but from effect to cause, which makes it all appear in a somewhat different light. A child dies and he looks around him for a possible cause. He thinks of possible motives and enemies, but can find none. He consults the dice, which point to a woman of such-and-such a totem. The only one to answer this description is the mother's brother's wife. She happens to be known as ungenerous, perhaps she was one day heard to comment on having an extra mouth to feed. The misfortune is thus projected upon her: but it is not a psychopathic, it is an approved cultural escape technique or compensation. In cases of illness or death, people tend to seek the cause in the direction of traditional jealousies. A wife of the queen dies in childbirth. The cause cannot be a jilted lover, because she and the father of the child were on the best of terms. But he is a married man, and women are known through jealousy to cause difficult childbirth to the lovers of husbands. The death must have been caused by his wife (even though she lives miles away). Nothing is done in the matter; moreover, there is no general agreement in the verdicts of different doctors. Six months later a young girl in the village dies suddenly of blood poisoning; her mother is known to have had quarrels with the deceased wife of the queen. It is therefore generally rumoured that the grave must have been treated to 'send back' death and the death of the child indicates that her mother was the witch responsible. Nothing more is said of the lover's wife.

Witchcraft provides an explanation of the worst evils, such as sickness and death, that befall man; it is the principle of evil, the Bantu Satan. Illness caused naturally or by ancestors is generally curable; it is only witchcraft that really kills. It was at first a source of great amazement to us that a man could find it possible to live on socially good terms with some one who had killed his father, attending the same beer-parties and able to converse in friendly fashion. But unless the case has been publicly dealt with and the witch smelt out, the evidence is considered incomplete, 754 761 777

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754 in spite of one's own convictions. Moreover, it does not follow that
761 the witch has any evil designs upon one, though he has killed some
777 one else. Personal adjustments with the witch are more easily achieved than we might imagine; they are even imperative, partly because witchcraft is so universal a cause of death that in this respect the witch is almost part of the inevitable order of things, partly because, unless a confirmed witch, he is not regarded with horror by the whole society, and partly because he may be an influential and respected man.

Witchcraft serves also to explain the differential incidence of misfortune or death which we generally leave unexplained; but it is not often invoked in this respect. An old, dried-up tree stands in a field. People often rest beneath it at hoeing time. One day, while two children are sitting in its shade, it falls down and kills one of them. The Lovedu realize that dead trees are liable to fall down. But it has long been standing there. Why has it fallen just on that day and, moreover, at that particular time when the children were there? Further, what made it kill one, leaving the other unhurt? This combination of circumstances must, they feel, be due to some malignant controlling force directed against the child. Or, when people recover from a disease such as smallpox in one district, but succumb to it in another, the differential effect in the latter is ascribed to the work of a witch. The occasion for evoking witchcraft as an explanation in certain circumstances is an aspect of witchcraft, but it is not an explanation of its nature and psychological basis and only part of the explanation of its function.

754 Witchcraft is employed to account for unusual or anti-social behaviour.
828 Hysteria might be attributed either to witchcraft or possession. A girl ran away from her own puberty ceremony, an unheard-of and reprehensible action. Her relatives said she must have been bewitched into doing it, so, instead of being punished, she was given treatment to remove the baleful influence. Attributing certain types of anti-social action or the breaking of some customs to witchcraft makes it possible for the society to withstand successfully many blows; an issue is avoided and the transgressor made to feel himself incapable of such actions but for the witchcraft. We must also remember that abnormalities need not necessarily evoke comment. A person may be born an imbecile, but it may be considered quite normal. This is so because there is a place in the society for the weak-minded, sometimes even as jesters of the court. Personal defects or limitations do not, to the same extent as among us, disable a man from performance markedly below the standards required in spheres in which he can be useful; and thus there need not arise an intolerable situation from which escape is sought by psycho-pathological devices or the projection of one's misfortune as witchcraft upon others. Finally, to attribute death to witchcraft, and to set about taking steps to send it back to its owner, probably provides greater emotional satisfaction to the bereaved than the feeling of impotence in the face of an uncontrollable, natural force. The same kind of emotional need is answered when a man with a grievance feels that he can, in the last resort, employ medicine to gain his ends, and people not infrequently indirectly hint to their enemies the possibility of their doing so.

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CHAPTER XV

THE RAIN CULT

The rain-queen in her sphere of safeguarding the seasons—technique of transforming the clouds—evils that cause 'heat' and act as impediments to rain—'cooling' rites counteracting the 'heat' of the earth.

As the centre of the agricultural cycle, rain is the focus of many human interests; as the elixir of life, it is one of the ultimate bases of man's sense of security; and as a manifestation of celestial grace, it is the supreme justification of the divine right of the queen to rule. The queen is primarily not a ruler, but a rain-maker, and men rely for their security, not on regimentation, armies, and organization, but on the queen's power to make rain for the tribe and to withhold rain from its enemies. All ultimate reliances are based upon the magico-religious world, and rain-making and its cult are an important part of that world. The rain cult is not composed of a few magical passes made by the queen; it is a whole complex of institutions with ramifications through many aspects of tribal life. The cult is not confined to measures taken to secure rain in times of drought; its observances must be kept at all times and a good year involves as much care on the part of the queen as a bad one. 794 789 643

The chief actor in the rain cult is the queen. During life, she is not merely the Transformer of the Clouds, but she is regarded as the changer of the seasons and guarantor of their cyclic regularity; when she dies, the seasons are out of joint and drought is inevitable. Her very emotions affect the rain: if she is dissatisfied, angry, or sad, she cannot work well, and in 1934–5, when the first rains did not come till December, the drought was attributed to her being upset at her daughter's liaison with a commoner. Her rain-making is not confined to dramatic ceremonies in time of severe drought; it is conceived of as continuous care throughout the summer. Furthermore, the Lovedu do not attribute every fall of rain to some special activity or volition on the part of their queen, but rather believe that the queen exercises some general control or care which ensures a good season. 643 789 821

Such being the powers of the queen, she is the person to be approached when there is no rain, not only at the beginning of the season, but any time during the summer in a country in which three weeks' drought might ruin the maize crop. There are various ways of doing this. Great councillors or important relatives may approach the queen in person, saying, 'The people are crying,' and asking her to help them. When there was no rain, Mugwena, related to the queen through his mother, used to walk near the queen's hut complaining, in a voice calculated to reach the royal ears, that it was a bad thing for the chief to kill his people by withholding rain. When the first summer storm of 1937 opened with much lightning and thunder, the two chief councillors mentioned informally to the queen at beer that they hoped she would ward off wind and thunder and give them a good year. Heads of districts approach the queen (*hu lova*) with a gift, usually nowadays of £1 or £1 10s., and very often 643 789 535 821

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643 bring with them in addition dancing performers (*gɔsha*) to please her and
789 to evoke her pity at the sorrowful sight of people dancing in summer when
535 they ought to be ploughing. The movements of this dancing do not
821 differ from those of ordinary dancing, but the music consists of *lesugu* songs sung also at the annual harvest ceremony, on the death of important royal people, and at the girls' initiation 'school'.

643 The most renowned of all dancing for rain is the *legɔbathɛle*, a special
789 kind of *gɔsha*, the mourning dance of a section of Thɔvɔlɔ people living
535 under one of the district heads, Mavulana. It is more dignified, its move-
533 ments slower and more stately, and its drumming more subdued than in an
821 ordinary *gɔsha*. So lightly are the drums struck that the clear, silvery, varied tones of the reed pipes ring out like the peal of bells. Only two drums are used, and none but those who have lost at least one parent may perform, and it is begun in the dim light of the dawn before sunrise, when, after a short spell, it stops and is resumed later in the day. When some one person has greatly angered the queen, and drought is believed to be due to her displeasure on this account, the married women from all the villages in the royal neighbourhood assemble every morning after cooking to dance, singing, 'We are being killed on account of a bogyman in skins' (*re vulaiwa gi Madikadyana di vɛlɛvɛḑana*). Grandmothers nurse the babies and encourage the younger women with their trillings and dancing movements. The dust rises high and by sunset they are black with dirt and sweat; but next day and the next they come again, sometimes for as long as a week, till rain falls or continued drought makes it clear that some other cause is operating as well. The great hardship this dancing entails (for nursing mothers who perform have no time to feed their babies) is thought to melt the heart of the queen. Too much rain, as well as too little, is laid at the door of the queen. On one occasion, when it had rained almost incessantly for six weeks, the chief councillor said in the presence of the queen, 'Fat does not fill the pot' (*makhura a a ḑale bija*), meaning that there can be too much of a good thing—a hint to the queen to regulate things better.

643 There is no belief that is stronger in the tribe even to-day than that
789 in the power of the queen to transform the clouds. This does not, how-
821 ever, mean that they do not recognize the regularity of the seasons. People know that the month of February is generally the rainiest in the year; that the month *Morenane* (October), when the Southern Cross sets just before bedtime, is the time when the first rains are approaching, and no one would *lova* rain in winter any more than Europeans would organize a day of prayer for rain in that season. Yet if rain does not come at its proper time or the season is generally bad, it may be said, 'The queen has not changed the hoeing season [i.e. the year] nicely' (*a va fedula ledzema ha vutse*); for if the cycle of seasons is considered inevitable, whether the new year is brought in propitiously or otherwise is in the hands of the queen.

643 Though renowned as the greatest rain-maker in South Africa, Mujaji
791 never works alone. She always has a rain-doctor, of whom there are many in the tribe, to work with her. She chooses any renowned doctor, but may change him for another if people complain that the rain is bad—

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that is, insufficient or accompanied by too many thunderstorms. For these deficiencies, the queen herself is never blamed. The chief function of the doctor is to co-operate with the queen in some of the things she cannot do: he divines the causes of drought and discovers which forces are hindering the queen's power from taking effect; and, using his own medicines, he aids her in removing these causes and setting right what is wrong. The relation between rain-doctors and the queen is interesting. They are specialists in their art, which they have inherited from their fathers, and are even consulted independently by outside tribes. Khishidwa, the queen's own rain-doctor, is often called by Nwamitwa, the Shangana-Tonga chief, in time of drought, and Tshivulane, a Venda chief, comes, not to *lova* Mujaji, but to call Levea, a rain-doctor on a farm within her jurisdiction. Any payments they receive are their own. Yet these doctors themselves unreservedly state that in the last resort they are dependent on the queen: if she stays their hands, their powers will avail them nothing. It is said, 'If the chief holds the rain from falling, the doctor cannot cause rain' (*hi khosi a ga tswara bula hore e khi ne, Daga e ga se nese*). A rain-doctor sent by the queen to make rain for a Venda chief who came to *lova* once in our presence urged the chief councillor, 'Tell the queen not to hold my hands.' In addition to the chief's right-hand man in rain activities, there are certain lesser rain-doctors whom she employs as her messengers when outside tribes *lova* rain, for she would never dream of giving a suppliant medicine to take back with him. These messengers, though sent by the queen, are, strange as it seems to us, not given any medicine or charm to use in their rain-making. It is considered enough that they come from her, and their payment is the entertainment they receive at the foreign court.

What the queen does to transform the clouds and the exact nature of the objects and medicines associated with her work are enshrouded in the greatest secrecy. It is doubtful whether any one other than the queen herself is in possession of this secret, for it is bound up with the title and power to succeed to the throne. The secrets are always imparted to the successor just prior to the death of the chief, and on occasion in Lovedu traditional history the would-be usurper, to whom the secrets had not been entrusted, has been deposed in favour of the 'chosen' heir. The queen's rain medicines are kept in rough earthen pots (*mehago*) in a part of the village to which few have access. Some of their power is said to derive from a human skull in the rain-pot, and there are horns which are kept in a hut. When these rain-horns (*dinaga ja bula*) are placed on the ground, rain falls; when they are hung up, it clears up and is dry. The medicine in the rain-horns is said, when burnt, to produce smoke which rises up in the air to draw and to produce the clouds. The technique is not unlike *leshwava*, luck medicine, which when burnt draws customers to traders and touts. Associated with the rain cult are the *gomana* drums the beating of which in former times was believed to bring rain, but the true *gomana* ceremonies have not been held for about thirty years. The rain cult to-day is largely confined to observances connected with the queen and her medicines or charms (*dithugula*).

The chief ingredient of the rain-pots is the skin of the deceased chief

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643 and of important councillors who are her closest relatives: when a chief
789 dies the body is left for some days in the hut, so that, when it is rubbed in a certain way (*hu fɔrɔlwa*), the skin easily comes away. Other ingredients are fat of the scaly ant-eater (*khwara*), a royal animal which, when found, has always to be brought alive to the royal village, and parts of the kudu (*thɔlɔ*). The queen's rain-doctor told us that essential ingredients were sea-water, because it foams and froths (*hu pukula*), feathers of the lightning bird, white and black sea shells, and various roots and
[824] barks, chief among which is the stem of the *khadi* (*Adenia gumnifera*), a tough forest creeper that contains much water. *Khadi* stems are also used for sprinkling 'cooling' medicines and for tying the bodies of dead people. Whether the queen uses these ingredients, we cannot say. From time to time a black sheep is killed to give strength to the queen's rain medicines; it has to be washed with water which is afterwards poured into the rain pots, but it is said that such a sheep is merely a present-day substitute for a human being, usually a child, whose brains were used. Important district
[634] heads related to the chief also have their rain-pots. Every year in about August, at the command of the queen, such a district head collects certain roots and barks, knowledge of which he has received from his father, places them in his rain-pot, mixed with water that has been drawn by girls below the age of puberty, and stirs them up so that rain may be good that year. Rain-pots are great secrets and only after years of friendship were we privileged to see one: it was well hidden in the cleft of a rock and partly buried at the foot of a tree on the upper slopes of a hill where the owner's father had dwelt. The rain-pots of the queen we have not seen, and what regular measures she takes are not known for certain; but, since it is said, when there are good rains, that the queen has firmly laid the foundations (*hu thea*) of the year, it is not unlikely that she also stirs her medicines.

789 Great care has to be taken lest the rain-pots 'weaken' (*hu figchela*).
261 They have to be given (*hu lumiṣwa*, to cause to be bitten) the first green foods (*mutshatsha*) every year, kaffir water melon (*legwadzi*) mixed with other green foods being used for the purpose, and at the royal village no one cooks and eats the new summer relishes before this has been done. On this day possessed people or people who have epilepsy also eat medicine with the firstfruits, but ordinary people do not *luma*, and there are none of the public festivities of a semi-military character associated with the eating of the firstfruits among Swazi and Zulu. It is very important too that the first termites (*dinnṣwa*), which appear usually in December, just after the first good rains, should be given to the rain-pots. Termites are closely associated with rain: they always fly out of their nests just after the rain; in a dry year there are very few; and it is believed that sprinkling the antheap with rain medicine (*mufugo*) makes the ants come in great numbers. Termites for the rain-pots may not be gathered by married women or girls over the age of puberty, and in 1937, when some young girls carried the first termites to the queen, she gave the termites to the dogs, refusing to use ants that had been thus defiled. The giving of the first termites to the rain-pots is called *bulane*. An interesting case arose out of this practice in January, 1938, when certain people in Vuthudi

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by 789
the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told 261
that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen 643
can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if 789
they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of 766
rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figthɛla*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 821
'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, 754
spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering 766
(*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why [824]
witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *ɖɛre* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *hu pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts 821
of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, 527
after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khumɛla*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

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821 has been reached), and we were told that in the old days men of import-
527 ance used to come and condole with (*hu emela*) the chief on such a day, as though to sympathize with her in the frustration of her efforts. There are other holidays associated with rain. On the day after the first rain of the season has fallen no hoeing or fieldwork is to be done. Such a holiday is called *le-nkhi-nteme* (do not cut me), as if the earth, believed still to be hot, dislikes being broken up by the hoeing. Such a holiday is also observed after the rain charms have 'bitten' the new termites and first-fruits of the year and when, any time during the summer, rain falls after two of three weeks drought, it is called *muene* (guest or stranger) and the next day observed as a holiday, for one honours a guest.

766 Wrong burials which stop the rain are righted by the use of *mufugo*
821 medicine and the water obtained by squeezing the undigested stomach
789 contents (*muswane*) of a sheep down a hole made in the grave with a stick
842 and reaching the body. This is thought to disperse the 'wind' and cool the grave. The flesh of the sheep is eaten without salt. The conception is thus of a grave agitated by ghostly heat and wind, which may be 'laid' by 'cooling', or, as we might say, calming, in the treble sense often of pacifying [the ghost], modifying [the heat], and causing [the wind] to subside. *Mufugo*, the medicine so important in the removal of impediments to rain, has to be obtained from the queen and a specially appointed person is responsible for doling it out in bottles when needed. The office is not conceived to be hereditary, but it has been held by a Mudiga family for some time, being handed down by father to son. When the last official in charge of *mufugo* died, his son was an unmarried man too young for the responsibility of office. Some five years later (1938), when the queen decided that he should assume charge, he protested his youth, though he then had two children, fearing that after contact with the medicine he might forget to wash his hands before eating and thus be rendered impotent. In this he had the full support of his mother, who prevailed upon the queen to allow an older relative to undertake the work provisionally; but the present position is that, should this old man be away, the heir to the office will have to act. Whether *mufugo* is identical with the rain medicine of the rain-pots is not quite clear; but, whatever its ingredients may be, it is considered extremely dangerous, liable to rob men and women of their fertility, and great care is thus necessary when working with it.

789 Sometimes it is said that 'the country is not right' (*naha a e loge*) and
372 then there is a special ceremony in which all the fires in the country are put out with *mufugo*. No generally recognized set of circumstances lead up to such a line of action, nor is there any idea that the fires are defiled in any way. It is simply looked upon as a method of getting rain when there is drought, resorted to when the divining bones of the doctor declare it to be necessary. People sometimes say, 'Fires are put out to usher in a new year,' but this does not mean that putting out the fires is an annual ceremony, as it is, for instance, among the Pedi. The word 'year' must not be taken literally, just as it does not refer to an abstract period of time in the phrase, 'The year has been infected by *hu khuma*', when what is meant is that the rain charms have 'weakened' (*hu khoma*). In this ceremony

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which 789
the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, 372
when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of *mufugo* and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gummifera*) to every village [824]
in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used [842]
that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or groundnuts, which they eat in the *khɔrɔ*. Each married man in turn must give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s*. or a fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khɛthe*), anything may be given. Each boy must give 1*s*. or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine, took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water, which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps 821
have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the 769
close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the 782
queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khaḍa; sometimes it is Mugɔdɔ's sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery, instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lova* the queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lova*, 787
but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 643
'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the 789
queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it [redacted] show your care for the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case, no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but they have "weakened" (*hu fighɛla*) it. They want me to be troubled.' She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people themselves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft, had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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787 pleading, she relented and said, 'Find me a black sheep without blemish
643 [colour].' The first messenger they sent returned without success, but
789 two others were dispatched to scour the country and on the seventeenth one was found. Kheshidwa, the rain-doctor, was now called. Four days passed, but he did not come. Then the queen, angry at the delay, suggested that she should proceed with the ceremony alone. But this the councillors would not hear of; 'You might deviate from the procedure the bones indicate to be essential,' they said. On the fifth day, however, Kheshidwa arrived, explaining his delay as due to the number of medicines he had to find, and at dawn on February 23rd the ceremony took place.

643 A calabash containing *mufugo* was placed in a basket for the chief wife
789 of the queen's brother to carry, and a procession of most of the inmates of the royal village set out with the sheep. They stopped first at a clump of trees near the village, where lies Moyacudupi, a female relative by marriage to the queen on the mother's brother's side. When the queen ordered her chief councillor, as direct representative of the mother's brother's side, to begin, he uncorked the calabash and poured some of its contents over the grave, saying, 'Stop for us these winds and tribulations, that it may rain nicely. They say it is you people whose murmurings are impeding the rain.' His younger sister next took the calabash, praying in almost identical words, followed by the queen herself, who said, 'Aye, we say, stop for us all these *pukudi* [winds from wrong burials] that rain may fall and people find corn.' The people now respectfully greeted (*ku lusha*), repeating the praise of Muhale, the king of old, and, during the trillings that followed, the rain-doctor said, 'The frogs do not cry, sire. I do not hear them'; he may have meant that it was so dry that even the frogs were silent, but we do not know for certain.

The procession now proceeded to Maulwi, the sacred grove where are buried members of the royal family and the two last queens. At the grave of Mathukha, mother's brother to the queen and father of the chief councillor, they all sat down while the same procedure was gone through as at the other grave. When it was the queen's turn to pray, she took a small horn wrapped up in rags and placed it on the grave. Then, pouring from the calabash, she prayed: 'Do not continue to hold my arms; leave me to do my things, that rain may fall and people have corn. Tell one another, tell every single one, also the old woman [meaning Leakhali, her mother] and Mujaji, "huckster in the hut", who "casts away some and shares others with the vultures" [Mujaji I]. Do not continue leaving us to be burnt by the sun. As for our health, we are reasonably well; we are merely troubled by the poverty you have left us.' She poured out all the *mufugo*, turning the calabash upside down beside the horn, while the assembled company did obeisance and ululated. The sheep was slaughtered and skinned and small pieces, cut from various parts of the body, were placed in an earthen bowl while the doctor, sitting some distance away, began squeezing the stomach contents to separate the liquid from the more solid part. When he had finished, the chief councillor, his sister, and the queen placed the meat on the grave, telling the gods, 'We approach (*ku sumu*) you with this sheep.' The solid stomach contents

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were placed on the grave, the assembled people greeted and trilled as before, the queen took away her little horn from the grave, and they all departed, carrying the sheep to an open spot some distance from the grave. Here they kindled a large fire and began cooking the meat in two large pots, one containing the internal organs (*mala*) and head, which, on this occasion, are not to be eaten by women of child-bearing age. Normally *mala* of a slaughtered animal are the portion *par excellence* of the women. While the meat was cooking, the doctor took a potsherd containing the 'water' of the stomach contents, his medicine bags and a stick of *khadi* creeper, and proceeded alone to the grave. It is surmised that he must have made a hole in the grave to pour down the water and medicine.

Meanwhile the clouds which had been in the sky at dawn had thickened and, while the pots were still cooking, rain fell and extinguished the fires, which had to be rekindled. The meat was eaten on the spot by all present and just before they all departed the bones were collected, wrapped in the skin, and placed on the grave. Prior to this, however, the doctor had spoken seriously to the councillors to approach the chief about the *pukudi* in the valley below, where a woman who had died in childbirth had been buried 'in the open' without *mufugo*. Ten days later the doctor was called to set the matter right.

This sacrifice is exceedingly rare, but it illustrates well the significant and usual intermingling of religious with what we should call purely magical rites. Thus, as the prayer is offered, it is rain medicine, which works by magic, not beer, the food of the gods, that is poured. The royal grave is treated, not to propitiate the gods, but to constrain them, to keep them cool, so that they will be unable to stop the rain. The sheep is an offering to the gods, a tangible indication that men still 'care for' their ancestors, but the use of the stomach contents on the grave falls into the magical pattern. Another point worth mentioning is that the queen was only one of several officiators: even her divinity does not give her precedence over the nearest living descendants in approaching the complaining spirits.

It has been shown that a great variety of steps can be taken to procure rain, their nature depending upon what is believed to be causing the drought. If the queen herself is thought responsible, and this is usually believed to be the case in the first instance, then her subjects will *love* her with gifts or dances to excite her pity and to please her. If there have been wrong burials and rain taboos have been broken, these must be righted, while if the trouble comes from the ancestors, they must be placated. Sometimes one finds a combination of causes, but always it is the divining bones which decide what steps are to be taken. There are rain rites throughout the season, for not only may there be good rain in one area and not in another, but an inopportune period of drought in the best of seasons may have drastic effects on the crops. As an indication of the type of action taken in connexion with the rain cult in any one season, the following has been taken from our diary for the season 1937–8, by no means a very bad year, but one in which the rainfall was below the average:

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1937

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November 12th	A rain-doctor sent to make rain at Mtimkulu's village, a petty Shangana-Tonga chief to the north, who had sent messengers to *loea* a few days before.
November 14th	A thunderstorm, with very little rain, but a very strong wind, broke in the afternoon.
November 15th	Holiday observed to 'turn back' the rain which has been scattered by the wind.
November 23rd	Rain fell with much lightning, which struck at Khiobeni, one of the districts.
November 25th	There was a thunderstorm in which lightning struck at Khidommamathgka, a sub-area of the capital. The place was treated with medicine and in the evening soft rain fell, but not enough for ploughing.
December 2nd	Real set-in rain fell till the 3rd.
December 4th	Hoeing began.
December 8th	First termites brought, but given to dogs, as carried by girls above the age of puberty.
December 12th	First termites given to rain charms.
December 13th	Holiday.

1938

January	Period of drought.
January 23rd	Mukupi, an important woman district head, came to speak to the queen, as there had been no rain for three weeks. The sun beat down fiercely and the crops were beginning to shrivel up. Several other district heads came to *loea* with money.
February 11th	People were consulting doctors about the drought. Bones declared a sacrifice necessary. Councillors approached queen and messenger sent for a black sheep.
February 17th	Kheshidwa, the rain-doctor, called.
February 19th	District head at Muduveni (several farms, but an old area of tribe) came with £1 10s. to *loea*.
March 1st–4th	*Legobathele* dance for rain by the Thovolo.
February 22nd	Sacrifice at Maulwi. Some rain fell, but not very much.
March 2nd	Kheshidwa called to put right a grave. This was done on the 4th.
March 7th	Levaga, a district head from the north, came to *loea* with £2.
April 2nd	Rain fell.

241 821 Some beliefs associated with the cultivation of *njugo* beans are relevant to our present subject. Among the Lovedu this crop is not planted until the mealies, among which it grows, are 1 ft. high, but this is regarded as a practical measure to prevent injury to the mealies rather than as dictated by the belief, firmly rooted and still put into practice by tribes to the south and south-east of Uulovedu, that *njugo* beans planted too early impede the rain. Only some Lovedu have this belief and no one, as far as we know, acts upon it; nor do the Lovedu pull up the young plants when there is no rain, which the Phalaborwa do, as one Lovedu suggested, because the beans look like hailstones. The Lovedu also say, but again

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as if it were a foreign conception, that no *njugo* beans should be planted during the year following the death of a chief. The association of rain and *njugo* beans seem to belong to a culture complex coming from the south. 241 821

The insistence nowadays is upon studying culture change as if it were a phenomenon important only in its relation to European contacts, but there has always been and there still is culture change of a different and, as far as the Lovedu are concerned, more vital nature. Even in the rain cult there have been changes. In the reign of Mujaji II, when the father of Kheshidwa succeeded Ramafalo as rain-maker, he instituted *hu runa*, a new ceremony of medicating all hoes with *mufugo* before the hoeing of the queen's field of eleusine, a practice which has fallen into disuse with the recent abandonment of the queen's hillside field for one in the valley which can be ploughed. The breaking of taboos is not necessarily a reflection of the breakdown and decay of custom. Indeed, the technique of the rain cult was based on the assumption that taboos were broken. Breaches account for drought and the countervailing efficacy of the queen's measures explains her reputation and the confidence people have in her. Wrong burials are known to prevent rain, but, since people try to avoid the unpleasant publicity involved in getting *mufugo* for the burial of, say, an abortion or in burying it in a wet place, these wrong burials are always taking place. 789 821

Neither European contact nor Christianity has succeeded in breaking down the implicit belief of every member of the tribe in the power of the queen to make rain. True, no Christians take part in ceremonies for rain and some do not believe that such things as wrong burials affect rainfall; but they harmonize the new with the old faith by the rationalization that the queen makes rain with the help of God, for they have all seen and can cite corroborative evidence for the powers of the queen. That the queen herself is honest and genuinely believes not only in her own powers, but also in the outside influences that prevent her from achieving success, can be seen in the reply she gave to the messengers who came on February 19th, 1938, with £1 10s. from a one-time district head in her kingdom to beg for rain. 'Go,' she said, 'and tell the master of Muduveni that we are trying, but things will just not come right' (arrangements were being made for a sacrifice to the ancestors for rain). The money, however, was kept. 643 789

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CHAPTER XVI

TRIBAL TRAITS AND ATTITUDES

Harmonizing the bases of social security with outlets for personal expression—the role of beer—moderation as an ideal and in the spheres of sex and authority—preoccupation with the quest for health—attitudinal reaction to the Western world.

121 We have drawn a rough outline of Lovedu culture and have lightly sketched in some of the forms of its institutions. From this has emerged the shape and structure of the society. The picture is, of course, incomplete, but we may perhaps give it tone by filling into the forms the shades of movement and motivation, and character by adding the colour of traits and attitudes. We have to undertake this task without the many forms which we have not sketched at all and, far more serious, without the wider background of surrounding cultures which would throw our picture into true perspective. To make good these omissions at this stage is impossible; all we can do is to orientate ourselves from a few familiar principles which will guide us in presenting our picture of the traits and interests of the Lovedu. These are the principles of man's wish for security, for achievement and for recreation.

Man must feel free to act without undue fear and uncertainty, and society must so order its arrangements that its members feel safeguarded against threats to their welfare; hence we in European society have our insurance systems which reduce the risks of our ventures, our legal sanctions which ensure the fulfilment of our expectations, and our conception of a righteous providence which consoles us in the face of a ruthless fate. Man's striving towards self-expression and recognition must also be satisfied, and society cannot neglect to demarcate spheres for, and to reward, individual achievement, though this is no simple matter because the opportunities that stimulate must be co-ordinated with the stability and security by which men may calculate the probability of the success of their ventures. Man also craves for recreation, adventure, and change from the monotony of those activities that are necessary to keep body and soul together; and here again the avenues that society provides must be integrated with the requirements of security and self-expression. Each society handles and co-ordinates these themes in a different manner; in one society, for instance, achievement is defined in terms of wealth or of ousting a rival; in another, in terms of wisdom or co-operation with others. The manner in which any particular society defines or handles these themes determines the interests, aims, values, and attitudes of its members; and it is from this point of view that we shall attempt to portray the Lovedu.

241 Lovedu culture is diversified: it is not like a man motivated by a one-track mind, or a fanatic obsessed by a single overpowering mania. But among its many interests, agriculture takes the first place. More time and energy are given to agricultural than to any other activities; no competing interest will move man to neglect ploughing and reaping, and no

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other way of life can oust it from its general pre-eminent position. The 241
man or woman who is in need of a pot or other article in the busy agricultural season vainly places an order with a craftsman, and 'He who takes a journey in spring must transact all his affairs' (i.e. not only where he goes, but also on the way), for he will not be able to pass by again during that season.

Agriculture provides the immediate security of the people, but in turn 241
it relies upon the life-giving rain, the power to make which has been 643
projected upon the queen. The queen is thus the foundation stone of the 182
security of the cultural structure. Her rain-making powers safeguard not only agriculture against the caprices of nature, but the whole country against the attacks of its enemies. The queen is more than that: the method of supplicating for rain has merged with the mechanisms of the social structure and has constructed the bonds with the districts, thus, despite political decentralization, securing the unity of the tribe. And, finally, the elevation of a woman to this exalted position has strengthened the status of women and their important role in the society and has emphasized the virtue of feminine qualities. But the queen is not conceived to be intimately linked with everything in the culture: her position in the *khɔrɔ* of the men is weakly institutionalized, she has no immediate contact with the European administration to the interferences of which her powers are doubly vulnerable, and the welfare of the cattle elsewhere, as among the Maḍala and Xananwa, ritually brought into relation with the chief, is outside her province.

As rain-maker, the queen controls half the great cosmic forces. Magic 643
may be invoked, the gods propitiated, in the interests and for the ends of 789
individuals, but ultimately these interests and ends and the destiny of the society depend upon the mediation and will of the queen. Man's sense of security in the face of personal misfortunes can be re-established by magic or religion, but the orderliness of cosmic laws is guaranteed only by the relationship of the queen with the supernatural. These laws are inscrutable, but the procedures for arousing pity in the heart of a human queen or for appeasing her anger are intelligible; and thus man can have confidence in undertaking his tasks. Moreover, he need not and must not resort to magic in his major economic activities, for he can and must rely upon the queen. Since the final justification of the pivotal position of the queen is her divinity, garden magic is conceived to be disruptive, like witchcraft: it competes with the power of the queen. One consequence of this conception is that success or failure in subsistence activities is regarded as immediately dependent upon industry, the application of practical knowledge and suitable materials, and that he who uses garden magic is a thief or a witch.

In most neighbouring tribes there is some public treatment of the 241
seeds before they are sown, or the hoes and ploughs are smeared with 789
medicine obtained from the chief: among highveld Sotho such as the Xananwa and Moletshe, there is even a special hut for storing the sacred seed, a few grains of which are handed to each householder at sowing time, and in this hut, which is associated with the *gɔma* drums and with fertility in man, girls reaching puberty are isolated and newly married

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241 couples sleep for the first few nights. Among the Lovedu these practices
789 have no counterpart. Given rain, what is necessary to make the crops prosper is work and good soil, not medicine, and as a result one receives the impression of a practical attitude, not only to agriculture, but, by extension, also to most economic activities. But success both in hunting and in pastoral activities to some extent depends upon the use of magic, although by comparison with the Nguni and Tswana the cattle cult is very much attenuated.

461 Thrift and industry are regarded as virtues. It is the hard-working bride who is sought after, while the most eligible bridegrooms are the *dibuḓu*, those who by industry have filled their grain pits. But what is valued is not just work; it is work to attain self-sufficiency, that will make one independent, rather than work which places one in a subservient position. Even, as they phrase it, 'In work for the chief, it is only the fool who kills himself'. Hard work must not be thought of in terms of our conceptions, for the outlook of the Lovedu is far less dominated by intensive striving and deep concentration and more by care-free, easy-going standards than ours. Work has dignity, for the maxim, 'It is not the gift-pumpkin [but the produce of one's own garden] that is juicy', is meant, not to deprecate the gift, but to foster pride in the products of one's labour; it is a tenet appropriately urged when the clothes which a youth displays have been acquired, not by his own efforts, but as a present from his parents. Work is accorded recognition: the child who begins herding is said also to begin to deserve the food he gets. Work excuses failures and losses, for as they say, 'The one who loses cattle is the one who herds them', or, more generally, 'The one who breaks is the one who works'. On the other hand, there is scorn of indolence in the proverb, 'The sluggard has no locusts even if they sleep in his courtyard', and a warning in 'He who sits with staring eye-balls [idly] will die, but he who scratches for food [cultivates assiduously] will live'. Considering the craving for beer, it is almost heroic for a man, when refused this elixir of life, to console himself with the thought that 'He who stints me is he who helps me' [because I shall better be able to attend to my work]. But the work that is honoured and considered most congenial is work in situations in which, as in the work party, the reciprocities are fundamental.

643 The weakness of the queen as a woman is also her strength and the
648 source of the prestige of the tribe. Her foreign policy is appeasement, not war; for, as they phrase it, 'The queen does not fight'. Reciprocity is the basis of her relations with her district heads, reconciliation the method of settling difficulties. Appeasement, one of the great values in the society, harmonizes with, supports, and is in turn supported by the reliance of the whole social structure upon compromise. This value and the traits corresponding to it interpenetrate every aspect of culture and of life. The hard régime of the initiation 'school' has been softened: there is no need to direct its procedures towards hardening the youth or instilling manly courage, and military discipline and regimentation are of little or no importance. Diplomacy works hand in hand with the
157 methods of the *khɔrɔ* and of reconciliation (*hu khumɛlwa*), but it also

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strengthens the tendency towards cunning and duplicity (which safe- 157
guard the secrecy of the rain charms) and has given rise to the impression among Europeans that the Lovedu are cowardly and deceitful, lacking the manly qualities of their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga. Foolish valour is discredited, for 'It is at the home of the coward that the porridge bowl is not thrown away': he lives to eat another day. The prestige of a 562
queen as ruler also maintains the high status of women in a patrilineal society. Nowhere else are so many women heads of districts or in such important political positions. Women own cattle, have wives and may aspire to headship of large villages; and in the social system the main forces are oriented from the pivotal position of the cattle-linked sister. A wife or mother is queen of her establishment, as its old Khilovedu name, *mulago*, indicates: *hu laga* means to control like a leader, while *le lago* describes the excessive control of some overwatchful kraal heads.

Agriculture is not important as a field of achievement, for stores 556
cannot be accumulated; immoderate success is suspect and a man cannot 555
establish or alter his status by economic means. 'Yours is what you eat; what you set aside is another's', means both that expending energy upon accumulating goods is lack of balance and that the 'haves' cannot be ungenerous to the 'have-nots'. Nor is the royal complex of institutions, except in so far as it interpenetrates the social system, a field of achievement for ordinary men. It is the social system which, besides being one of the great pillars of security, provides the scheme in which man seeks self-expression and recognition. There are wide avenues of achievement for men, especially in the *khɔrɔ*, and women may aspire to influence within the *munyɩoalo* complex and its 'houses'. There are other fields of achievement: men may find satisfaction in the circle of the huts of their wives, women in spirit possession, and both men and women may become doctors, district heads, craftsmen, or story-tellers, while the adventurous may seek expression in the fantasy of manipulating the forces of witchcraft.

But all these avenues are available only within the arrangements of the 181
social structure, which on the whole are designed to eliminate competition 692
and to reward co-operation. The activities of the *khɔrɔ*, in which men seek and display their highest self-expression, throw into bold relief the qualities and traits that are most esteemed in the society: mature wisdom, appeasement, reliance, not on force, but on agreement, and confidence in the effective operation of the long-run reciprocities of the social system. The task of the *khɔrɔ*, the most honourable and most arduous of all tasks, is successfully achieved only if the disputants can be guided towards reconciliation and acceptable compromises. Certainty—the idol of security set up by our aggressive society, the fetish worshipped by legalistic practitioners and the obsession impelling our courts to adjudicate upon conflicting rights according to strict law—is not a feature of the *khɔrɔ*. The *khɔrɔ* is oblivious of the fear that hard cases will make bad law, for it need not, as we do, steel itself against tenderness for the hardship of the unwitting offender, lest exceptions upset the certainty of the law and that elegant symmetry which, as we conceive, guarantees security. In

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the *khɔrɔ* the exigencies of personal adjustments may overrule the decrees of the law. In the setting of the *khɔrɔ* we thus see emphasis upon compromise and informality, faith in muddling through rather than in meticulous certainty, and reliance upon the pressure of the social reciprocities, not upon the sanctions of force. We may, in the context of European society, call them care-free standards, but that is to fail to see their place among the Lovedu.

These characteristics are faithful reflections of what one finds in the society and what is proper to the social structure as a whole. This structure provides the pattern of long-run reciprocities which, without the support of sanctions of force, ensures mutuality and co-operation. The reciprocities are motivated by inevitable necessity: 'The well-doer does well unto the well-doer; it is only his despoiler that the despoiler despoils'. Side by side with insistence upon give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as strenuously striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. Co-operation is essential to life and its tasks, for, says the proverb, 'One leg cannot dance a *gɔsha*'.

It is striking how the culture by re-interpretation prevents the struggle apparently inherent in the objective situation, such as when there are limited prizes or resources. The Reserve is overcrowded, the population presses hard upon the natural resources, and land is scarce; yet the people act as if the old abundance of land still prevails. They attribute ordinary shortages, not to scarcity of land, but to the indolence of the modern generation, thus rephrasing their difficulties in a manner which is congruous with social values, reduces the possibility of competition and permits of the resolution of the difficulties by human effort. And, generally speaking, economic resources and especially the *munywalo* cattle exchanges cannot be manipulated to acquire wealth or status or position. There is no special prestige attached to possessions and no socio-economic stratification of classes; for a great man, whether he be poor or rich, is first and foremost a royal relative, and the purpose of economic activities is self-sufficiency and independence. What particularly struck us was the absence of competition in craftsmanship: we have often seen one potter appraising the pots of another; we have always found it useless to urge expedition upon one worker by hinting that otherwise we would place our order with another; and it seemed to make little difference that the money was badly needed for tax purposes. Lucrative trade, calculation instead of mutuality in the work party, and display, both of possessions and of personality, are intensely disliked.

To the same pattern of values as non-competitiveness belong the disinclination to make comparisons and the aspiration towards equality with others. The role of these attitudes is not merely economic. The former reflects lack of interest in analysis as well as the absence of graduated yardsticks for comparing quantities and performances. Linguistic devices for expressing comparison—adjectives have no comparative or superlative forms—can hardly cope with our distinctions. It

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is very difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things we quite naturally compare, such as objects of craftsmanship, achievements of individuals, or other elements of culture. They do not share our interest in analysing out parts of a culture complex in order to compare them, and they generally regard the complexes—for instance, two different types of dance—as wholes incommensurable with one another. Of course, they do compare things, but as regards economic goods they are chiefly concerned to be favoured equally with others. 'What are you stinting me of?' is a common phrase implying, 'Am I not, equally with others, entitled to share in your generosity?' A child, asking us for sweets, often says, 'Give me *also*', for he is begging for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors, the prayer is quite often phrased in such terms as 'Give us *also*' or 'Let us have health *like others*'. When a son had just been initiated as a doctor, his father prayed simply, 'Let him also be able to heal nicely,' and when a son was ill in town, the words, despite the competitiveness of town conditions, were 'We say, let him be "cool", Mother, and in his work let him be like others.' To stress, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with, or greater than that of, others is evidently improper. |8|

Competition is not always eliminated. Doctors are not conceived to be rivals for a limited clientele, but they are said to 'try' one another: cultural definition diverts attention from the objective social situation of a limited number of customers, in which competition is discouraged, to the magical sphere, in which the fantasy of competitive strife is permitted. But the most striking arrangement that limits competition is the socially recognized, albeit not rigidly prescribed, hierarchy which defines men's status according to seniority or rank. 'Robes may be passed on [to strangers], never royal rank'; or, again, 'What becomes worn by age is clothes, not noble rank', because a nobleman can never lose caste or position. Younger brothers are taught to defer to their elder brothers, and in spite of displacements of district heads, it is hardly conceivable that commoners can oust royal relatives. Where the rivalry is fiercest, as among councillors at the capital, it is part of an institutional conflict and may not be openly displayed.

Dancing and music relieve the monotony of life, there is adventure in illegitimate sex relations and in the outlawed activity of witchcraft, but it is beer which provides the predominant recreation. Both beer and dancing belong to the co-operative, reciprocity pattern, whereas witchcraft is essentially competitive and anti-social. Unlike the Shangana-Tonga, the Lovedu dislike display in dancing, except in the esoteric dancing of initiation and the individualistic dancing of adherents of the alien cult of possession. Dancing, like beer, has other than recreational significance, and it is the manner in which beer has been integrated with diverse aspects of the culture that we may profitably consider. [535]

Beer is the humanly satisfying element, even the justification of many actions; it is a recognized means of maintaining prestige and hence of achievement; and, as the medium of goodwill exchanges, it also subserves security. No occasion, whether social or ritual or religious or economic, |8| 273

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181 is complete without beer. During some seasons of the year, people are
273 in a perpetual state of exhilaration: some are singing or gossiping near the beer pots; some are expectantly watching their concoctions mature; and the rest are recovering from the last beer drink. Drunkenness is deprecated, but drink induces a state in which behaviour otherwise frowned upon is tolerantly regarded. Beer parties should be orderly, for they are occasions when some of the restraints of life may be relaxed and when jealousies and dissensions, normally under control, may rise to the surface. Though ostentation, even self-praise, is allowed in states of exhilaration, beer must be drunk with decorum; it should be lingered over, not bolted in haste.

181 A multitude of values centre round beer. It is a nourishing food, taking
273 the place of meat feasts elsewhere; it is also the food of the gods. Beer is so
574 great an attraction that it would be sheer lack of balance to keep one's appointments, to attend to other business, or to be worried by the passage of time if a beer party is imminent or in progress. A man's reputation for generosity depends upon his giving a beer party occasionally, although the entertainment is invariably in connexion with some definite purpose, economic, ritual, or religious. Beer is the medium of goodwill exchanges between relatives-in-law and between neighbours; and, as belonging to this context, the tributary beer from the districts to the queen is transformed from a burden to a pleasure. Beer is at the basis of the group of
[571] *valejana* (literally, those who eat together), composed largely of kin and neighbours who often co-operate in economic activities; this group cuts across the lines of the district and includes even such alien elements as Shangana-Tonga; and the main obligation of its members is to call fellow members to any beer that is available. Reconciliations are effected by beer, which also 'opens the way for the mother-in-law'. All the essential reciprocities are maintained by beer: a man returns a borrowed article with beer; a family doctor, instead of being paid for his services, expects to be called to the family beer; and in the work party beer removes labour from the category of subservience to that of mutuality. With beer one thanks, but with money one pays.

181 None of the interests that we have considered are intensive, and none of the striving, whether for security, achievement, or recreation, is concentrated. The diverse ideals and achievements that are permitted in social arrangements enrich personality and encourage the qualities of balance and wisdom; and the insistence upon a reciprocity which is not motivated by distrust, conditions mutual helpfulness and suppresses aggressiveness and display. An important clue to Lovedu *Weltanschauung* is their attitude to what may be considered to be ultimate power, the power through which the final goals of life and security can be attained. Such power is sought, not in privations, tortures, visions, and self-oblivion, but in normality, equanimity and maturity; it is derived, not from breaking the ordinary bounds of experience to escape to another world and from transcending the limits of the senses, but from manipulating mundane forces and from identification with nature. The Lovedu do not compel cosmic laws by the power of ecstatic states or trances; they bend these laws to their purposes by supplicating the queen and

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XV. BEER AS A SOCIAL STIMULANT

(*a*) BEER BEING CARRIED TO THE QUEEN

(*b*) A BEER PARTY

[facing p. 288]

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XVI. RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

(*a*) AT THE LILY SHRINE

(*b*) A TYPICAL LOUEDU SHRINE

[facing p. 289]

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moving her to pity and by 'cooling' the heat of the earth and the anger |81| of the ancestors. Frenzy and excess are outlawed, moderation and balance are honoured. They have little conception of the Buddhistic Nirvana or annihilation of human existence, of the fanaticism and fatalism of the soldiers of Allah, or even of Western concentration and intensive striving. From the point of view of our values, the Lovedu are Laodicean, 'lukewarm, neither hot nor cold', happy-go-lucky. They are always saying that they will 'try', never that they must succeed. But there is nothing intensive about their striving. A man faced with a difficulty is always advised to 'persevere', but that does not imply our grim determination, being more like the leisurely manner in which they set about all their tasks.

This theme permeates every aspect of the culture. In the boys' circumcision the object is to break the child of his wildness and lack of balance, and the purpose is achieved, not by excessive tortures and privations, but by the mature guidance of the old men. Neither strength nor stoicism are much made of, and the virtues inculcated are balance and self-sufficiency. The Lovedu tolerate ostentation only on occasions appropriate to exhilaration, quite unlike even such nearly related tribes as the Maḍala and Phalaborwa, who have institutionalized boasting displays by those famed as hunters or warriors. In the field of the [785] magico-religious, fastings and visions do not figure, except among the possessed and the smellers-out, the latter always foreigners, the former a recent introduction. Possession in its Lovedu context has been shorn of its paranoic elements, its exaggerated trances, and its inception in a mental cataclysm. Cataleptic seizures do not serve as inductions to the super- [828] natural as among the Nguni, for fits are due to witchcraft, and, unlike the smeller-out, who is a Shangana-Ṭonga and works by insight and exaggerated procedures, the Lovedu doctor divines by his craft and acquires power by learning and experience. Prayer is not an emotional |81| outpouring of the heart, but a communication as between man and man. |152 Dissension in her country upsets, and anger in her heart inhibits, the power of the queen. Spells are not characterized by intensity or malevolence; they are often merely directions to the medicine to bring about justice or to restore the balance. Even at a death or burial, there must be no display of distress, no undue weeping; both the dying and the survivors resign themselves with a calmness that is the admiration of Europeans who know the Lovedu well. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to injure her next child; Mputa, now thirty years of age, was born a cripple, it is said, because his mother, Makwada, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. We have never seen weeping at a funeral, and the property of the deceased is not so contaminated that it has to be destroyed, though in the midst of the Lovedu the Shangana-Ṭonga phrase death as a terror situation, even pulling down the hut of the deceased and removing from his village. Suicide is an escape, intelligible enough when a man is insane or (in the old days) has been condemned to death as a witch; but otherwise it is attributed to witchcraft, not to frustration.

In the method by which the themes of both sex and authority are |81| handled there is the same aversion from excess or ostentation. The Lovedu 831

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181 are not sex-ridden; it is we who, by outlawing the impulses, which we
831 subtly stimulate in our romantic ideals, our literature, music, and art in general, create for ourselves neuroses and psychoses, maladjustments and perversions. The Lovedu have no problems of sexual adjustment or compatibility: their attitude is a matter-of-fact one. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of excessive promiscuity, they learn from their proverb that 'A woman's pubes may break up the family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are wholly undeveloped. In ritual, sex is symbolized to some extent, but only as an aspect of fertility, not as a sensual pleasure, while obscenity is inconspicuous and must sometimes be rationalized, as if it were questionable even under the auspices of the ritual. The fertility theme is itself pushed far back, so that it is unrecognizable in the symbolic background.

[838] The Lovedu are innocent of Lesbian practices. They are also revolted by what they believe the Shangana-Ṭonga in their midst tolerate—namely, the marriage of immature girls to old men, who they say sometimes manually enlarge the vagina of these girls; and they regard as disgusting that extreme measure of Shangana-Ṭonga women, who in impotent rage against a man may display their genitalia. Yet the Lovedu are not unsexed; modern conditions are making nubile girls breast-conscious, so that they are beginning to wear attenuated bodices; young men admit to being aroused by the sight of the inner, smooth surfaces of women's thighs; and significantly the common word for the female sexual organs is *vadimoni* (place of the gods) or, among old women, *khitugulɔ* (a charm or object made sacred by association with the gods), and for the penis, *baḍa ya mutse* (staff of the village). In the one case of exhibitionism we
[839] saw tried before the *khɔrɔ*, the culprit, a man, was dealt with tolerantly as if he were an irresponsible madman; masturbation among children is looked upon as 'playing with' the sexual organs, and among boys it is indulged in less for its sexual satisfaction than to prove to their mates that they have reached maturity. The Lovedu do not suffer from guilt complexes because sex is not a temptation to be resisted by painful effort of will.

181 Again, within the family there is little of that assertion of authority that among us leads to the development of an Oedipus complex. One finds neither stern paternal authority nor fierce resentments and compensatory day-dreaming among children. In the *khɔrɔ* authority is distributed, in the work party dominance is resented. There are no institutions that foster the development of strong personalities. Recognition is not given to supermen, and there are no great heroes in Lovedu history. The precocious child is a potential witch and the authoritative councillor is liable to be regarded as intoxicated. One day the great councillor of the queen conducted the proceedings of the *khɔrɔ* in what appeared to us to be an expeditious manner, taking command of them, silencing irrelevancies, and crisply announcing his decisions. We could not help remarking upon the masterful exhibition, the order and efficiency, but our remarks caused great surprise and we were told that only a drunken man could have been guilty of the ignominious display. Modesty, not arrogance, and dignity, not assertion, are great virtues.

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In the Lovedu configuration of values, moderation is allied to toleration of differences. The Lovedu do not attach much importance to precision and punctuality, rigid procedures and meticulous fulfilment of promises. Time is not valued and the word for slowness or absence of hurry is the same as that for goodness or moral virtue (*vuya*); the only way to ask a man to go slowly is to ask him to go in a good manner (*ga vuya*). Time is not the first consideration, for most actions can, within certain limits, be performed to-morrow as well as to-day. 'The far-off well causes thirst', they say, implying that one should drink [beer] where one can and not rigidly pursue some distant goal; the saying is an appraisal of opportunism as against inflexible purposes. Interest very rarely centres in exact forms, word-perfect formulas, or the precise execution of a rite. Prayers and spells are extempore, communications with the ancestors are often disturbed by gossip and intrusions, and consultation of a doctor about questions of life and death may be interrupted by all manner of irrelevancies. In the *khɔrɔ* the procedure does not rely upon set forms; there is toleration even of the differences of customs and laws in the districts; and great deviations from the norm are possible if people agree. An actual performance of a rite differs widely from the ideal description given by an informant. The important thing is always the broad pattern, the underlying spirit, not the exact form, the letter of the law; and magical power is hardly ever derived from a precise unfolding of a rite or adherence to meticulous details. The most highly formalized aspect of the culture is the *digɔma* complex, where we seem to see the remnants of a highly ceremonious outlook upon life, which was characterized by secret societies, masked gods, and symbolic objects, and by esoteric mysteries enmeshed in fixed forms and calendric observances. The obscure symbolism of the drum cult is inscrutable, but its dramatic interest keeps it alive, even if the power of its mysteries and mummeries appears to challenge the prerogatives of the queen.

Toleration of variations is necessary among the Lovedu to effect the incorporation and willing co-operation of so many divergent elements, especially in view of the fact that the ruling group has neither the means nor the inclination to impose its will by force; it is also implied in the autonomy of the districts and necessitates the elaboration of the links which overcome the weaknesses of decentralization. Variability adds to the scope of individual expression, permitting of the realization of very different temperaments and avoiding the dangers of repression. This is so because individuality will have, within the limits of the pattern, great play, not only in specific situations, such as rites and ceremonies in which the forms are not rigid, the roles of persons not fixed, and the precedences and procedures not invariable, but also in whole societies in which wide expanses of culture are not externalized in conventions or ceremonial. This is true of specific Lovedu rites, ceremonies, and institutions, as well as of Lovedu culture as a whole. Another aspect of the idea that man has many potentialities and many ways of realizing them is expressed in the saying, 'Man is an elephant; he does not eat one [kind of] plant only'—that is, he should try many things.

The socially stressed Lovedu values and the social arrangements are,

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181 of course, not congenial to every one, and frustrations occur; but the society provides for procedures whereby serious frustration is minimized. Thus the loss to one family of a murdered man is solaced by replacing him from the family of the murderer and building up permanent marriage and *munywalo* links between the two families. Tolerance of variations harmonizes with the insistence upon compromises, and in the setting of the culture it does not create serious problems of instability and insecurity. Security is provided by the integration and coherence of the dominant motivations and interests, the long-run reciprocities of the social system, and the unshakable confidence in the powers of the queen. At the same time the predictability necessary for stability is of a different order from that of our social arrangements; and it is measured very largely by the spirit and the willingness and attitude of people.

181 Conformity is not secured by external sanctions of force and only to a
626 remarkably small degree by the ancestors. Nor are people so delicately conditioned to the values of the society that they spontaneously react to conscience. The internal sanctions are only moderately developed and there is no undue sensitiveness to shame or guilt, ridicule or abuse. An offender is not cast out; and a witch, generally speaking, is not ostracized. Over-sensitiveness to rebuffs, even in delicate situations such as when a man begs the favour of joining a beer drink, is deprecated, for, as they say, 'To chase a guinea-fowl [the beggar] is to cause it to go where it can scratch for food', so that it is foolish to feel crestfallen when the remedy is to pass on and seek beer where you will be well received. Nor should a man be sensitively timid or unnecessarily diffident: 'He who feels cold need not be shown the fire'; one may ask for favours and should not feel injured if refused; and there is no disgrace in begging for whatever one needs. Indeed, just as 'An ant bearing a burden cannot crawl under dry wood' (that is, things that will conceal him), so a man who has of the good things of life cannot hope to escape sharing with others who may legitimately beg some of them. Europeans often interpret these traits as obtuseness, shameless beggary, insensitiveness to high ideals, and even insolence.

The Lovedu are sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system, and these forces are set into motion against a man when he disregards the reciprocities upon which the system relies. Since there are few repressed fears the pressure of which on the mind can be removed by confession and atonement, the sense of guilt seldom moves men; offenders very rarely repent merely at the dictate of conscience. The sense of shame is more delicately internalized, but it drives men to make restitution only when the misdeed has been exposed and brought into relation with the reciprocity system. The ego, in other words, is not highly vulnerable, for it is well-balanced, so that frustration of one purpose does not prostrate the individual, and there are many opportunities of escape from an antagonistic to a better disposed group or environment; as they phrase it, 'There is no madman but he has a friend'. Participation in the benefits of the culture depends upon not offending against the reciprocities; but the positive aspect, pride and self-realization in mutuality, is far more important than the negative aspect, fear of being deprived of the reciprocities.

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It need hardly be said that the reciprocities are not precisely calculated equivalences, nor a series of exactly balanced obligations. People do not consciously think of the long-run result of their behaviour, and they know that social duty done is not always sure of its reward. 'Hard as the axe chops, it cannot eat the honey it extracts', they say to warn those who expect that their efforts will inevitably be rewarded. 181 626

The traits, motivations, and attitudes of the Lovedu become more and more intelligible in the context of the culture as a whole. Whether they are so delicately integrated that we can speak of the culture as an articulated whole, is not a question we shall try to answer. The tribal boundaries are certainly not the boundaries of the culture, which both in its forms and in its attitudes very gradually merges into the culture of a larger area, the limits of which cannot be exactly determined. In view of the increasingly great variations as one goes further and further from the nucleus, the degree of integration can be regarded relatively only to the area one chooses. Lack of integration is often more apparent than real. With regard both to recently introduced elements and to old elements which in their forms or purposes lag behind the changes of the whole culture, the process of integration is proceeding apace, but can never be complete. Thus the cult of possession is shedding those elements that are incongruous with the culture. There are also apparent inconsistencies in the divergent forms allowed in the districts and in principles of behaviour which are contradictory. Thus, for instance, revenge is permitted in the magico-witchcraft sphere, but is outlawed in the legal sphere. We may compare this contradiction to our approval of killing an enemy in war, which is conceived to be in the interests of national security, and our condemnation of killing a fellow man in peace, which is a crime against the security of life. Cultures often segregate contradictory aspects of social experience into logic-tight compartments, and there is no conflict as long as the contradictions can either be kept distinct or be reconciled. If they are embodied in the cultural system, no pressure is brought to compare them, and there is no lack of integration either in the mind of the individual or in the culture. 182

Men feel insecure chiefly in the face of disease and death, dissension, drought, and the disruptive danger of European intervention. The Lovedu attribute their fears to witchcraft, aggressiveness and quarrelsomeness, wrong burials, and the 'spoiling' of the country by the white man. We shall deal briefly only with two of these sources of insecurity: disease, which is one of the most constant preoccupations of the Lovedu mind, and the European, whose meddling has changed the shape and meaning of life and has upset the standards of right and wrong. 181 753

There is abundant reason for the perpetual anxiety about health, for disease is rife and even minor illnesses provide the occasion for the entry of the witch. Read against the background of their imperfect knowledge of anatomy and of the causation of disease, experience warns men that almost anything, from a simple scratch to the dreaded 'coughing disease', may cause death; in every case, not germs and poisons, but witches and sorcerers, may enter the body and take advantage of the weakness of the patient. Disease is combated, and susceptibility to disease is guarded against, at

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181 every step in a man's life. The infant is saturated with medicine:
753 he is made to grow by means of medicine, he is steamed and strengthened, and every upset of the stomach, every sign of disorder, every major change in his life is treated as if it were a grave danger. The child is often inoculated against the 'poisoned shaft', the 'last, fatal arrow' that a malicious enemy might 'hurl' at him. Medicines by anticipation protect those who after their initiation ceremony might be weakened (*hu khuma*) when they resume contact with the world. Even adults in perfect health periodically consult their doctors to discover whether, unknown to them, some one is not planning an attack upon them.

To a European nothing is more amazing than the number of medicines that are tried, rejected, and changed when a man is or supposes that he is ill, unless indeed it is the contradiction that is implied in their preoccupation with their ailments as contrasted with their care-free attitude to life. The Lovedu are always telling of their illnesses, yet they seem to worry as little about them as the Englishman about the weather, although he can hardly converse without complaining about it. It must, therefore, not be imagined that life is weighed down by this interest in ailments; the Lovedu are seldom really depressed. They do not feel at the mercy of a capricious power, for their safety is ultimately in strong hands. They can use medicine to combat witchcraft and, though death is inevitable, their faith in the superiority of the good forces that they can invoke to control evil remains unshaken; for death is only the occasional triumph of evil, which time and again throughout life is defeated by the power of medicine. The outlook which supports security presupposes an ordered universe in which witchcraft is not merely outlawed, but can be overcome by employing well-recognized techniques.

829 In the face of the danger of the European, the position is entirely
177 different. The white man is conceived to be part of a world which is antagonistic and incomprehensible; its forces are both disruptive, striking at the very significance of life, and capricious, not amenable to control by any known magical techniques. The projection of the danger upon the supernatural is but one aspect of a far wider conflict between European and Native, conqueror and conquered, perpetuated by divergent outlooks and different cultural configurations.

The conflict is an exceedingly complicated one. There is, firstly, the threat to the security of the Lovedu tribe, a threat that strikes particularly at the position of the queen and at the effectiveness of social mechanisms, causing criminals to multiply, encouraging disrespect for parents and for elders, and weakening the force of the reciprocities. Secondly, in the wider contact of Europeans and Natives attitudes have become vitiated by the antipathies that develop between the group of fellow men and the aliens outside it. The loyalties and trust between those within the group become transformed into hatred and suspicion towards those outside it; in the one case the human capacity for self-sacrifice, in the other case the capacity for selfishness, comes into play. Where the whole value system of the one group clashes with that of the other, antipathies are intensified. Moreover, the differences between the groups coincide with pronounced biological distinctions, such as

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colour, and with intense economic competition leading to poor-whiteism, and, as a result, an all-comprehensive theory of innate racial differences becomes a necessary philosophy to the European, while, to the Native, treachery and cunning towards the European become the ethical ideal and anything that he can get away with is thought to be legitimate.

These extremes are not always found, but even where a situation, such as that between farmer and labourer, is not vitiated by a sense of insecurity or the traditional antipathies, it may still give rise to misunderstandings. This is so because the Native is not trained in or conditioned to the European standards of concentration, industry, devotion to a single end, precision, and attention to detail, nor to the European conception of responsiveness to conscience. Many forms of Lovedu self-expression ill fit the contact situation, and often their behaviour is resented as the insolence of an inferior. Europeans may escape the feeling that they are treating the Native inhumanly by devising a theory of racial inferiority; the Natives, often accepting the reality, ascribe their status and misfortunes to the evil motives and systematic persecution of the European. It will not be possible to elaborate this theme, but a few of its aspects may be touched upon.

The vulnerability of the powers of the queen to European interference is one of the reasons for the all-pervading attitude of secrecy towards white men. There is a certain amount of untruthfulness and evasion towards fellow tribesmen: children are warned never to divulge the happenings in their homes or the possessions of their parents. But, as regards the European, deliberate lying is a positive virtue, for the inscrutability of the queen's powers is the essence of their preservation and of men's faith in them and in the queen, and secrecy is the only effective weapon against the European. Since disclosures to Europeans, even of the most commonplace activities or customs, might have unforeseen consequences, threatening the society, secrecy and its concomitants, hypocrisy and duplicity, have become ends in themselves. In our experience, despite our efforts to help people (which they often shamelessly exploited) and to justify the value to the tribe of our work (which made us only more distrusted), threats were often made against those who were our close associates and suspicion rested even on those whom we casually visited, unless, indeed, they could give an assurance that they had deceived us. At last, after incorporating ourselves as *khadi* (father's sister), foster father, and co-wife in various families, we became accepted, made some close friends, and overcame some of the suspicion. But, generally speaking, the good man is he who can circumvent the European and, conversely sometimes, the comprehensible European is he who has cheated the Native. In this context, it is not surprising that the European has an unflattering opinion of the Lovedu. And it is also intelligible that, to an essentially generous and easy-going people and in informal situations, the burden of secrecy imposes too great a strain and from time to time breaks down under cover of privileged confidences and the relaxation of drunkenness, or upon a sudden compulsive frankness. But in formal situations, such as in European courts, the Lovedu rely upon falsehood, and they believe that any lie is good enough to deceive a European.

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Legal relations with Europeans have been tragically misrepresented, for the procedures and sanctions of the European legal drama are not very intelligible. The villains of the piece are the solicitors, who, in their eyes, plot to put an end to reciprocal obligations, and safeguard criminals. These villains appear to be the main actors on the stage, and their victims, baffled by the awesomeness and incomprehensibility of the situation, see the solicitors in the role of conspirators laying schemes behind the scenes, where corruption arbitrarily decides the fate of the victims, or of impostors displaying deceitfully purchased loquacity before the footlights. They see the victim at the mercy of forces that inspire a dread not unlike the dread of being assailed by witchcraft, with this difference—that against witchcraft the sense of security can be regained by invoking magic, while nothing will avail against the awful incomprehensibility of European justice.

The purpose of the whole drama is inscrutable. Should the dock prove to be a trap to the innocent victim, all he can do is to resign himself to the inevitable. Should the offender be acquitted or inadequately punished, he becomes the luckless victim of a new tragedy; his enemies in the society by *hu niklela* magically render him subject to an obsessive compulsion to relapse into crime, so that he may once more re-enact his part as victim in the court and so eventually expiate his original offence. Not only recidivism, but also imbecility, may be the result, for the victim 'will remain laughing at the passing flies'. *Hu niklela* is some kind of answer to the feeling of insecurity before European law, but it is a very inadequate answer: it is not much invoked, it cannot prevent the multiplication of criminals and the growing aggressiveness of witches who escape the clutches of European justice, and it tries to reinstate confidence by relying upon a recidivism which undermines security. To the European, the Native offender is a difficult problem. He will not confide his defence and he wastes time with rambling statements; policemen regard him as insolent and as having gangster proclivities; and the only way to deal with him, it is thought, is by repressive regulations, pick-up vans, and punitive raids.

In the wide expanse of the employment situation there are other difficulties. The sanctions of the reciprocities of Lovedu society are lacking, and the appeal to these sentiments that the European values has little effect, except when the mutualities, the give and take, of Native society can be simulated and the group antipathy or negative identification can be converted into a measure of sympathy or positive identification. Historical factors, proximity, and many other considerations cause the degree of vicarious identification of the hostility with situations and localities to vary, and likewise the difficulties of overcoming the hostility vary. In a locality where, with the best intentions, farmers have ejected Lovedu squatters from their ancestral lands in order to re-employ them as wage-earners, the hostility is fierce and cannot be overcome in the first generation, whatever means are adopted. Of the Government, which they think is always deceiving them, they say, 'Sire of I-come-I-come, the child is already born and has begun to walk', to denote how readily promises are made to come and help, but how dilatory the fulfilment

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is; and as the result there is a profound distrust which vitiates relations. In 829
the situation of a European-owned mission station, both because of the 177
threat attributed to an iconoclastic creed and of the supposed capitalistic exploitation, the services and sacrifices of a missionary are liable to be rewarded with ingratitude and suspicion.

But however favourable the conditions, the difficulties must not be underestimated. It is the sensitive ego that is easily controlled; if a man cannot ordinarily be moved by an appeal to a sense of honour, conscience, or cupidity, moral pressure cannot easily be brought to bear upon him. Not only is the Lovedu ego not vulnerable, but the resort to kindness and the appeal to high motives are liable to be construed as cunning and an attempt to overreach. 'An ingratiating person', such as a European who comes with pleasant words, the Lovedu say, 'lacks not ulterior motive; if he lacks it, he is doomed' (for in any case he will be suspected). No wonder that the European so often believes that firmness and coercion are the only means of controlling the Native.

The different views held by the Lovedu and the European with regard to 177
certainty and precision lead to many conflicts. The lack of Lovedu insistence upon these traits gives an appearance of irresponsibility and disregard of obligations against the background of European society; and the white man readily believes that Natives are innately like children and always need supervision. As employers, masters, and administrators, Europeans have, in the setting of a competitive, calculating society, no alternative but to stress punctuality and precise regulation; but they are wrong in supposing that the essence of every society must be its regulative aspect and that anarchy must follow if irregularities and disregard of rigid procedures are allowed. The meticulous fulfilment of obligations, upon which the Western commercial structure depends, is not necessary in the timeless Lovedu culture, with its reliance upon long-run reciprocities. The Lovedu would easily understand the parable in which the [181]
people who worked for an hour in the vineyard in the cool of the evening received as much reward as those who had toiled there all day long in the hot sun, for they have little patience with the dull, mechanical systems that measure merit, work, and time by a highly graduated yardstick. In the hierarchy of Lovedu interests and necessities, time and punctual fulfilment of promises are secondary; but this does not mean that in the setting of the culture people are irresponsible and unreliable.

The beer-drinking of Natives is the bugbear of the European em- 177
ployer; it is a real problem to the farmer. Even in the Reserve its social 273
function is gradually giving way to its pathological one. There are many reasons for the change: the greater abundance of grain, the increasing monotony of life, the sense of frustration, and the recognition in the society that relief and excess may be displayed in states of exhilaration. Farmers legitimately complain of the demoralizing effect of beer. Beer can never be used in its full cultural context on the farms, and its prior claims to time and interest can never be harmonized with the requirements of labour service. The problem that is raised is apparently insoluble, for total prohibition of beer leads to the surreptitious drinking of injurious, rapidly maturing concoctions, to a sense of grievance on the part

177 of the Native, to his increased hostility to greater police activities,
273 to evasions of and disrespect towards the law, and to irritation and loss of time by the farmer in prosecuting offenders. In the contact situation, the food becomes a drug and the vehicle of social intercommunication becomes the means of dipsomaniacal escape.

177 Similarly, it would be possible to show the inevitability of other attitudes of European and Lovedu to one another; but here as elsewhere in this book we must frankly admit that volumes will have to be written before the situation has been fully described. The opinions of the Lovedu held by Europeans are, however, not based upon unrealities. It is true that the Lovedu in the contact situation are liable to be indolent, irresponsible, unreliable, ungrateful, untruthful and irrational. Traders have reason to be exasperated by conduct and by the operation of motives which run counter to all their reasonable expectations. The farmer does not, without reasons which are very real to him, call them 'creatures' or regard them as drunkards who, incapacitated week-end after week-end, justify their existence by work in the intervals between bacchanalian feasts. Those who labour to elevate the 'barbarian', to give him the blessings of a new culture or religion, or to promote his material advancement do in fact find their sacrifices rewarded with ingratitude and advantage taken of their labour of love. These Europeans, as well as the Native, are the victims, sometimes of their personal prejudices, but more often of the whole background of the contact situation. Yet the Lovedu proverb, 'A person is a person; it is a stump that has no ears', encourages the hope that with skilful handling and sympathy the situation may be made to yield to reason.

098 The anthropologist, who ascribes the practical man's views solely to prejudice and ignorance and, worse still, to inaccurate observation, not only uselessly antagonizes those in closest contact with the Native, thus rendering a disservice to better relations and co-operation, but also brings discredit upon his field methods and science and condemns them to ineptitude and distrust. Judgements upon motives and attitudes are always liable to grave error, for valuations are subjective and the personality of the observer is as important as the behaviour he observes: two men, one frustrated and the other successful, may come to very different conclusions, though they observe the same behaviour. We must beware lest practical men, familiar with the Native, ascribe our judgements to our preconceptions, especially to a facile toleration of traits to which not we, the observers from without, but they, the employers and administrators, have themselves to adjust realistically. 'Wisdom', say the Lovedu, 'comes from the scar' [of experience]; and it is the practical man, not the anthropologist, who has suffered the wound. There is great need for co-operation and for resolving differences by open discussion, for, to quote another Lovedu saying, 'Quarrels have no hiding place'—that is to say, if people desire amicably to compose their differences.

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CHAPTER XVII

CULTURE CONTACT AND CULTURE CHANGE

The relativistic approach: value of comparative and historical study—*interpenetration of the tribes*: ethnogenesis of the Lovedu and evolution of some of their cultural patterns—*the iconoclasm of Christianity*: breaking down and building up among converts, repercussions among pagans—*the challenge of Western conquest*: the indirect responses of the culture and its undisturbed foundations.

THE RELATIVISTIC APPROACH

For the past half-century Western conquest and civilization have been 178
challenging Lovedu culture. For centuries before that various Bantu cultures had percolated into the Lovedu lowveld. As a result, there has been cultural change, not only in the past few years, but throughout all the ages. Change is inescapable, continuous, ever-present, and there is no evidence that in the European period it has been revolutionary, while in the pre-European period it was merely evolutionary. There is a distinction, but to present the contrast as that between disruptive change and gradual development is unwarranted. The greatest disturbances brought about by contact with Western culture cannot, in their effect upon institutions and cultural patterns, be compared with the major cultural evolution, not only of the Lovedu, but of many other tribes, within measurable periods of time.

The evidence of great changes afforded by an historical and comparative 174
study of the tribes of the Northern Transvaal is overwhelming. Thus, for instance, the cultures of the Lovedu and of their kinsmen, the Mamavolo, have widely diverged since their separation from one another 250 years ago. The Mamavolo are like their immediate neighbours, the highveld Sotho, and unlike the Lovedu, not only in their handling of the major cultural complexes, such as the royal institutions, the 'schools', marriages, agricultural ritual, and village structure, but also in countless details of culture. They tolerate no female rulers, have given up ritual suicide of the chief, no longer appeal to the rite of the door to determine succession to the throne, and neither accept wives as tribute nor redistribute them in order to link up the political system. In minor details, such as their material culture and methods of threshing, and the absence among the Mamavolo of *thugula* (dedicated) cattle and of the practice of elongating the *labia minora*, their differences from the Lovedu are equally striking. The total impression of their culture and of their methods of expressing hostility to the European differs so greatly from that of the Lovedu that it is difficult to credit the common ancestry of these two tribes. Yet the evidence of history and of remembered, but no longer practised, custom is decisive.

Moreover, misgivings soon disappear in the light of further historical and comparative investigation. The Shai, immigrants since *c.* 1790 into the lowveld from amid Pedi and Transvaal Ndebele in the south, resemble the Lovedu far more closely than do their kinsmen, the Mamavolo. The

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174 Sekhopo, splitting off from the Lovedu royal group (*c.* 1800) and subjected to Pedi-highveld-Sotho influences, though only twenty miles from Uulovedu, are less like their present-day Lovedu royal relatives than are the Tswale. But the Tswale are foreigners, tracing descent from the Venda royal house of Thohɔ-ya-Ndɔu; they entered the Lovedu sphere of influence (*c.* 1730), and they lost close touch with the main body of the Venda (*c.* 1840). In language and almost all major aspects of culture the Tswale have been Loveduized. They have not adopted the specialized Lovedu royal complex of institutions, but equally they have lost their characteristically Venda elements. Thus, of Venda elements, they have given up the *dzumbo* and *thondo* 'schools' and the attribution of extensive powers to a high god; even the peculiar Venda disposition of forces and persons in the political organization is little more than a memory; and differences in detail from the Lovedu, such as peeling the skin off a goat's tail before killing it ritually, which is a royal Venda feature, are no greater than the differences found between one district and another in Uulovedu itself. These are not isolated instances of divergent cultural evolution in response to divergent environments and contacts. Dozens of examples emerge from an historical and comparative investigation of the Northern Transvaal alone.

121 In the whole of our field investigation, nothing has been more fruitful and stimulating than our visits to twenty-six Northern Transvaal tribes. There can be no doubt that, had there been time to study ten times that number of tribes over a much wider area, the value and suggestiveness of the comparative and historical background would have been correspondingly enhanced, against which the direction, nature, and magnitude of cultural changes might be evaluated. There arise problems of method, even of the legitimacy of making inferences from one tribe to another. We shall not deal with them here except to say that breadth and depth of observation and fertility of interpretation largely depend upon the range of one's knowledge and experience. If inferences from variations within the tribe are legitimate—nay, absolutely necessary—for the most elementary presentation or generalization, by the same reasoning they must be legitimate across the boundaries of tribes. Culture elements, culture patterns, and the major cultural configurations do not stop short upon the borders of districts, nor of tribes, nor even of culture areas.

Comparative study has enabled us to see in actual being the diffusion of culture elements across the boundaries of districts, tribes, and culture areas. The different handling by different cultures of the same cultural material, according to the needs of their environment or the genius or emphases of their patterns, can be observed and its results established without any doubt by comparative investigation. Once it can be determined that the raw cultural material is the same, deductions from variations in forms and functions or in purposes and goals are far from being illegitimate, but illuminate the distinctive trends of the cultures in which they occur. Inferences from incommensurable variations are illegitimate; but the wider the range of comparison and the more intensive the functional investigation, the easier it is to eliminate this error

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and the more precisely can be estimated, not only the nature, direction, and magnitude of change, but also the relation of the change to the forms and purposes of the culture in which it is found. [2]

Comparative study, as a technique of interpreting culture and its evolution, must go hand in hand with historical investigation. Both the past that survives in the memory of the carriers of the culture and the present are functionally important. They give us some of the clues to the psychological forces that cause or resist change and they provide data upon the nature of institutional evolution. But man is more than his memory and the living past is far more than the remembered past. So much is self-evident to a carrier of the culture that it will never be mentioned by an informant and will wholly escape the investigator's attention unless, with the aid of sustained comparative and historical study, he discovers the key that unlocks the memory and opens the way to the socially unconscious, that system of codes and standards which, without being conscious, condition experience and behaviour and are themselves conditioned by the social, psychological determinants of the past. Historical study is important for understanding the attitudes and reactions of the present, for estimating the evolution of forms and institutions, and for evaluating the relation to and reaction upon one another, not only of attitudes and forms, but also of the psychology of the people and the material content of the culture.

Culture change, according to this approach, must be investigated and interpreted, not merely functionally, but also relatively to the past and to reactions in other tribes. The method may be called relativistic functionalism. It implies observation and interpretation, not merely of the forms and functions of institutions within tribes, but also of the differential process of incorporation or rejection, under different conditions and in different tribes, of new culture elements.

This is not the place to justify this approach or to examine its theoretical and practical implications. All we need say is that, among the Lovedu, exceptionally good material exists for applying this method. Various sections of the Lovedu, as well as of numerous other tribes, of diverse origin and culture, have been subjected to diverse cultural influences for different but determinable periods of time; and their interpenetration can be studied in relation to both time and space. Particularly instructive are the differential responses to such patterns as the Venda royal complex of institutions and the transformations and modifications impressed upon such cultural material as the 'schools'. Thus, for instance, the royal pattern of the Kwindɛ (Venda royal group) can be studied in a chain of tribes of Kwindɛ ancestry extending into Vuloveda, some of whom have been subjected to intimate and long continued, others to less intimate and shorter, Lovedu contact. But this royal pattern has also interpenetrated other cultures, imposing itself upon the heterogeneous peoples incorporated by the Kwindɛ, like Koni, Karanga, Nyai, and Laudi, and leaving diverse impressions upon politically independent tribes such as the Dakwa, Virwa, Nareni, and Lovedu. The differential interpenetration, especially of the various branches of the Lovedu, enables us to arrive at important conclusions.

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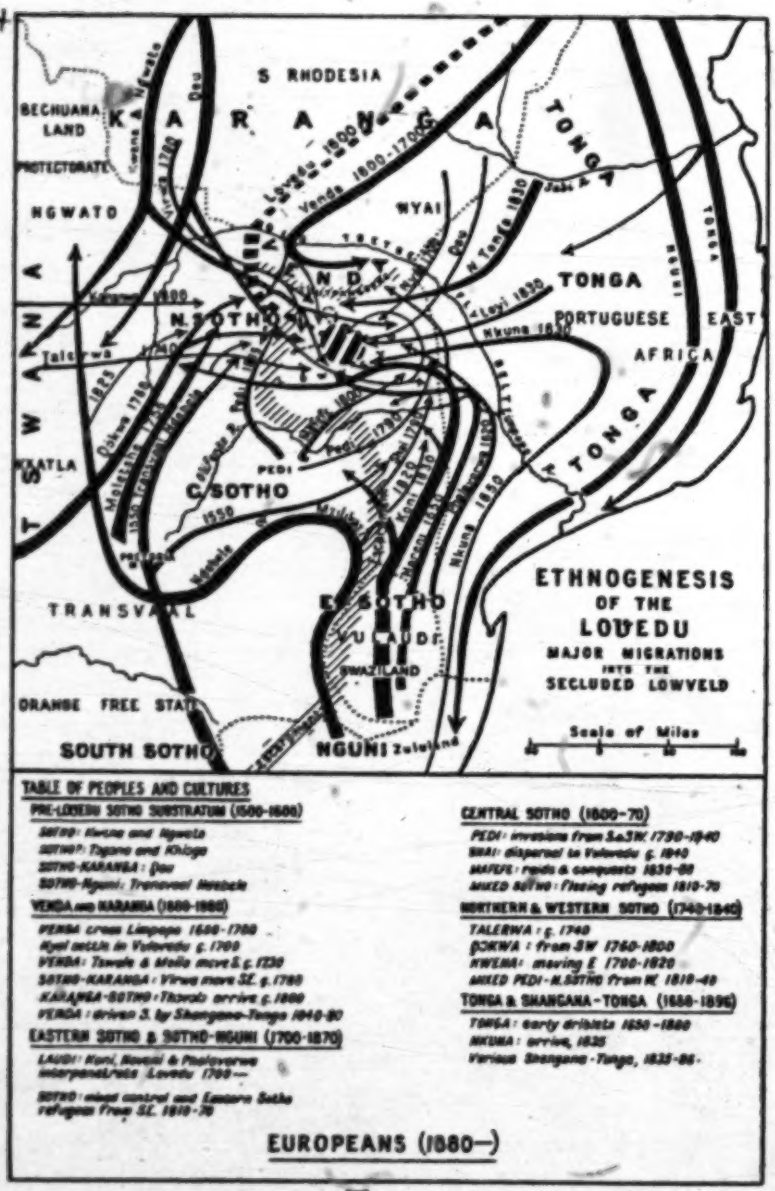
S RHODESIA
BECHUANA LAND PROTECTORATE
NGWATO
KARANGA
TONGA
WYAI
Venda 1800-1700
Lovedu 1800
Tsonga 1700
Dau
Tsonga
Tsonga
Tsonga
Jabi
N Tonga 1830
Lovi 1830
Nkuna 1830
TONGA
PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA
N. SOTHO
Kalanga 1800
Talerwa
Dikwa 1700
Makhuba 1700
Kwena
Kwena
Kwena

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Oral traditions of the past, it is said, are unreliable and unverifiable. 121
Accounts by informants about the present are also unreliable and often, unless one lives a lifetime in the society, unverifiable. Even the most elementary facts observed do not speak for themselves and have to be interpreted, and the verification of objective facts becomes a complicated process not unlike verification of historical material from such circumstantial evidence as is provided by comparative study. Certainly, in our experience, what was impressive was the substantial agreement among all the tribes upon the main events and migrations, which also provided useful clues to diffusions of culture in the past. The lack of discrimination as regards place and time and the dramatizations and justifications were difficulties which gradually disappeared as the background of comparison was enlarged. Even the discrepancies, seen against the total background, illuminated the local trends and motivations, and proved to be more apparent than real.

Most men of the Lovedu royal group to-day deny their Karanga ancestry, 121
although ten years ago they admitted it. You will tap their memories in 177
vain to discover either the truth or the reason for the change of attitude. But in the light of comparative investigation—for this phenomenon is not unique among the tribes—and of a study of reactions between 1926 and 1936, the change is intelligible. The suspicion that the releasing of land to the Native under the Land Act, in pursuance of a segregation policy, might be a device to dispossess the tribe engendered a profound disturbance to men's sense of security, which could be re-established only by affirming the title of immemorial occupation of Vulovedu. The method of relativistic functionalism ensures, not merely perspective, but also balanced and comprehensive interpretations.

INTERPENETRATION OF THE TRIBES

Lovedu culture as it is to-day is the result of a complicated historical 174
process. For some indication of the genesis of the tribe and of its culture, the reader is referred to the accompanying map; we cannot discuss the evidence in this book.

More than 300 years ago there were tribes sparsely scattered over the whole of the Northern Transvaal. This area lay outside the main migratory currents: Nguni and Tonga coming down on the east, Sotho-Tswana circling the curve of the Limpopo on the west, and Karanga halting between these two to the north of the tsetse-fly belt along the Limpopo. The date of these migrations and their relation to one another is lost in oblivion, but trickles from these currents and backwater eddying from them, particularly from the Sotho-Tswana current, penetrated into the Lovedu lowveld. There were, however, Kwena and Ngwato who descended the escarpment in force only after arrival on the highveld of invaders from the east (Koni, *c.* 1700), the south or south-west (Dokwa, *c.* 1760, and Moletshe, *c.* 1750), and the north (Virwa, *c.* 1780). Some of these Kwena and Ngwato form a chain of peoples, no longer independent, from the north, round the west and to the south of Vulovedu, into the political and cultural structure of which many have been incorporated.

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174 In pre-Lovedu times there were also the famous *ḍou*, Elephants who are everywhere a dependent substratum, except for a small group, the Masoma, living among the Mahlo or Nareni of Segorora. This cluster is very old, was interpenetrated with a culture evolved at the junction of Karanga and Sotho streams in the north-west near the home of the Ṱirwa, and scattered sparsely over the whole of the lowveld. Lovedu tradition asserts that the Lovedu, migrating southwards, found them on their way and incorporated them as messengers; and there is no doubt that at various periods many of them, owing to pressure elsewhere, settled in Ṱulovedu. There were other pre-Lovedu peoples in the lowveld, such as the Khiɔga, Ḍgɔna, Sɛja-Phala, mostly offshoots of mixed Sotho and Karanga, and a few so-called Transvaal Ndebele emanating from the far south.

Despite slight intrusions of Ṭonga, the ethnic and cultural composition of the pre-Lovedu lowveld was predominantly Sotho, considerably influenced, however, by the culture and peoples that had evolved on the borders of the Karanga. This pre-Lovedu culture, or people of Sotho-Tswana-Karanga we shall call the 'Sotho substratum'.

Into this geographically isolated area, penetrated only by small groups of people migrating under pressure, there came (*c.* 1600) the Lovedu royal group, descendants of Mambo, one of the sons of Monomotapa and chief of one of the provinces into which the empire of the Karanga had split up. Lovedu tradition as to the disruption of Monomotapa's kingdom is confirmed by Portuguese writers; it was the disintegration that enabled the Portuguese to extend their settlement inland as far as Sena (1609). There is much other evidence, but the relationship between the Karanga, Lozwi (two names used by the Lovedu in their praise songs), and Monomotapa (which some authorities say is a myth) is lamentably obscure. 'Judging from the customs, history and language', writes E. G. Howman,[1] 'these people [Vakaranga] were the tribe mentioned in all the Portuguese records of three hundred years ago as being the people of Monomotapa, though unfortunately no trace of this name can be found as surviving nowadays.' It is significant that in Lovedu tradition this name is known.

After the advent of the Lovedu, the history of the lowveld becomes more decipherable, for the tribes that rule to-day have more or less detailed traditions of their past which may be interrelated, while the peoples of the Sotho substratum either have no history or it is vague or starts somewhere in Lovedu times. Some of the histories are nothing short of amazing in their comprehensiveness. Muhlava, chief of the Nkuna, for instance, gave us a history covering a century during which the Nkuna were subjects of five different Sotho tribes, and every detail in it, whether of time-sequences or events or movements of people, was corroborated by the accounts given us in these tribes.

It is clear that in their early period the Lovedu for long remained undisturbed in their secluded environment. There were minor infiltrations, for there were movements of peoples on the far-off boundaries of the lowveld; but the first considerable body of people that came within

[1] *South African Journal of Science*, vol. xv, 384.

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striking distance was the Venda. They crossed the Limpopo from the north in many successive waves, culminating in the arrival of the royal Kwindɛ group (*c.* 1700). The histories of Lovedu and Venda do not converge in Rhodesia, but both peoples had early contacts with Karanga, Lozwi, and Nyai and both have traditions of the Mambo. There is also the legend among the Venda of having conquered fireless aborigines with fire. But it is in the post-migratory period, and especially between *c.* 1750 and 1820, that contacts multiplied through trade, migrations, royal marriages, and the Venda practice of seeking their rain, not only from their high god Mwari at Mbvumɛla in the Rhodesian Matopo Hills, but also from Mujaji, whom they sometimes call 'the wife who brings us water to wash our face'. When the *kwɛvo* of Tswale and Moila, two Venda tribes, came to settle on the borders of Ʊulovedu (*c.* 1730) a complex interpenetration started; they were Loveduized, while the Mamaila section of the Lovedu, moving northwards, first became Vendaized, so that thirty or forty years ago the court language was still Venda, and subsequently, owing to historical factors, fell under influences from the south and south-west, and reverted to Khilovedu and Lovedu-like cultural patterns.

The channel of inter-communication between Venda and Lovedu was so wide in *c.* 1780 that Mashau, a Venda chief, came personally to aid Mugɔdɔ to suppress the rebels in Ʊulovedu; but it gradually narrowed from *c.* 1790 onwards, owing to the intrusion from the south-west and north-west of Ḍɔkwa and Ʊirwa respectively; and it was all but blocked since *c.* 1840 by the Shangana-Ṭonga invasion from the east. This invasion also drove southwards into Ʊulovedu many Venda refugees, some of whom still speak Venda. Swelling the Venda or Venda-Karanga influences were the Nyai, whose northern manners and dress are still remembered, Ʊirwa, whose history appears to link them with the southern Zimbabwe at Mapungubwe, and the Thɔʊɔlɔ. These Thɔʊɔlɔ say they are from Ʊukhalaga, but it is clear that they had migrated southwards long ago and later became Sothoized to the east of Ʊulovedu, mixing there with the Sotho substratum, especially the ubiquitous *ḍou*. About 1800 they fled before the Mafɛfɛ invasion from the south and, settling in Ʊulovedu, brought with them the cult of spirit possession

Great as has been the influx and influence of the Venda, it is eclipsed by that of the Laudi, a name under which we include the Phalaʊorwa, Nareni (both Mahlo and Letswalo), and Koni. All of them, including large sections of the Venda, such as Mphaphuli, Lwamɔndɔ, and Masia, came either from Ʊulaudi or Phalaʊorwa, in the south-east, near Swaziland. It is there that large bodies of the two original migrations of Sotho and Nguni from the far north converged upon and merged with one another. All Laudi tradition, even that of the Koni of Maḍala on the highveld, speaks of a settlement in Phalaʊorwa (*c.* 1620–1720). The Phalaʊorwa remained in the unfavourable environment between the Olifants and Letaba Rivers, some of them periodically breaking away from it and settling in Ʊulovedu. The Nareni, having left Phalaʊorwa, split into the Mahlo and the Letswalo, and the latter, scattering along the foothills of the Drakensberg, penetrated into Ʊulovedu (*c.* 1750). At one

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174 time, when Bodile ruled (1825–50), there was close contact between the Letswalo and the Lovedu, the chiefs of the two tribes exchanging rain medicines. The Koni also left Phalaborwa and eventually gave rise in the area we are considering to a great chain of tribes: the Khaha of Maake (*c.* 1730) and of Maupa (*c.* 1800), and the Koni of Maḑala (*c.* 1720) and Dikxale (*c.* 1830). By 1750 the Laudi had completely invested the Lovedu on the east, south, and south-west. Their influx into Vulovedu, the inviolable country of the Rain-Queen, greatly increased as the result of disturbances in the south and south-east, from 1820 to 1870. The turmoil was caused by Moselekatse's spoliation, ravages by fugitive cannibals, Pedi and Mafefe raids, Shangana-Ṭonga invasions, and Swazi depredations. The accretions to the Lovedu enhanced the great influence of the Laudi, predominantly an old Sotho people.

Between 1800 and 1870 many Central Sotho or Pedi scaled the Drakensberg and spread their culture first among the Laudi and through them into Vulovedu. The Mafefe, carriers of this culture, for long ruled several lowveld tribes; and the Shai, from amid a Pedi and Transvaal Ndebele environment, crossed the Olifants River and many settled in Vulovedu (*c.* 1840). But the main Central Sotho infiltrations, coming from the west, were greatly modified in passing through the sieve of highveld Sotho. Among them were the Kwena, already mentioned, and the Ṭalerwa (*c.* 1740), but the Ṭalerwa as well as other scattered bands from the high veld at first represented rather Northern Sotho influences; and only later, after considerable admixture from the west and south Tswana and Central Sotho elements began to predominate. The upper layer of highveld tribes, such as the Ḑokwa and Moletshe, originated from the west and south-west (Tswana). They have been very receptive to Pedi influences, since the Pedi themselves were overlorded by the Kxatla, who were, if not Tswana, close relatives of the Tswana. Thus during the ascendancy of the Pedi under Thulare (1800–24) and the Tevele raids, when many highveld tribes fled to Pediland, Central Sotho culture penetrated deeply into the highveld. It was the Ḑokwa who carried this mixed Sotho culture farthest into the lowveld, but among the Lovedu the intrusion was regarded as a challenge to be resisted, and it has left a heritage of hatred and antagonism, which, though no justification continues to exist for it, is still alive to-day.

Numerically the greatest single invasion of the lowveld was that of the Shangana-Ṭonga. Some few Ṭonga, who came long before the nineteenth century, were assimilated without leaving any perceptible marks on Lovedu culture. During the nineteenth century successive waves of Shangana-Ṭonga fell upon the lowveld: refugees fleeing before Manukuza, leader of the Nguni from Zululand (*c.* 1836–40); groups escaping from the clash between Mawewe and Mzila, rival claimants to the throne after the death of Manukuza (Soshangane) (1856–70); and fugitives seeking safety after Ngungunyame's defeat by the Portuguese (1894). These are the unassimilable Shangana-Ṭonga, originating from all parts of Ṭongaland, and in the country of Mujaji segregating themselves in the valleys, while the Lovedu cling to the hills. They have an exceedingly complicated history, but it is sufficient to note that, though many of them

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have broken away from Lovedu overlordship since the beginning of the twentieth century, Vulovedu has been crowded and its borders surrounded by Shangana-Tonga.

It is manifestly impossible to examine in detail the nature and magnitude of the changes in Lovedu culture that may be attributed to the Sotho substratum, Venda, Laudi, Shangana-Tonga, and other tribes. We may, however, as an illustration, cursorily trace the evolution, under these influences, of the Lovedu royal complex of institutions. The germs of this complex come from the ancestors of the royal group. The Portuguese record that only a man without physical imperfections could become chief and that the Mambo handed his daughters to his bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but faithful service. According to Dos Santos,[1] writing in 1601, it was formerly the custom of the kings of Sofala to commit suicide by poisoning when any disaster fell upon them or they were disfigured by a physical defect, and, further, though it was incest outside the royal circle, kings married their own sisters or daughters. Even to-day there is evidence among some Shona of the rite of the door, of women rulers, and of celibate female rain-makers.

This is the nucleus around which the Lovedu have elaborated their royal institutions. Its primary elements did not come in the post-migratory period, for they are, except for the vaguest indications, absent among the Venda, who have always constituted the buffer between Lovedu and Karanga; and their presence among Nareni and Khaha to the south is not a feature of the Laudi or Eastern Sotho, but can be historically traced to the Lovedu. Among the Virwa an attenuated form of this complex may be attributed to Karanga influences. The accretions to and fallings away from the old nucleus were inevitable in the new setting of the Lovedu. The powers of the Karanga high god, who made rain and supported the sacred king, became projected upon the Lovedu queen; a mere vestige is left of the saturnalian licence accompanying the accession of a Karanga chief; and unsuccessful Lovedu claimants to the throne, who generally flee the country after the interregnum, are still referred to as *mambo* (sing. *lembo*). But there is among the Lovedu no sign of the resuscitation of the spirit of the deceased Karanga king in the maggots emerging from the decaying body as it lies sealed in a special hut before burial.

It is curious that among the Mamavolo, after 250 years of subjection to influences of the Sotho substratum and the Western and Central Sotho, this complex has been obliterated, while among the Lovedu it has been elaborated. The varying response is, however, intelligible in the light of their different histories. The Mamavolo, hiving off from the main body, were overwhelmed by the Sotho; even a cursory study shows how they lost their bearings and abandoned their faith in their heritage and, for security, remodelled their institutions upon those of their powerful neighbours. But the Lovedu maintained their dominance in their lowveld environment; they dealt with the challenges of invaders by elaborating the royal pattern so as to absorb them; and they responded to the prevailing belief that, not a priesthood, but the chief himself must

[1] Quoted in Theal, *Records of S.E. Africa*, vii. 191, 194.

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174 mediate for rain by a new conception both of the high god and of the
643 divinity of the queen.

177 The forces refashioning the old nucleus are the result of composite internal reactions to external influences. In Chapter I ('Pageants of the Past') we saw how, in the face of a feeling of insecurity, Khiali tried to safeguard the succession by casting out the heir, and how the innovation set into motion forces that precipitated the change from kings to queens. Simultaneously came the elevation of the queens to veritable rain-gods. The Lovedu rain-making technique is Sotho and constrains the forces of nature by magic; it is a fundamental departure from the Karanga technique, which uses an appeal to the high god through his priests on the mountain, where he manifests himself in clamour and flame. But there is still a faint connexion, for foreigners allege that Mujaji herself originally obtained her power from Levibi, where Mwari appeared in thunder and lightning to a chief of the Ṭavatsinde, a group among the Venda. *Ʊuuga ya uuga bula e a na*, thundering [on the mountain of] Ʊuuga [is followed by] pattering rain, is still the praise-title of the Levibi of Ʊulovedu. The Lovedu, we surmise, have replaced Mwari by Kuzwane, creator-god, divested of his rain-making and celestial powers, and the word 'Mwari' (or 'Mwali') suggests, even to the Lovedu mind, Muhale, the Lovedu chief who is founder of the tribe, the only semi-hero of legend, and is associated with ritual, as, for instance, the Bird of Muhale in the *vyali* initiation, which is also associated with rain.

But if this is conjecture, it is significant that power to effect the great change from kings to queens was sought in father-daughter incest, a pattern enjoined by the Karanga and considered as the source of fertility among the Shona. Not only did the traditional model sanctify the change, but the success of the experiment was guaranteed by the elaboration of values already existing in the society. Indeed, the change is represented merely as a reassertion of an ancient but fictitious cycle of kings and queens. The accession of a woman, in spite of the high position of women, was obviously a difficulty; but the rationalization provided by a supposed cycle satisfied misgivings, and the change lent itself to transforming the danger of foreign encirclement into an instrument for extending the network of political institutions. The complicated exchanges of the queen's wives constitute only an extension of the old pattern of the house of Mambo, who received daughters from his sub-chiefs in return for protection or food or as a result of conquest, and who handed out his daughters to his personal bodyguard.

In the elaboration of the Lovedu royal complex, the model and justification came from their Karanga ancestors, but the vital addition of a new association of the chief with rain, which is neither Karanga nor Venda, was inspired by Sotho culture. But, in the Sotho substratum, rain, agricultural rites, and the drum cult were inextricably merged and, in the context of the Lovedu pattern, they did not all find an equally firm place. We shall touch lightly upon this complex, noting here merely the extraordinary fact that, despite the long-continued pressure of Venda influences, the Venda contribution to the Lovedu royal pattern is to-day hardly perceptible. The reason lies partly in its incongruity with the

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conception of a female ruler who is also a divine rain-maker, but partly also in the obscuring of the borrowed elements by readjustments since the accession of a queen. 174 643 177

For a time the Lovedu kings followed the custom of the solitary dance (*u pembela*) of the Venda. It was under the inspiration of such a dance just before his death that Mugodo (*c.* 1790) made his famous prophecy. Venda chiefs perform this dance either shortly after accession, when it firmly establishes against all claims their divine title to the throne, or towards the end of their reign, when it symbolizes abjuration of earthly things and elevation to godhead. These conceptions are inconsistent with the Lovedu pattern, which prescribes the rite of the door as the title to succession, and safeguards the queen's inscrutability by making her the inaccessible 'huckster in her hut'.

The special Venda disposition of forces and persons in the organization of the royal court has left numerous marks in Lovedu culture and its reception facilitated the transition from kings to queens. The *khadi* (father's sister or the sister), as priestess, is in a favourable position to assume control during the minority of the heir, as is the case to-day among the Sekhopo and in many districts in Ulovedu. There is also the critical instance of the Mamaila, where between 1825 and 1895 sometimes men and sometimes women ascended the throne, and where the interaction of the two patterns may be closely observed. The Venda emphasis on the virginity, for a time, of the chief's wives has had widespread repercussions even as far as the Nareni; and among the Lovedu it has become interlocked with the cogs of the political machinery, so that, while the permanently chaste are rewarded, the unchaste go out as wives of great men to strengthen their loyalty to the royal house. Nowhere else has such an ingenious solution or reinterpretation been evolved, though the differing readjustments among the various tribes show amazing inventiveness and resourcefulness.

The patterns and culture elements of the royal complex among the surrounding tribes, which have found no place in the Lovedu complex, are too numerous to mention; but what is rejected is just as important as what is adopted in the evaluation and interpretation of the forces determining change. Least has been taken from the modern Shangana-Tonga, but there are similarities in detail, though not in pattern, which may be ascribed to a common heritage of the distant past. It is, for instance, only the Tonga in these parts who have to any extent elaborated the idea of placing chiefs' wives as rulers in the provinces, a practice known among the Lovedu kings long before the arrival of the Shangana-Tonga. Among the Shangana-Tonga the accession of a brother to the throne admits of the progressive realization of aspirations fostered by a culture in which at one and the same time the hierarchy of age and the coincidence of maturity with the peak of life as well as display and competition are more emphasized than among the Lovedu. This pattern is quite unacceptable among the Lovedu.

There are many other suggestive contrasts, but what must surprise the observer is the small contribution (apart from the rain-making technique) of the Sotho from the south and west. The distribution of medicated

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174 seeds by the chief, as among the highveld Sotho, is thought to savour
643 of witchcraft, as only witches use medicine to make the crops grow. The
177 Pedi pattern of the 'tribal candle', the chief wife whose first son succeeds and whose bride-price is contributed by the tribe (who thereby obtain a stake in the succession) has penetrated far. It has been partially accepted by the Laudi as well as the Sekhɔpɔ; but the Lovedu have not been influenced. Of absorbing interest and immense interpretative value has been the conflict of Lovedu and Pedi patterns where their incongruity precipitated a crisis among the Nareni and Khaha.

Everywhere in the lowveld the transition from kings to queens caused disturbances, and the form of justification invariably reflects values in the cultures concerned. Among the Mamaila the change is justified by the sin of the male heir. When the change first occurred, the male heir was ousted because he had cohabited with his father's wives, which is a disqualification by Venda standards. Thereafter males again ruled. When the change occurred a second time, the male heir was driven off because he had broken open the door, which is a sin by Lovedu standards.

Among the Khaha of Maake and the Nareni, both Mahlo and Letswalo, the position is different and may be considered less cursorily, though unfortunately only in very broad outline. The Khaha, greatly disturbed by invasions from the south, sought stability by trying to imitate Mujaji I, the security of whose tribe they attributed to her feminine powers and longevity. In those days (1827) the Mafefe, following the Pedi pattern of royal marriage, politically dominated the Khaha as well as many other tribes. Nevertheless, among the Khaha, Mali, a woman, succeeded as chief against her brothers and was 'placed' by Mujaji. She was the first Khaha female ruler, modelled her court upon the Lovedu pattern, and even adopted ritual suicide as a means to power. The whole Lovedu pattern was not incorporated, for the traditional basis was lacking, especially as regards the ascendancy of women, the unquestioned acceptance of the caprices of the door, and the conception of receiving tributary wives and redistributing them. Thus men were not excluded from the throne. Mali herself, having failed to prevent the flight into exile of her people, was succeeded by a male chief; but in 1928 a woman, Mali II (or Maake, as she is sometimes called), was called upon to rule. Mali II was married, was asked to renounce her husband, as queens could have no official husbands, and when she refused she had to abdicate and now reigns merely as regent during the minority of her brother. The task of integrating the Lovedu with the Khaha pattern was never completed: the door is invoked to decide only between rivals with plausible claims, and no adequate solution has been found to harmonize the Pedi and Lovedu patterns of royal marriage. The chief wife even of the queen among the Khaha is the mother's brother's daughter, and it is for her marriage that in theory each district head must contribute cattle 'to seek their mother' (*hu nyagela mma 'vɔna*).

Among the Mahlo Nareni, sporadically dominated by the Mafefe until as late as 1901, the change came under conditions of European control (1923). The door entrusted the rain charms and chieftainship to Manjana, wife of the deceased chief, Segɔrɔrɔ. But when strife occurred, the

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European intervened, construed the opening of the door as coincidence, and recognized a son of Segɔrɔrɔ's first wife. (Incidentally, the Pedi conception of the 'tribal candle', though accepted for a time, by 1923 was again receding before the old Laudi insistence that the mother's brother's daughter required no additional support to be chief wife.) To-day the tribe is split: Manjana's magic has power to call up the clouds, but the quackery of the recognized chief sweeps up gales which scatter the rain.

Among the Letswalo the change, motivated by a desire for security, aggravated a crisis which continued into the European period and was ended by the drastic intervention of the European. Ramadau, son of chief Bodile, defied his father by refusing to espouse his one-eyed cross-cousin, whom Bodile himself then married. But this wife turned out to be a witch who expiated her offence of stealing the rain charms by being mauled to death by a lion. Angered by his son's disobedience and his wife's treachery, Bodile then (*c.* 1850) prophesied the coming of the ants and the accession of a woman; but in the total setting of the drama the son's disobedience is condoned by representing his cross-cousin as a deformed witch and the treachery that threatens the welfare of the tribe is made the occasion for the accession of Magaepia, daughter of Bodile The whole theme is handled less skilfully than among the Lovedu and indicates the existence of many conflicting motives. Before Magaepia succeeded there were wholesale assassinations of successive heirs; Magaepia, having replaced the lost rain charms, became, first, rain-maker to Ramadau and, after his death at the hands of the Swazi invaders, queen, but only of a portion of the tribe. The strife continued, the European intervened, and, when the tribes of the lowveld rose against the encroaching settlers (1894), the Letswalo joined them, but suffered a devastating defeat.

Changes can be traced in all aspects of Lovedu culture, some greater, some smaller than those in their royal institutions. It will take us too far afield to deal with these changes, but a few remarks may be of interest. Almost nothing of the *gomana-vyali-vuhwera-vudiga* complex came with the royal group. Some of it can be attributed to the Sotho substratum: it is the *ḍou* of Ravothata who make the *gomana* drums and close the *vyali* with their weirdly costumed dancers, the *magɔgɔbya*; the Kwena likewise claim always to have had the *gomana*; and Lovedu boys are allowed to become initiated at the *gomana* lodges of the *ḍou* of Khaḍa and of the Kwena of Maunadala, who also may accept royal boys to 'cross rapidly' (*hu ḍubunya*), or become initiated in a few days, at his *vuhwera*. The *magɔgɔbya* are unique, but are found also among the *ḍou* of Masoma and it is from Tsubye (the country of present-day Shai) that these costumes came over a century ago, having been brought by two men named Masehisa and Dinawe. The evidence may be indefinitely multiplied, but it is more interesting to examine for a moment the different manifestations of the complex over the Northern Transvaal, because what has been emphasized in it or muted or rejected illuminates the character of the incorporating culture.

We have no evidence of the occurrence beyond the Northern Transvaal of the sacred drums, considered as shrines consecrated by human sacrifice

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174 and as the focus of a 'school' for revealing the secrets of the whistling
643 ancestors (*zwiḍajani*). Some Venda north of the Limpopo have drums of
177 the *mɔndɔɔ* (spirits of the chiefs) and *zwiḍajani* (familiars of Mnisi, the rain-god), and there is some evidence of drum ritual among Pedi, Venda. and even Ṭonga; but the elaborated drum cult belongs to the Northern Sotho. It has three characteristic elements: the supreme moments of the agricultural year are signalized by the sounding of the drums and the cult is intimately linked with rain or fertility; these calendric observances, as well as other great national occasions, are, by the interposition of the drums, brought under the surveillance of the tribal gods, represented by men masquerading as spirits who have come to earth; and in a special initiation novices are inducted into the secrets of the cult.

This constellation is most emphasized in three tribal groups: Laudi (especially Phalaborwa), Maḍala, and Xananwa-Ḍɔkwa-Moletshe. Among the Phalaborwa the striking emphasis is upon the link with rain-making, upon the *lesugu* or women's counterpart, and upon the exulting display before the drums which is permitted to those who have military and hunting exploits to their credit. These features become progressively attenuated westwards towards Ṱulovedu. The stress upon display reappears among the Maḍala, though in a different form, for there we find the esoteric *khidinkhi*, which is at once a dramatic dance inspired by the sacred drums glorifying the prowess of the chief and of warriors, and a rain and fertility rite, blessing cattle and crops and safeguarding the people against disease. In drawing into the complex the welfare of the cattle and in the absence of the *lesugu*, the Maḍala pattern differs from that of the Laudi, but approximates that of the Xananwa-Ḍɔkwa-Moletshe. These differences coincide with the emphases of the different cultures. The Laudi have an attenuated cattle-cult, though it is better developed than among the Lovedu; whereas the highveld Sotho, influenced from the west and south-west, have a fuller cattle-cult, though by no means as elaborate as that of the west (Tswana) with its seasonal migratory life, conditioned partly by pastoralism and partly by a desire for security in a difficult environment. Among the Laudi men's and women's initiations are often combined, but on the highveld they are markedly separated, for the *vyali* and *vuhwera* exist as distinct institutions and the Bird, guiding spirit of the *vyali*, is usually absent. In the third area, that of the Xananwa-Ḍɔkwa-Moletshe, the dispositions are in many respects quite distinctive. The drums become the focus of an elaborate fertility cult, rain-making stands outside the complex, and the chief *motif* is not display, but dramatization of obedience to the gods and loyalty to the chief. The supreme moment is when the manhood of the tribe, collected in the cattle kraal, receive the command of the gods communicated, under inspiration of the drums, by the *zwiḍajani*.

There is every possible variation in the patterns among the intervening tribes. In some, such as Tswale, Moila, Dikxale, Mamabolo, and Ṱirwa of Makhatho, the cult is often structurally unintegrated, standing outside the province of the chief and consisting merely of 'schools' managed by outsiders who have their own drums. The cult in these cases is practised merely for revenue purposes; it is a 'business' as the

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Natives say; the alien drums are pierced and rendered useless at the death, not of the chief, but of their owners; and the *zwidajani* are often visitors from tribes where the cult is better developed. Among the Lovedu the cult has been only partially accepted; the pattern is the pattern of the focal area in the east. The features that have been attenuated or elaborated can be explained in the light of the emphasis of Lovedu culture: there is no display, no stress upon fertility, no linking with the welfare of the cattle, no elaboration in connexion with agricultural ritual, but the *zwidajani* command peace and agreement among men. 174 43 177

Elsewhere in this book we have given slight indications that the Lovedu interlocking *munywalo* exchanges and social structure can be traced to Karanga models; that the Lovedu have rejected the pattern of the wedding feast and wedding gifts which comes from the west; that Lovedu legal arrangements are the resultant of composite forces; that the smeller-out and the cult of spirit possession come from the Shangana-Tonga and Thovolo. These and many other borrowed culture elements may be followed up with advantage, and indicate the magnitude of culture change. But for our purposes, before proceeding to discuss the nature and effect of the impact of Western culture, a brief reference to Shangana-Tonga influences will suffice. Despite similarities in detail—an attenuated boys' puberty rite, the conception of *makhuma* (ritual defilement), the indirect warning to the witch by *hu cbela*, to mention a few features—and despite the extensive reception by the Lovedu of Shangana-Tonga elements of material culture—fowls, various crops, and methods of storing and threshing and stamping—the striking feature remains the great gulf between the two cultural configurations. They have, for instance, different views as regards sex morality, different marriage patterns, different conceptions of the hierarchy of age and the position of women; they deal differently with the situation of death, with rain-making, display, and regimentation, and, whereas the social groupings are totemic among the Lovedu, they are non-totemic among the Shangana-Tonga. 177

There are many other divergences, but one difference that calls for comment is the attitude to and reception of European culture. More adaptable, if brazen, than the Lovedu, at least in their new environment, the Shangana-Tonga have, as fugitives under Sotho domination, more complacently submitted themselves to European conquest. Disciplined by the military heritage of the Zulu, they made efficient police and soldiers, especially against their Sotho overlords. Their training in competition, trade, and display enabled them to respond better than the Lovedu to the stimuli of Western culture. Above all, European penetration benefited them, while it dispossessed the Sotho. The history of the contacts and reactions is the history of a century, which is far too complicated for treatment here. But this can be said: the Shangana-Tonga gained land and the right to be ruled by their own chiefs; the Lovedu lost land which was given to their erstwhile subjects; the prestige of Mujaji in the eyes of the white man waned while that of Shangana-Tonga chiefs waxed; and the Shangana-Tonga subservience

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177 to the European hardened Lovedu antagonism and resistance both to the European and to his protégés.

THE ICONOCLASM OF CHRISTIANITY

177 797 Effective European contact with the tribes of the lowveld began only in the decade 1880–90. At first Mujaji II hoped to play off Christianity and the secular authorities against one another, but they proved to be inseparable allies. Christianity in those days tolerated no compromise with pagan practices: it could not envisage the salvation of souls except through sweeping away heathen custom. It interceded on behalf of the Native against the encroachments of an acquisitive society, but conducted its crusade with the support of the civil arm of that society. When Mujaji was recalcitrant, she was reminded of the fate of Sekukuni (1877) and Cetewayo (1879); when she complained that the new creed was iconoclastic, Albasini replied that the Government also 'had the Book'; and when farms were parcelled out to settlers, the missionary became landlord of 4,856 acres and exacted labour and fees from his tenants. The Native was already angered by the raids of Buys, servant of the Republic, freebooter, and 'upperhead or great captain', and of Albasini, Native commissioner, Portuguese trader, and self-appointed chief of the Magwamba (Knobnose-Shangana-Tonga). Thus he could hardly have been expected to receive with open arms either the missionary or the settler.

The highest praise is due to the missionary for his superhuman efforts, his espousal of the cause of the Native, his intercession that gave the Lovedu their location, his unrewarded labour of love, and the inestimable gift of education and a new outlook on life that he brought. Too little has been made of these services, of the difficulties overcome and of the ingratitude he encountered. Khashani, first evangelist and royal kinsman, was martyred (1884); and so fierce was the resistance to Christianity that the drought of 1881–2 was attributed to those who were its apostles. But all this we must pass over, for it is with the reception of Christianity and Western culture into Lovedu culture and its response to the challenge that we are concerned.

The historical background of Christianity is a sharp differentiation of converts from pagans, in order to minimize the danger of relapsing and to ensure the growth of solidarity and communal interests in splendid Christian isolation. But the result was the ranging of Christians and pagans in opposite camps and fierce conflicts of loyalty. The history of Western culture is not distinct all along the line from Christianity, but it may be distinguished as distant and distasteful control rather than direct and deliberate disruption of custom, causing hindrances and frustrations and antagonism among all sections, not preaching a new way of life to the carefully segregated few.

The great changes effected by Christianity are those among converts. Half a century of evangelization has brought forth conversion among 3 to 5 per cent. of the Lovedu. Beyond this small insulated minority there have been repercussions, but, owing to the segregation of the Christians in mission settlements and the protective secrecy of the pagans, these repercussions have not been great.

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By far the greatest concentration of Christians is upon Medingen, the mission-owned farm. In 1936 the total population of Medingen was 1,870, of whom 893, or just over 47 per cent., were Christians. In 1911 the population was 1,731, and, as nearly as can be determined, 780, or 45 per cent., were Christians; and the figures respectively for 1921 were 1,883 and 990, or 52 per cent. The striking fact is that, despite the many influences favouring an increase of numbers, the percentage of Christians has remained practically stationary. The most powerful missionizing agent is the school, which is attended by about 300 children, who tend to complete their school careers with confirmation; moreover, in the past, Christians from everywhere sought sanctuary on the mission station, while there are powerful evangelizing forces on the station as well as obstacles to the settlement there of pagans. Figures of increases or decreases are not available for the rest of Uulovedu, where one of the most significant phenomena is the relapse to paganism in the last decade of large numbers of the royal sons. Among those who have relapsed, however, an impression has been made, though often they are, like the sophisticated Native, the most implacable enemies of the faith in which they have been nurtured. It is the disruptive effect of Christianity upon custom as seen among converts living on mission stations that we propose first of all to examine, turning thereafter to positive contributions among these converts and ending with a brief consideration of the repercussion among the rest of the population.

The distinctive feature of Christianity is that it breaks down in order to build up. In the form in which it appears on the mission stations it is not merely hostile to repugnant custom, but also works against everything that can be recognized as custom. Converts and their teachers hold that, without complete and irrevocable severance from traditional values, the emotional background easily reasserts itself and undoes the work of Christianity. Participation even in innocent heathen life evokes disturbing associations. To outlaw merely the repugnant part of a custom is useless; the prohibition must be total. An attempt to differentiate is like an attempt to give reasons; the reasons for a thing are liable to be confused with its substance and explanations often merely obscure the issue. The old, even if only doubtfully incompatible with Christian practices or beliefs, must not be presented to conscious attention. Hence Christianity draws the individual away from all things tribal. Compromises are impossible upon such questions as the freedom of the sexes, beer-drinking, polygyny, and among the older population even *munywalo* (bride-price); there is no room for a liberal interpretation of our system of religion or morality. The policy in the past has never been to graft the new upon the old; it has been to destroy the cultural pattern and to substitute another, irrespective of whether it could be woven into the remainder of the social scheme or harmonized with existing beliefs and institutions.

This is not an indictment of missionary effort; it is the result of a considered policy conceived to be in the best interests of posterity. The mission had, from the earliest times, to contend with lack of discipline, slackness where there was no supervising foreman irritating habits of

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177 duplicity and ingratitude, suspicion, and attempts to take advantage of
797 kindness. These were construed as barbaric traits that had to be uprooted. There appeared, in addition, to be an unusually large number of anti-Christian practices: the tribal justice, proceeding upon no fixed principles, seemed corrupt; there were periodical smellings-out of witches; people believed in the divinity of the queen. Dancing and drumming were obnoxious, not merely because they were 'heathenish din', but also because of their association with the idolatry of the *digɔma* and the 'schools', the sexual laxity at the *gɔsha* dances and possession by spirits.
[533] There were also mendicant minstrels who played the xylophone (*dibila*) and sang for their food and lodging, whose songs did not always express Christian sentiments. One, for instance, not long ago, used to sing, 'Christians are cheats who put us to sleep before we eat [referring to grace], so as to kill us unawares', and another's song rang more crudely: 'The husbandless woman climbs to the roof of the hut; she urinates and the rats fall down in a faint'.

Early Church policy laid down what should be outlawed on mission-owned farms; wife-purchase, shrines, *digɔma*, rain-making, witchcraft, divination, 'strengthenings with medicine', the consecration of weapons, and other repugnant customs. It stamped as particularly reprehensible theft, sexual offences, opposition to the Church, and, later, migration to seek employment in the sinful towns. The sanctions with which it can enforce obedience upon a self-governed estate include refusal of such privileges as baptism and confirmation, public denunciation in church, various penalties, such as road-making and catechism classes, and even expulsion from the mission station. Natives believe that the whole system is served by a network of espionage, and the intrinsic difficulties of the situation have been immensely increased by the fact that financially the mission station largely relies upon the contributions in fees and work of its tenants. On one occasion a self-constituted committee of disaffected tenants in Johannesburg, who were in arrears, accused the mission of capitalistic exploitation and of robbing the Natives of their country, and drastic action was necessary.

177 The Christian attack upon the marriage pattern and especially polygyny
795 has led to many subtle reactions. Devout Christians of the old order still
184 refuse to accept cattle, but surreptitiously pocket money payments which by the nature of the case can be used to subserve personal, not social, ends. The Church no longer sets its face against *munyoalo*, but seeks to turn it into a kind of dowry, and Christians call it 'thanks'. The Christian's freedom of choice of a mate weakens the reciprocities and emphasizes independence and materialism at the price of the patterns of co-operation and long-range mutuality. A Christian often marries a non-relative, but cannot easily escape the complex net thrown over the whole social structure by the cattle exchanges. He may have to face the opposition of those relatives whose displeasure may cause illness to him or his family. If he marries a second wife, his cross-cousin, he is excommunicated, and he will be unable, even on his death-bed, to secure the final consolation and blessing of the Church unless he sets aside his pagan wife. Polygyny, the inheritance of wives, and beer are so deeply rooted in

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the culture that they constitute the gravest difficulties of the mission as well as the most formidable obstacles to embracing Christianity. Christians are required to build a house before marriage: this again tears them out of the context of parental influences. Wedding feasts and bridal gifts introduce the pattern of the highveld Sotho and of the towns, but without serious disruptive effects.

Christian marriage sets up community of property and strikes at the economic independence of women; it emphasizes patriliny, but, in compensation, introduces a conception of marital companionship. Families are larger, because the old spacing of children has broken down: monogamy, proscription of the institution of 'lovers' (*ruglovu*), the opposition to anything pagan, the diminished control of the old women are some of the reasons. There is more illegitimacy because the marriage of girls is later, examination for virginity is considered un-Christian, the disciplinary influences of the initiation 'schools' and of parental authority have weakened, and there is no training in the rules of incomplete sexual intercourse. Among some of the other results, it may be said that Christians are less complaisant about the infidelity of their spouses and that the care of a brother's widow occasions serious conflicts.

The iconoclastic effect of Christianity may be illustrated in a few other spheres of culture. Christians often object to performing the services to the chief expected of every tribesman. At the capital they plough one of the queen's fields, but have largely withdrawn themselves or have been excluded from the political and legal organization. They do not submit themselves to procedures involving appeal to the smeller-out, regard as repugnant the duties of messengers in 'blood' cases and, by extension, those of all court messengers, and, since the regular court sessions are held on Sunday, they cannot attend them, nor indeed are they welcomed as members of the *khoro*. At Medingen the districts are not recognized and the majority of offences come before the council of elders or the missionary. Christians disregard traditional holidays and taboos, such as those after deaths and the first rains or when lightning strikes down to earth. They defiantly plough over sacred places to show the absurdity of superstitious fears. They neither kill twins nor observe the rules as to burial in wet places. They oppose the 'schools', avoid the dances and ignore the firstfruits rites.

It is un-Christian to become possessed or to have the 'dirt'-removing rite after death. Even important royal kinsmen who become Christians must be buried in the Christian cemetery, not where they will be contaminated by heathenish associations. The bearers are Christians, and pagan relatives follow the hearse in the rear, segregated from the Christians, for they do not know the hymns that are sung. The corpse is made to face west, towards the setting sun, not north, whence the Lovedu came. When the queen's brother, who became a Christian on his death-bed, was buried, the only concession permitted to custom was the placing of an ox skin upon the coffin; no wonder that his spirit did not long lie at rest and that subsequent drought was attributed to his complaints. Not only are pagans and Christians separated in the

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177 procession to the grave, but, after burial, relatives on each side have
795 their separate rites.
184 All this is but a reflection of the attempt to make the segregation as complete as possible. Even the visible evidence of different styles of building, of dressing, and of living together was in the past more boldly thrown into relief by the geometrical villages, with their square houses fronted by flower gardens and straight streets crossing one another at right angles and ornamented with orange trees. But the Christians' efforts to differentiate themselves from pagans are limited by two main factors. Neither the Bible nor their limited experience of the world has suggested too many different ways of living and behaving. In large spheres of culture they know no more than is supplied by the traditional background; and limited resources often make impracticable the adoption of different standards and attitudes.

Christians tend to defer in everything, not to the tribal, but to the church authorities. Local problems and church matters, as well as relations with the European, are advised upon and guided by the church and its officials. Christians set themselves up as interpreters of and intermediaries with the European; they tend to assume command upon occasions of European festivities or of intervention, except that of official business with the chief or the councillors. They crowd round inquisitively when agricultural officials arrive, while pagans avoid them; they prepare the programme or draw up the illuminated address when there is a celebration, such as the Coronation in 1937 or an agricultural show. And they work out these plans and addresses in consultation, not with the tribal authorities, but with the evangelist. It is not unnatural, for they complain that the tribal authorities will never learn and never listen to their advice or accept their suggestions. All this occasions friction and divided allegiance, it weakens the authority of the queen, and it antagonizes the pagans.

In recent years there has been more co-operation. The old influential Christians have died and the educated young pagans have learnt to manage things for themselves. Agricultural officials, despite active resistance from pagans and co-operation from Christians, realize that their work is incomplete without sustained efforts to secure the interest of the pagans. Christians are vouchsafed no information from the capital and their opportunities of leadership and interference become limited. Jealousies among Christians have led to disunity and they have lost control of the postal arrangements. The secretarial duties of the chief are undertaken jointly by a Christian and several pagans. And young men who in the past found their major opportunities in identifying themselves with the Christians are beginning to find it more profitable to side with the pagans. This is but a reflection of more universal trends: the importance of the church has receded before the rapid expansion of the activities of the administration, industry, and commerce; these activities are no longer in active co-operation with Christianity, and differences in religious outlook between pagans and Christians tend to be over-shadowed by the feeling of common hostility to and distrust of the European. How far the new tendencies will lead to constructive

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co-operation and to bringing Christians into more realistic touch with the total tribal environment are questions too large for consideration here.

But Christianity has not destroyed only; it has also built up. Christians wholeheartedly embraced education; pagans, believing that education implies the acceptance of a foreign faith, are torn by conflicting loyalties, and their ardent desire to acquire the three R's expresses itself in the attempts made to set up a tribal school, which will be the agent, not of an alien creed, but of traditional values. Education and the outlook it has engendered have equipped Christians for meeting the impact of Western conquest and culture. Schoolchildren lose much of the lore of the veld and the training of the tribal initiations, but they gain new games, new skills, and new knowledge, implicit in which are assumptions regarding the nature of man and the purpose of existence. The church, through its preachings and schools, has been the channel of more than half the influences of Western ethics and culture in their positive effects. Its future lies in its control of education, for its religious mission has become submerged in a mass of technical and routine duties, entailing the preparation of pupils for examinations and the filling up of forms, with consequent loss of personal contacts and pastoral care. Its religious influence is evident in grace at meals, prayers for oneself, church services, Biblical Christian names, feasts, sacraments, and periodical visits of the women of one settlement to commune with and advise those of another. But on the whole the purely religious has been eclipsed by the educational effects. The two are inextricably interwoven; and their separation might well mean that Christianity will have no message for modern man and will be regarded as linked with the repressive, not the progressive, forces of Western civilization.

The valuable adjustments brought about by Christianity are the adjustments towards the modern world: receptivity to Western standards, less reluctance to co-operate with Europeans, and aspirations to seek self-realization amid the opportunities offered by them. Christians are less sceptical than pagans of European health services and of the innovations of the agricultural demonstrator; and they are better equipped and, until recently, were more eager to accept such Government posts as those of interpreters, policemen, and forest rangers. Only Christians can be teachers. Christians are driven to action by the idea of progress; they seek their future and achievement in change; and they attribute the disabilities under which the tribe suffers to the ignorance of their pagan rulers. Not much of what they have learnt intellectually has merged integrally with their lives, but they are less frustrated than the pagans.

Their outlook stands in close relation to the great extension of economic needs necessitated by Christianity, such as church and school fees, books and occasionally newspapers, better clothes and more European household articles, brick houses, wooden coffins, and burial societies. Their contributions, which help to support the widespread organization and institutions of the Church, constitute one of the main resistances to conversion; but the necessity to meet the new demands has made them keener agriculturalists than are the pagans. You sometimes hear a pagan derisively call out to Christian workers, not the friendly greeting '*Uxakwa*'

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177 (workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian
795 reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians
184 are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement, occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities, Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion, develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.

177 There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the
795 tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft
184 which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence
578 of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of
754 the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers. Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven underground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain, albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witchcraft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witchcraft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

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The repercussions of the Christian outlook in the tribe as a whole may be referred to briefly. The tendencies are changing because of the recent re-absorption of Christians into the tribe, but the main results to-day are still those coming from the segregated Christians. Christian holidays have to some extent become part of the life of the tribe. Sunday is, as far as agriculture and building operations are concerned, a day of rest, but, for this reason, it is set aside specially for public business, such as tribal gatherings and *khoro* trials; and one result is that Christians, even if their moralizing and attempts to improve law and procedure were better tolerated, are excluded from participation. People occasionally have 'beer of Christmas' or 'New Year'. Twin murders can no longer be reported to the queen, as there is danger of implicating her, and Christian women, more interested in the pregnancy, legitimate or otherwise, of their friends, threaten to take action if they suspect a murder. But the effect is unsuspectedly complicated: a pagan mother who under pressure allows her twins to live may be refused assistance by her husband's mother, and often reacts by underfeeding them in order to starve them to death; and much greater secrecy is maintained. In 1923, after a few convictions in the European courts, the queen forbade the killing of twins and ordered births to be reported to the mission station; but the rule became a dead letter as soon as it could be safely circumvented.

Real or pretended sensitiveness among pagans to Christian values has had some effects. Not only do pagans ascribe their misfortunes to disregard of duties fostered by the example of the Christians, but they advance Christian values as excuses for not fulfilling their own obligations. They may condemn the Christian intrusion as causing drought or disobedience, but they may justify their own doubtful behaviour upon principles of Christian ethics. In 1937, for instance, Mashishimali refused to accept a *gsha* dance on the ground that his wife's brother, who lived in the village, was a Christian, but the real reason was self-interest and unwillingness to kill a beast and to burden himself with feeding the dancers. For a similar reason, an old woman, nominally a Christian, refused to allow her son to accommodate the dancers, but the reason she advanced was the pagan associations of the drums. Slackness in obeying the queen is ascribed to the example of the Christians, who break taboos with impunity and escape their obligations as messengers of the *khoro* by declaring that the work is un-Christian.

At one time Christians could terrify pagans by predicting eclipses and locust invasions, visitations which they ascribed to the obstinacy of the pagans in refusing to accept the gospel; this weapon is useless to-day, but the Christian hell causes some uneasiness of conscience and repressed fear, especially evident in dreams and during illness. There are death-bed conversions, and the evangelist is sometimes anxiously called to interpret alarming dreams. Masilu, a budding doctor still learning the bones, which had been discarded by a Christian relative, suffered from a persistent illness. While bed-ridden he dreamt that he had ascended a great ladder half-way to heaven and came to a luxuriant country. There he saw two roads, but he was stopped by the guardian of the gate to which one of these roads led, and told to take the left-hand road going to the

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177 west. He suspected that that road led to hell. The evangelist, called in
184 for consultation, prayed for his soul, explaining that the dream clearly
195 warned the pagan sinner to mend his way of life if he wished to be admitted to the road that led to salvation. Masilu was half-persuaded, but when his wife scorned the imposture and he had regained health, he let the matter slide. But sometimes conversion takes place in such circumstances, especially as the view is held that many people, after a dream of this nature, suddenly die. We may also associate with Christian ethics such phenomena as the growth of a sex-guilt complex, the wearing of blouses to cover the breasts, and the repression of virginity observances.

The persistence of a belief among Christians that the restrictions imposed upon the tribe may be attributed to backwardness and refusal to give up custom has not been without its effects. Sophisticated pagans share this belief with the Christians, but on the whole the assumption of enlightenment and superiority derives from the conception, fostered by Christianity, of the darkness of the pagan world. There is much that can be advanced in support of their contentions: the location allotted to the tribe, it is urged, would have been larger if the whole tribe, not merely a portion of it, had presented itself to General Joubert when, in the 1890s, after their defeat, he commanded their presence in order to enable him to give them land proportionate to their numbers; and, similarly, the stringency of the dipping laws, the absence of any benefits from the fund of the local tax, the ascendancy of the Shangana-Tonga are laid at the door of the ignorance of the councillors. Christians allege that in other tribes, where there has been enlightenment, disabilities have disappeared. Some pagans, half-accepting the impeachment, blame their leaders; others, and they are in the majority and the most influential, resent the imputation and fiercely resist every suggestion that comes from the Christians. On the whole, however, the obvious advantages of knowledge of the ways of the white man and of the outside world cannot be gainsaid: it is the educated Native who gets the best posts and secures exemption from carrying passes. But where enlightenment is paraded by Christians, it merely occasions more resistance and opposition.

THE CHALLENGE OF WESTERN CONQUEST

177 The influence of Western culture, as a force distinct from Christianity, can be fully interpreted only against a background that extends, as regards time, to the earliest contacts between Bantu and European and, as regards space, over the whole of South Africa. Attitudes and reactions observable in Lulocedu are often intelligible in the light, not of local misfortunes, but of experiences of tribes in other parts of South Africa. We cannot here discuss this question; indeed, the problems arising from the impact of Western culture within the tribe alone are too complex for summary treatment. On the whole, there has only been legislation against utterly repugnant custom and, until recently, the restrictions that have been efficiently enforced were few, and did not strike directly at the integrity of custom. The policy has been one of *laisser-faire*; and no active attempt has been made to graft new culture elements upon the old patterns. The

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integration that has taken place has been a response of the culture itself to the challenges of the new order. Therein lies the greatest difference from the manner in which Christianity has influenced the culture. Since 1938 the policy has changed somewhat, and there are more active though still not conscious interferences with custom; but among the Lovedu the effect as yet has been negligible. 177

The labour migration to towns and farms, necessitated by taxation, is reluctantly undertaken. The Lovedu are not easy prey to recruiters, who have to give assurances regarding, not only labour and other conditions, but also immunity from arrest for arrears of tax. The ideal is to return home, for 'The only place one never returns to is the womb'. The migration has not had the great effect that is reported in other parts of Africa: very little that is brought back is incorporated into the culture, even the accent men acquire in towns being rapidly discarded: marriage ceremonial does not require the presence of the man, his bridal visits being often undertaken by others; the pivotal position of women in the social structure minimizes disturbances; and, since during the whole suckling period a husband should partially avoid his wife, his absence for six months or so in town is not a serious problem as far as sexual adjustments are concerned. The absence of the men creates difficulties in holding the initiations and in economic dispositions. But the salient fact is that the energies liberated by the use of the plough exceed the drain caused by the labour migration. Old men, who no longer pay taxes, conduct the political and legal affairs of the tribe, and women, who do not migrate, control religion and ritual.

In legal arrangements there have been changes. But the deprivation of the power to enforce decisions means little to the old culture, which never relied upon force, though it may mean something when the sanction of reciprocity has become undermined. The force of the law is being destroyed, not by the limited jurisdiction allowed, but by the interference of solicitors and the multiplication, so it is believed, of criminals acquitted or protected by the European. Witches, they say, escape punishment by Europeans, because Europeans neither have witchcraft nor understand its workings. We have elsewhere noted some readjustments in legal procedure. Here we need add only a few further points The *khosi* must be careful lest dissatisfied litigants report procedures or decisions that are illegal by European standards; but, on the other hand, it sometimes threatens recalcitrant debtors with the dire consequences of being sent to the European, and such is the disinclination to be judged by the European that the threat is generally effective. The *khosi*, for instance, takes care not to order an expulsion (which is illegal) before the crops are reaped, as the victim is then more liable to appeal, while many cases may be quoted in which the threat to send a litigant to the Native Commissioner has led to a solution by agreement. The weakening of the sanctions of reciprocity has led to increasing resort, not to the European courts, but to 'sending back' the evil. 177 692

The *khosi* has more and more to deal with written evidence, such as cattle lists, letters between the parties and from farmers, and pieces of paper on which had been noted the marriage cattle that have passed. 177 695

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177 605 The handling of this evidence is woefully unskilful, but important distinctions must be made. Where the writing takes the place of the notches that used to be cut on sticks to indicate the cattle that had passed, it tends to be accepted if there is other supporting evidence; statements in a letter of the amount of money sent with the letter are generally given credence; but sentiments expressed in letters and written accounts of the circumstances of a case are usually completely ignored or dismissed as unimportant. In one case where a husband wrote that he had definitely deserted his wife, the court ignored the letter on the ground that, unless the husband gave his evidence in person, he might well reverse his attitude and appeal to the Native Commissioner. The subject of the development in the handling of written evidence is a large one; but to what we have said we would merely add that the recording of evidence in writing has been attempted, since 1932, in only fifteen cases all told. The attempt has miserably failed. The usual record reads approximately as follows: 'Andrew Malopo *v.* £19. 5 Jim Malate 2/8/32', and to that cryptic statement nothing is added by way of such embellishment as the nature of the case, whether the date refers to the day of trial or retrial or payment, whether in fact there has been payment, and so on. Native Commissioners have sometimes tendered advice about how cases should be decided and recorded, but it is beyond their province, and the results have been precisely nil.

177 642 Political institutions have suffered no fundamental change. External relations are maintained through the wives the queen still receives from, and the rain she still gives to, foreign chiefs; the suppression of military exploits and cattle raids has not affected the Lovedu. Relations with European authorities have modified initiative and control over large spheres of policy, for the tribal authorities receive instructions rather than discuss suggestions, though consultation is nowadays a recognized preliminary to the introduction of an innovation. The tribal gathering (*khivij*) never was important in Lovedu; now it discusses perhaps more tribal matters than in the past, as well as European proposals and demands, but it has little power. The councillors, presenting European matters, sometimes give a distorted version, finding it difficult to justify either the measure proposed or their inability to bring about modifications or to circumvent it; and very often they do not mention important points at all. The widespread tendency to justify a desired action by saddling the European with responsibility for it reappears again and again. The people may be told by the councillors (who have a car) to mend the road, because, they say, an official who broke the *spring of his car upon it has* complained to the Native Commissioner; the administrative admonition to maintain better control over young boys going to work without their parents' consent was presented to the tribal meeting as a warning that boys not carrying tax receipts would be arrested if found at beer parties. (By traditional standards, now maintained with difficulty, beer parties are only for adults.) The justification or circumvention is upon the pattern that is known, and that pattern, despite the intervention of the European, remains intact.

177 231 656 Measures taken to protect national (South African) interests, such as

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *hu fisa*, the care of cattle by others. 177 231 656

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness. 177 231 556

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass. 177 231

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tsonga introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant, the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders 177 241 134

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177 planted with sweet sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of
241 stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its
134 utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

177 A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money
437 subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with
[182] Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The
182 suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes attributed to Nyasaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures
[164] with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894–6. The psychological determinants of change are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutri-
146 tion. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation
182 that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment. 177 146 182

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals. 177 825

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doctored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European justice are compensated by magic (*hu nickela*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digoma* and the *zwiđajani* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal. 177 754 578

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material 177

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177 culture and in the small body of segregated Christians, has been indirect response in attitudes and in the old institutions rather than incorporation of culture elements. The purpose has been to circumvent, if direct resistance was impossible, rather than to accept or embody.

Among the vast majority of the people the long-range pressure of new needs and the indirect response in attitudes has left intact almost all the essential features of the culture. Lovedu religion remains a reality, showing few signs of being modified by Christianity. Ritual is practically untouched—even Christians believe in the magical power of the queen. Magic and witchcraft have become more rather than less elaborate and have been applied to every new introduction from the European. Among the most devout Christians the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and of therapeutics still hold sway. The essential structure of the political, social and marriage systems is intact, though the reciprocities have weakened. The 'schools', which in 1938 we had thought dead, have been energetically revived, everything in the country during the whole of 1939 being made subservient to the supreme purposes of the *vyali*. The need for dramatizing social values, and for self-expression, which is served by the 'schools', becomes greater as frustration and the lassitude of under-nourishment increase. The bases of subsistence have deteriorated and Natives are not slow to point out that in the sphere of culture most affected by the European the evil effects, despite the gains, are most evident. They blame the plough for the destruction of riverside gardens and for soil-erosion, but they realize that it is impossible to go back to the hoe; and they dislike the new forms of employment, but are unable to see any way of doing without them.

The Lovedu are now entering a new phase, that of greater interference by the European and of increasing community of interest with other tribes. This will ultimately mean a more direct challenge to their institutions and a response in terms partly of their local, and partly of a more comprehensive cultural configuration. The necessity of studying culture contact and culture change comparatively and over large areas will thus be more imperative than ever.

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Made and printed in Great Britain by
The Camelot Press Limited, London and Southampton

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[End map A]

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DUKHALAGA ON S.RHODESIA
NYAL
WANKWE
NGALAND
TSHAUNE
PORTUGUESE
EAST
AFRICA
GAME
RESERVE
D
T O N G A
L O V E D U
L U D I
E D I

[End map B]

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AFRICA

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

JOURNAL DE L'INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DES LANGUES ET CIVILISATIONS AFRICAINES

ZEITSCHRIFT DES INTERNATIONALEN INSTITUTS FÜR AFRIKANISCHE SPRACHEN UND KULTUREN

Editor

DIEDRICH WESTERMANN

Assistant Editor

D. G. BRACKETT

VOLUME XI

1938

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON : HUMPHREY MILFORD

[title page]

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Thonga FT6
Venda FX19

AFRICA

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

VOLUME XI JULY 1938 NUMBER 3

THE PLACE OF THE NORTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL SOTHO IN THE SOUTH BANTU COMPLEX

EILEEN JENSEN KRIGE

L 101 131

THE Sotho of the North-Eastern Transvaal Lowveld occupy an area with fairly well-marked geographical boundaries. To the east, the Game Reserve, low-lying, unhealthy, very sparsely populated even in the old days, remains an effective barrier to contact with and further migrations from the Shangana-Tonga of Portuguese East Africa. South are the Olifants River and the towering Drakensberg range curving north-west then northwards to merge into the well-marked escarpment on the west dividing Lowveld from Highveld. On the north the Klein Letaba river roughly demarcates our area from the Venda and the Shangana-Tonga of the Knobnose Location. The Sotho-speaking Venda of Tswale and Moila, who fall well within this area, resemble in culture their Sotho-ized neighbours more than their own Venda kin to the north; but the Shangana-Tonga, who occupy most of the lower-lying eastern and north-eastern portion of the area and comprise at least one-third of its total population, are unassimilated strangers of different stock coming from the north-east and east. They have been entering since about 1840, usually in small bands, at first seeking the protection of and subjecting themselves to the Sotho owners of the land. On the arrival

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'Africa': the Journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures is published by the Institute, but except where otherwise stated the writers of the articles are alone responsible for the opinions expressed.

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Thonga FT6

of the white man, some of their headmen were granted independent locations which have served as nuclei for the building up of more united tribal groups. (See accompanying map.)

The most important Sotho tribes of this area are the Lobedu, the Narene and the Khaha who together comprise about three-quarters of the total Sotho population.[1] The outstanding demographical feature is, however, the numerical predominance of the Lobedu who, with a population of well over 40,000, are not only the greatest tribe, but outnumber all the other Sotho-speaking tribes put together.[2] The pre-eminence and cultural influence of the Lobedu in this area does not rest solely upon their numerical preponderance. It is based largely upon the fame of their queen, Modjadji, who, as the greatest rain-maker in the Northern Transvaal, is not only regularly approached with gifts by other chiefs but also sometimes places them on the throne (*ho bea bokosi*) and is appealed to in cases of disputed succession.

This area, though forming part of a greater cultural whole including the Northern Transvaal Highveld and probably Pediland to the south, is, however, sharply characterized by distinctive features, such as ritual suicide of the chief and recognition of women as rulers in their own right, that are not found elsewhere. These are sufficient to form a fairly well-defined culture pattern, which, owing to the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the Lobedu, if for no other reason,

[1] The Sotho population of our area is made up as follows, according to van Warmelo:

Lobedu	8237 taxpayers.		
Narene	2521	"	(Mahlo 1332, Letswalo 1189).
Khaha	1608	"	
Thabina (Mozoboya)	1048	"	
Phalaborwa	335	"	
Makwibe	300	"	
Baba Mamidja	473	"	
Shai or Tsolye	256	"	
Tswale	337	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.
Molin	260	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.

The only large tribal groups among Shangaan-Tonga are

Mohlaba	2918 taxpayers.	
Nwamitwa	1547	"

[2] The proportion is Lobedu 8237 taxpayers.
[illegible] 7133 "

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101 one might call the Lobedu culture complex, though it is not at all clear what the origin of its differentiating features is. In its most typical form this culture is found among the Lobedu of Modjadji, the Letswalo and the Khaha. To the north-west it merges into the not very different Venda culture complex; to the south, Pedi influences, noticeable on the edge of the Drakensberg, become increasingly apparent among the Mahlo and eventually predominate among the Bala Mamidja on the banks of the Olifants. In the east, the Phalborwa have developed specialized responses to the challenge of an [184] arid bushveld environment; while to the west along the escarpment, Tokwa influences are so marked that the Sekhopo branch of the Lobedu, who live there, differ more from the Lobedu of Modjadji than do the unrelated Khaha and Letswalo.[1] These gradations are to some extent hidden by the fact that owing to the mixed composition of every tribe differences in custom in any single tribe are often as great as differences from one tribe to another. The nature of this Lowveld cultural pattern, those features peculiar to this area and those held in common with other tribes, will best be shown by a short account in general terms of various aspects of the social and economic organization of these tribes.

361 171 General Aspects of the Lowveld Village. The Lowveld village, nestling among the trees and shrubs of the surrounding bushveld vegetation, which usually provides a natural fence, differs in general aspect from that of the Highveld tribes with its well-smeared, high-walled courtyards. While there is a tendency in the south, among Narene of Segororo and to a lesser extent among Thabina and Maake's Khaha, for villages to straggle in lines along the hill-sides, there is nowhere any sign of the large agglomerations of dwellings so typical of the Tswana town and present in an attenuated form also among Tokwa of the Highveld. The Lowveld village is not large, consisting generally of from two to twenty huts; but there is evidence that when times were more unsettled and the need for protection kept

[1] The Birwa who live partly in the Lowveld, partly in the Highveld, probably belong to the Lobedu culture complex. Though their culture differs in many respects from that of the Lowveld tribes there are also marked similarities, such as ritual suicide of the chief.

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s effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 361
quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 171
arger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both
oustyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho
uild on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well
uited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the
ld days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not
ntil recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for
griculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [592]
wo huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in
ections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the
ob and beer-making activities.

Tribal Economy. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 241
gricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 231
dults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [262]
re unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As
mong Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as
rictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
nly is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in
wn or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess
ttle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 241
full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate
ome of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in
gricultural activities, every married man having one large field for
hich he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop,
en grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pump-
ins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely
woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly
anted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some
eas, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a
esult of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential
limatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one
mily are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much
s ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
ees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached
o cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

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241 of the agriculture of the more mountainous portions of the Lowveld is the use of terraces, or rather contour walls of stone, for there is no levelling of the ground in between, to prevent excessive washing away of soil. With the absence of men in the towns and the introduction of the plough vith subsequent preference for valley cultivation, these contour walls are tending to fall into disuse.

162 Division of labour between the sexes is the same here as among [171] Venda and the Highveld tribes of the Northern Transvaal. While care of cattle is the province of men and agricultural work is done by both sexes, cooking and housekeeping is confined to women. Men are responsible for the erection of storage receptacles, renewal of pantry and village enclosures and the lion's share in hut-building, including thatching, for women do only plastering of walls and preparation of the floor. The crafts confined to men are ironwork, work in skin, and all wood-work such as the manufacture of drums, platters, spoons, milk pails, stamping blocks, porridge twirlers, and flat winnowing baskets. Pottery is confined to women, but weaving and basketry (other than the making of winnowing baskets) is done by both sexes.

162 Political Organization and Position of the Chief. The most 163 outstanding features of the Lobedu culture complex, which clearly differentiate the Lowveld tribes from their neighbours to the south and west, are ritual suicide of the chief and the possibility of women ruling in their own right.[1] Among the Lobedu the chief reigns for a period of four circumcision schools, each 'school' being separated from the previous one by a period of almost ten years, and then has to drink poison and die. The institution can hardly continue when its supporting background of ritual and belief is crumbling, but it has survived to this day; the immediate predecessors of the present Lobedu and Letswale rulers died unnatural deaths in the traditional manner, Modjadji II in 1894 and Mamathola in 1905. There is in this area no conscious belief that growth of the crops, welfare of the cattle,

[172] [1] These two features occur together in the most important tribes of the Lowveld such as the Lobedu, Khlin, Nareme, Thabina. The only tribes to whom this institution is foreign are the Phalaborwa and Tsebye and the two Venda tribes of Molla and Tswale. Sekhupo and Radwadu, sections of the Balobedu, broke away when the first woman succeeded and themselves have only men rulers.

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and the regularity of the seasons are bound up with the life of the chief, but the identification of the earth with the chief in the phrase ' mabu a fesa ' (the earth is hot, burning) which is used by all Lowveld tribes as a euphemism to denote the illness or death of the chief, seems to imply some connexion between the life of the chief and the fertility of the earth. Some such association seems implicit also in the feeling among the Lobedu that the chief should have no physical defect (it is thought to be impossible for the queen to be ill, and the present queen has never had a day's illness) and should lead a secluded life, being seen by and giving audience to royal relatives and the nobility only. So close is the association between the ruler and the land he rules among the Lobedu that the chief may not leave the country or cross its boundaries, a taboo which made it impossible for Modjadji to register her vote at the nearest Native Commissioner's office in the recent elections for the Native Council. 642 643

The great power of the chief in the three most important tribes of the Lowveld lies in rain-making. Here we find as in so many other aspects of their culture an intensification of a feature present in modified form in many other tribes, leading to a difference as great or greater than the complete absence of the trait. Many chiefs in South Africa are great rain-makers, and tribes of the Highveld and Sekukuniland share with those of the Lowveld the custom in time of drought of sending young men to ' beat mofoko ' pegs around the country or to put out all the fires in the country and rekindle new ones in each village. But the Lowveld chiefs, especially Modjadji, are the greatest rain-makers of all, recognized in the old days as such by tribes as far south as the Swazi and Zulu, and rain ritual here has characteristic features not found elsewhere. Important among these is the custom of dancing for rain. When the rains do not come at the right time, it is usual for each headman in turn to come to the royal kraal with his followers to *loka* rain by dancing for the chief, and when this does not help the women come as a last resort to do a special dance which is so exacting and causes so much crying on the part of small babies, who have to go hungry while their mothers dance, that it is believed the chief must be moved by it. This custom, still practised by the Lobedu, has died out elsewhere in the Lowveld, having been last performed among the Khaha in 1911. The belief that twins, mis- 643 789 643 789 766

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643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men,
578 and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
644 or *bathanosi* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to be a *mothanosi* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanosi* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanosi* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the
[565] village and permission to have children. A *mothanosi* of noble birth ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaba and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's
[171] mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage.

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marriage. Where the chief is a woman, her own son or daughter succeeds. The Lobedu now have a distinct preference for women rulers; the last three chiefs have been women, and the present queen succeeded in preference to her elder uterine brother. It would seem that the fashion was set by the Lobedu, for tribal genealogies show no women chiefs in the Lowveld prior to the accession of Modjadji I. Shortly after that we have the appearance of the first queen in the Khaha and Mamaila tribes, followed later by Letswalo and Mahlo. Lowveld tribes are no exception to the general tendency among Bantu for succession to the throne to be accompanied by trouble and bloodshed. They have, however, an interesting method of submitting the case of various claimants to the decision of the powers that be by the ordeal of trying the door. All claimants to the throne are brought to the closed door of the hut in which the old chief died. One by one, they step forward shouting their own name and ancestry to try the door which, while resisting all efforts of other claimants, flies open at the touch of the rightful heir.[1]

The Lowveld chief is assisted and advised in the government of his country by his relatives,[2] generally known as *bathomane*. There are no formal councils, as among Tswana, and it is even doubtful whether the *pitjo* or meeting of all adult men in the tribe ever had power to make decisions. Certainly to-day it is called only when orders or notices from European authorities have to be transmitted. No one in the Lobedu tribe ever knows what is happening even in important matters affecting them all, and the tribe accepts with equanimity the most outrageous favouritism of the royal family.

The district, bounded by natural features such as streams or depressions down the hill-sides, is generally quite small, varying in extent from about one square mile to five, so that in a country like Modjadji's with an area of some 140 square miles there are about 100 headmen. Aggregations of districts into larger units under sub-chiefs, such as are found in Zululand, though not unknown, are not

[1] Some one is, of course, inside to hold the door against the wrong claimants and in Modjadji's tribe the chief always has one hut with two doors, said to be for this purpose.

[2] The *rangwane* (father's brother) or *rakhadi* (father's sister) are often important advisers or, especially where a woman is ruling, the *malome* (mother's brother).

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634 624 characteristic of Lowveld political organization. Districts are still of great importance, and the district head is a busy and important man, both socially and politically. Contact with the European has resulted in two diverse tendencies observable in our area: among small tribes, 634 such as Phalaborwa and Sekhopo's Lobédu, there has been increased 624 centralization, the chief taking over functions, such as allocation of 178 land, which used to be the province of headmen; elsewhere, especially in the large kingdom of Modjadji, district headmen are in many respects becoming more independent, exacting from underlings labour to which they are not entitled and even controlling other districts to which they have no right.

624 Women may here, as among Venda, be heads of districts,[1] and, though the proportion of women to men is never high, they are often 562 the most important district heads in the tribe. Women become headmen in a variety of ways: among Lobedu a woman of the royal family may be appointed head of an area (generally, nowadays, over newly-bought tribal land) and though in practice her husband may do most of the work, she it is who is recognized and approached in the last resort. A daughter of the chief house succeeds her father even if there are sons of other houses; a woman may succeed her husband when the children are too young, and though, strictly speaking, she is only a regent in this case, she often continues to rule until her death and long after her son has attained his majority. Or a *rakhadi* may be asked to act as regent for her nephew, in which case she very often secures the succession for her own son, ousting the rightful heir.

695 Law and Justice. The Lowveld was the land of the ordeal, the only method by which witchcraft could be discovered or difficult cases of theft and adultery, where evidence was inconclusive, be decided. Boiling medicated water which scalded only the hands of the guilty might be used or a concoction be drunk which intoxicated the culprit, leaving the innocent unaffected. Except for occasional use among the Phalaborwa, however, the ordeal has been completely ousted by the Shangane-Tonga smeller-out and a modern method of dealing with witchcraft has developed over the whole of the Lowveld, which has spread not only into Vendaland but also into portions of the

[1] Except among Phalaborwa, Tsolya, and the people of Tswale and Sekhopo.

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Highveld. When, after many private consultations with diviners, a man decides to make an accusation of witchcraft, he and the accused will *bitsha* or lay a wager of money or cattle on the matter, after which, accompanied by a witness, the 'ears of the chief', supplied by the Head Kraal, they set out to consult a far-away smeller-out, nearly always a Shangana-Tonga who lives too far to know anything of the people concerned. Unless the smeller-out is able to give the totems of all members of the party and successfully find an object that has been hidden beforehand, they will pass on to another until some one suitable is found. The verdict of the smeller-out is taken to court where it is always accepted and the guilty party told to pay his wager, the modern counterpart of the death penalty of old. A distinction between murder and accidental homicide is everywhere found in the Lowveld, punishment for the latter being the handing over of a girl to the injured family. She never returns home, nor does any bride-price pass. 695 [682]

Bantu etiquette, which makes it impossible for a case to be reported to the chief except through a third party, generally among other Sotho tribes one or two specially appointed men, has in the Lowveld given rise to a rather more complicated system whereby each district has its 'mother' at the Head Kraal, through whom reports are made and actions brought. Where a person in one district has a case at the Head Kraal against some one in another district, the 'mother' of the complainant's district will approach the 'mother' of defendant's district to call his 'children' to the court, and various payments are connected with the system. Most of the important men living at or near the Head Kraal are such 'mothers', many having more than one district in their charge. 576 694

Family and Clan. There is among Lowveld Sotho no term distinguishing the father's from the mother's side of the family, the word *malube* being used to denote all relatives whether on the father's side or the mother's; and in practice, whether at weddings or at working parties, both sets of relatives play an equally important, if sometimes different, part. A man inherits his totem and family name from his father, but in his education and social life his mother's people have great influence. Most children spend some years of their life with the 601 611 855

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855 mother's mother, especially in cases where the next baby has arrived before three or four years have elapsed; and a young motherless child is often sent by his father to his mother's brother's people (where his mother's mother will be) in preference to being handed over to a fellow wife of the mother, for it is generally considered that the mother's people are best able to rear (*hodisa*) a child.

593 A very special relationship exists between a man and his sister, especially his eldest sister, who is or will become the priestess of the family. She is the person who has greatest influence over him, who will be called to reason with him when even his parents are unable to persuade him. The sister whose cattle he used to obtain a wife also has a special interest in his household affairs. This house is the place where she will 'put her things' and make herself at home when visiting her old home; his daughter will one day marry her son; his wife may run to her or her elder sister if he ill-treats her, whereupon she will remonstrate with her brother or even in extreme cases arrange for permanent protection of such a woman away from her husband. [753] The sister's rights are supported by a powerful sanction, for if she 'feels dissatisfied in her heart' owing to bad treatment at the hands of her brother, the ancestors are liable to make his children ill. When this happens, the brother will have to approach his sister humbly to come and end matters, after openly airing her grievances, by interceding with the ancestors on behalf of his children. Not all sisters are, however, in practice able to control and influence their brothers: here, as in all human relationships, much depends on the character and good sense of the parties concerned; and I have seen a 'bad lot' just back from town slap the face of a sister who had been called to remonstrate with him about a loose woman he had brought to his wife's house from town.

613 The clan, if it can be said to exist at all, does so only in a vague way, and there are no functions or usages associated with it. Relatives belong to no clearly marked group but can be traced in ever-widening circles from the individual family just as we trace relationships in our own society. There is no term for clan: *mulobe* refers to relatives on both father's and mother's side, while *khoro*, a word most commonly used to denote that portion of any village where the men sit, but also meaning court, clan, or tribe, is too vague in its connota-

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tion. There is no trace whatever in the Lowveld of the Twana ward. 43
Lowveld tribes are totemic, but the totem is neither exogamous nor bound up with any single lineage group. People of the same totem are often not related at all and the lineage group cuts right across the tribe, relatives from the same place of origin and with the same totem often being found in several different tribes. Indeed, the tribe consists only of a small nucleus of members of the ruling family after which it is named, the greater portion being accretions from any and every neighbouring tribe. Thus the majority of members of the Narene are not Narene at all; they are Lobedu, Khaha, Phalaborwa, Kwena, Tokwa, and others who have joined the Narene at various times; and so it is with all Lowveld tribes.

Formal Education. The tribes of the Lowveld have five initiation 881
schools; two, known as *Khoba* and *lyale*, for girls, three, *bodika*, *boxwera*, 794
and *Asmana*, for boys. These schools are not peculiar to the Lowveld; all of them are found also among Sotho tribes of the Highveld of the Northern Transvaal while some, like the *bodika* or circumcision, have a very wide distribution in South Africa. But the *lyale* and *boxwera* in our area have a typical form, not found elsewhere, being held at the same time, while the *Asmana* appears in its strongest and most characteristic form among Phalaborwa, Khaha, and Narene in the south of our area where, most probably, it had its origin, for it is absent from Pediland.

Khoba is the private initiation and seclusion of a girl at or shortly after reaching puberty when she is taught the things she should know and do as a woman. The *bodika* or circumcision school is too well known to merit attention here, but the *boxwera*, for boys, which in Sekukuniland and other parts of the Northern Transvaal is held alone, in the Lowveld is linked with and held together with the *lyale* girls' school, the central feature of which is a wonderful 'bird' in a special enclosure which appears on moonlight nights and dances and speaks in a whistle.[1] The true significance of the *Asmana* has not yet been

[1] In late years these schools have been languishing or dying out in the northern portion of our culture area. The Lobedu have held neither *lyale* nor *Asmana* for 30 years, while their last circumcision was in 1919. In the south of the area, on the other hand, all the schools are still in full swing, the Letswalo having held their last *bodika* in 1934 and *lyale* in 1936.

[See 2: Krige and Krige for further information on Lovedu cults — A]

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881 794 established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on either side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dejaw* or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, wailing manner.

794 An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tendency for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools, to set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where they are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they are a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Highveld have no *Aomana*; but a Narene man who has come to live in the area has brought *Aomana* drums and holds schools to which many Dikxale go.

836 837 Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowveld tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa in having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved of by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adultery, which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in any way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widows, especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even though [694] they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attached to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness is better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where there is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act will [695] send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the bare word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepted. [694] Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adultery, with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head of cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more than a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in the fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the parties concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a boy whose people they do not consider suitable.

582 [71] Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution of preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu-Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully 40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with the

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mother's brother's daughter, and in contrast to all surrounding Sotho tribes, Pedi to the south and Highveld tribes to the west where it is common, marriage with the father's brother's daughter is not considered possible. Cross-cousin marriage with the father's sister's daughter is known only among the Lobedu, where it is common within the royal clan, Khaba, where it is rare, and Moila's Venda. The prevalence of marriage with the mother's brother's daughter by which a girl is said to be 'born for' a son of a certain house and knows all her life she will marry there, has been a stabilizing influence leading to very much less illegitimacy resulting from the absence in towns of young men than is found in other areas where this type of marriage has broken down. A girl knows she will have to 'cook for' her father's sister, her future mother-in-law (indeed there is a definite moral value attached to this), and even in the absence of her husband-to-be will be married by the family. If, as a young married woman she has a child in the absence of her husband, it is an irregularity without serious social consequences. On the death of a spouse, sororate and levirate are common; marriage with the wife's brother's daughter is found where the wife is barren or dead, and full inheritance of a young wife of one's own father is quite common.

The custom of a woman being 'married' by a woman, to common in the Lowveld, is one often misunderstood by Europeans. Since a girl is 'born for' the son of her father's sister whose cattle made her father's marriage and her own birth possible, her father's sister may, even if she has no son, nevertheless 'marry' the girl, who will come and cook for her and have children by some appointed relative or by private lovers of her own choice. It is possible, though much rarer, for a woman rich in cattle to 'marry' a non-relative.

Though in the Lowveld as elsewhere the person responsible for payment of bride-price in a man's first marriage is his father or guardian and brothers and sisters are usually coupled, the cattle for the girl being used by the boy, it is not customary in the Lowveld, as is the case elsewhere, for any other relative to contribute. Here, when a man has no cattle, instead of begging from various relatives, he will proceed to 'show the knee' to a man rich in cattle, i.e., he will borrow cattle on the understanding that his first daughter will

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583 be handed over to the lender to become, in most cases, the wife of
[724] his son. To-day this custom is not as common as it used to be, owing to the fact that girls now often resist such a marriage, knowing that the European authorities will support them. No cattle or presents from the girl's people are ever handed over in marriage, and there is therefore nothing corresponding to the Zulu-Xhosa *ukulobola*. But there is all over the Lowveld a special name and function associated with each beast and goat that is handed over, which, together with the fact that there is generally no fixed number, no organized bargaining, such as that which characterizes Pedi procedure, and that very few people complete payment of bride-price before marriage, illustrate the non-commercial character of this arrangement.

585 The most characteristic feature of marriage ceremonial in the Lowveld is the slow and tedious procession from the girl's to the boy's home, the bridal party having to be persuaded to move at each step by means of gifts, till finally on reaching their destination they have to be carried in on the backs of women from the boy's home, weeping loudly in their distress. There is no central marriage feast, though a goat is killed for the girls who accompany the bride, and no one from the girl's home, except for the bridesmaids, is present. The brilliant competitive dancing displays, mutual vituperations between the two families and general feasting which form part of Nguni marriage ceremonial, all are conspicuously absent in this area where the arrival of a bride hardly disturbs the even tenor of everyday life. It is of common occurrence for a bride, before arrival at her husband's kraal, to be taken to the village of the sister whose cattle the husband has used in the marriage. The sister must see the woman who will bear a wife for her son and will kill a goat in her honour. Blood-mixing ceremonies between bride and bridegroom to eliminate all dangers of sex intercourse are common over the whole area.

586 Barrenness and adultery are not grounds for divorce, though when a woman is barren her parents generally offer her sister, for whom, however, cattle must again be handed over. A peculiar feature of divorce in the Lowveld to-day is that the husband almost always keeps both the children and the cattle, except in rare cases where it can be proved that he has wrongfully driven away his wife, when he receives neither children nor cattle.

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RELIGION. In common with the other Bantu tribes of South Africa, the people of the Lowveld have ancestor worship. The form which it takes here bears many resemblances to that found among the Venda and also to that of the Shangana-Tonga though it differs from both in a number of ways. Characteristic of the religion of Lowveld tribes are the predominance of the beer offering to the almost complete exclusion of the blood sacrifice, the use of shrines and dedicated goats or cattle, the powers attributed to old beads and other objects once in the possession of the ancestors, the prominent part played by women, the virtual equality of ancestors on the mother's and father's side and the cult of the *dajow* in which old men deceive women and the uninitiated by acting the part of ancestors supposed to be returning to the village after certain ceremonies. 771

The creator-god, to whom however no worship is directed, is known as Khudrwane, use of the term *Modimo* in this sense being in the Lowveld probably a Christian innovation. Belief in a sky-god, such as that of the south-eastern tribes, is absent, while spirits such as the mountain and river spirits believed in by Venda, and Tikoloshe, Impundulu and other half-mythical creatures who play so important a role in the everyday life and beliefs of Pondo and Xhosa are quite unknown in the Lowveld. Instead, one finds the *dajow* or *dawojane*, ancestral spirits who come after sunset after important religious ceremonies in the royal family, during the *kamana* drumming and sometimes, among Lobedu, at the installation of an important headman, and call in thin, wailing voices. Often they whistle out their own names or throw stones at the village, scolding people for having broken customs, till beer is brought to them and they are appeased. They are ancestors, yet they are only half-men with one leg and one arm instead of two;[1] they dwell in the sacred woods, and when they come no one is to leave the village, women and children shutting themselves up securely in their huts. The fact that the part is acted by a few old, trusted men is not known to many. 776 [171] [887]

The sacred place at which offerings are made is not the cattle kraal 778

[1] Among Venda, *dhadjani* are thought to be mountain spirits with one leg, one arm, &c., the sight of whom brings death to the traveller. They have no connexion with ancestor worship and are said to be mostly of Sotho origin. This is clearly a borrowing.

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778 or back of the hut, as among Zulu-Xhosa, but a shrine in the courtyard of the chief hut. Lowveld shrines vary from family to family but are easily recognizable. A shrine may consist of a mound of earth, a stick and river pebble, a spot where a thithikwane lily has been planted or a long stick planted in the earth like the Shangana-Tonga shrine. The contents of these shrines also vary within a general pattern: the Lobedu royal family place the bones of a sacrificial goat or ox in the mound; other families bury two black river pebbles and a piece of a special kind of antheap, and there are many further variations. Always there are, in addition, charms given by the doctor to prevent the ancestors from causing trouble. Instead of a shrine, or even along with it, one may find a beast or goat dedicated to the ancestors, usually bearing the name of one of them, which will at all important offerings be made to drink of the beer given to the spirits.[1] Important national offerings, especially supplications for rain, are made at graves of deceased chiefs or the sacred wood in which chiefs are buried. Great importance is attached to objects, especially old beads, hoes, spears that have once belonged to the ancestors. These are handed down from generation to generation, are placed beside the shrine when an offering is made or may even be used instead of a shrine in a beer offering. Old beads are peculiarly important for ensuring the health of any one wearing them and are used in the curing of many illnesses caused by neglect of ancestors. Sacred drums
778 are to be found in every tribe; these are the *Ramana* drums, thought
534 to be inextricably bound up with the welfare of the tribe as a whole. Among the more southerly tribes of the area, these drums are smeared with the first-fruits when the chief eats the first-fruits, beaten on all important occasions such as the harvest offering and pierced on the death of the chief.

783 The officiator in important offerings is generally the father's sister or, if she be dead, the eldest sister in the family; but if she lives too far away the head of the family himself may officiate. In general, the officiator calls on ancestors both on his father's and on his mother's side and there may even be two shrines, side by side, one for the father's line, one for the mother's. There is no evidence of any differentiation between the four lines of grandparents to the exclusion

[1] The Venda pour the beer on the beast.

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of the lines of the father's mother and mother's father, such as is mentioned by Stayt for the Venda. The complete absence of any awe or reverence when the Bantu approach their ancestors is seen in the loud talk, jokes and laughter of all except the officiators themselves, and the discussions that frequently take place between the officiator and his neighbours in the middle of proceedings as to what he should do next and how he should do it. As is the case with Europeans, some families are more religious than others, and the very human tendency to forget the gods when things go well is well marked. Some people are always giving to the gods, telling them of all important happenings in the family, giving them a share of any beer that arrives at the kraal, asking their blessings; others forget to perform even the harvest thanksgiving and, unless illness or other trouble comes to show the anger of the ancestors, years may elapse without any religious ceremony taking place.

THE DOCTOR. No religious ceremony of any importance takes place without the co-operation and advice of the doctor; indeed the majority of offerings that are made are done on the advice of the doctor, who determines in every case all such details as which charms are to be used, whether any special relatives have to be present, what if any beads are to play a part. The great doctor is a figure of inter-tribal importance; he works not in one tribe but in many, a fact which largely accounts for the uniformity in the religious practices of different tribes, in contrast to the diversity found in any one tribe. All doctors are not, however, of the same importance. The herbalist, of whom there are hundreds, both male and female, has a limited sphere. He has inherited from his parents or some other relative, often, in the case of a woman, from her husband, one or more medicines or type of medical treatment such as the cutting of veins for blood-letting and a cure for epilepsy, and this he dispenses to all who come.

The doctor, *par excellence*, is the bone-thrower who combines with his divining an extensive knowledge of medicine. There is nothing spectacular about the Sotho doctor; he wears no special or distinguishing dress; his methods are not directed to securing any dramatic effects. Unlike the doctor in Zulu-Xhosa society who is called to his profession by the spirits, undergoes a long period of *ukuthwasa* during

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which he acts in a strange manner, hears voices calling him and often runs amok, the Sotho bone-thrower learns his art in the same quiet manner as any other craft and completes his training not by any public ceremonial but by a private strengthening consisting of drinking water in which the bones have been cooked together with the blood of a cock to make him wakeful and clever. There is no objection to people practising their profession long before they have completed their training, so that doctors range from the novice to the renowned diviner of long standing. The profession, though open to all, is usually inherited from a relative; but there is an increasing number of men to-day who become doctors for the money they make out of it and without undergoing any extensive training.

The doctor associated with the new cult of possession that has within the past thirty years spread over the Lowveld from the east resembles in his methods the Zulu-Xhosa doctor. He is possessed by spirits who talk through him and order him to throw bones and guide him in the use of medicines, and he uses all manner of wonderful tricks. But he undergoes no initiation other than that of all possessed people. The cult is confined largely to women who, during possession, speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thobolo or Kgalaka, but in reality a kind of gibberish. Possession takes the form of dancing to the accompaniment of tambourines, rattles and a special kind of drum beat, initiation into which is believed to cure the ailment which accompanied the first manifestations of the possessing spirit. These spirits are always those of relatives, usually on the mother's side, in contrast to the foreign spirits who are thought to possess Shangana-Tongs who have the same cult. Only a few of those who are possessed ever become doctors and then only when the possessing spirit was a doctor. They are the only class of Sotho doctor who receives inspiration direct from the spirits.

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A class of doctor that does not belong to the Sotho culture yet is indispensable to Lowveld Sotho society, who is seldom or never a Sotho yet has a place in Sotho life, is the *nekane* or Shangana-Tongs smeller-out. He divines chiefly by the head without much use of bones, is able to find things that have been hidden, and is the final judge or smeller-out of witches.

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The doctor is not, in the minds of most people, clearly distinguished

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

from the witch: it is generally argued that he who knows how to counteract wizards must himself be one, and Lowveld doctors are known to 'try' one another by sending lightning or familiars to their rivals to test their powers. Doctors have been openly accused of witchcraft. This confusion is, however, in no way detrimental to the practice of great doctors since not only is a doctor unlikely to work against a client when it is in the interest of his practice to please, but as there must always be a motive in evil-doing, witchcraft without intention being impossible, doctors harm only their enemies. 791 754

DAY AND NIGHT WIZARDS. The term *mulai*, wizard, is in the Lowveld equivalent to 'criminal' and implies evil intention, desire to kill others. In contrast to the Shangana-Tongas, there is thought to be no such thing as unintentional witchcraft. The wizard knows he is a wizard and harms others because he bears towards them feelings of envy or malice. The methods employed in witchcraft do not differ from those of good magic; the distinction between the two lies in the evil motives, injurious to social life, which lie behind witchcraft. Hence use of magic on one's possessions to hurt the fingers of whoever tries to steal them or sending animals to frighten a deserting wife into returning home is not witchcraft, though the technique is identical with that of the witch, because designed not to kill or injure seriously but to uphold the social order. 754 789

All tribes in the Lobedu culture area have a technical distinction between two classes of wizards—the night wizard (*mulai ne bezie*) and the day wizard (*mulai ne matsuru*). The night wizard, usually but not exclusively a woman, inherits his evil powers from his mother who teaches him the art in early infancy. His methods are direct: by going himself or sending familiars, various animals such as the stoat and *zwidubaw* (human beings whom he has killed and enslaved), he works his harm. He works mostly at night, and there exists a sort of society of wizards who dance together at night and recognize one another by day. The day wizard, on the other hand, does not necessarily come of a stock of wizards. Any one who uses medicine to poison or kill is a day wizard. Sending lightning, using people's footprints or pointing at them to harm them, poisoning food and beer, these are the methods of the day wizard in whose work the 'spell', 754

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
South African Natives FX5

754 i.e., telling the medicine, without any set phraseology, what to do, is important. Day wizards are chiefly men and it is said that, owing to the facility of obtaining bad medicine in towns and from foreign tribes to-day, this type of witchcraft has greatly increased.

In everyday life, however, a person is called a witch, whatever methods he has used, and in an accusation of witchcraft there is never any discussion whether the culprit is a day or night wizard. Moreover, there is in the minds of ordinary people considerable confusion about the type of witchcraft associated with each class, and it is possible to live among Lowveld people a long time without coming upon these distinctions. The night wizard is thus in Evans-Pritchard's terminology the witch, the day wizard the sorcerer; and the great distinction between sorcery and legitimate magic lies not in method but in intention.

273 535 SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF BEER AND THE DANCE. It would be a mistake in discussing the main features of Lowveld society to leave out of count the social importance of beer and the use of the dance or *gasha* as a social institution, though neither is confined to these tribes. Beer, apart from its religious value, plays a part in social and economic life. It is continually being carried from one group to another, acting as a bond between people and establishing friendly relations. In the [184] Lowveld, in contrast to the Highveld, it is still of greater importance than money; while people may refuse to attend working parties for money, they will flock to one where beer is served. The *gasha* is a [534] dance in which women do the drumming while men playing reed pipes dance in a circle round the drums. It is, however, much more than a dance. It is an institution for maintaining friendship and reciprocity between groups, a way of showing sympathy on the death of a relative and the means by which subjects approach their chief for rain in time of drought. A *gasha* is often sent by one chief to another in the Northern Transvaal.

171 SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN LOBEDU CULTURE AND THAT OF OTHER AREAS. The Lobedu culture complex represents a close blending of two cultures, that of the Lobedu who came south from somewhere in Rhodesia when the empire of Monomotapa was breaking up, bringing

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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with them the Sacred Kingship and other culture elements, and that of certain Sotho peoples, from whom, it would seem, came the cult of the sacred drums associated with *komana* ceremonies and the typical Lowveld form of *boxwera* and *bjale* schools. Since these latter traits are absent, as far as our knowledge goes, from the Sotho other than those of the Northern Transvaal, the question of their origin is difficult to solve. The tribes in the south of the Lc' ..du culture area include the Khaba or Koni who appear to be related in some way to the Pulana and Pai south of the Olifants River who, van Warmelo thinks, belong to a very old sub-stratum of Sotho that occupied the Eastern Transvaal and Swaziland before the advent of the Swazi proper. It may be that the drum cult and other culture elements belong to these people, but the problem awaits more intensive research into the culture of Pulana and Pai.

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The relationship of the Lobedu culture to that of the Venda who also came from the north is a close one, both in language and culture. In material culture, religion, the part played by women in social and religious life, Venda and Lobedu are very close indeed. There are, however, a number of well-marked differences which preclude identification of Venda and Lobedu. Though the Venda chief was hedged in with ceremonial in the old days, ritual suicide of the chief, the outstanding feature of the Lobedu, is quite unknown to them; no women chiefs are allowed among the Venda though there are women heads of districts; the custom whereby district heads send daughters to be wives of the chief is not found among them nor are disputed successions settled by the ordeal of opening the door. Venda initiation schools such as Domba and Thondo differ widely from those of the Lobedu; they have no *komana* drum cult, no *dajaw* or impersonation of ancestral spirits associated with their religion. On the other hand, the divining bowl so typical of Venda magic and the weaving of *masila* cloth are quite unknown to the Lobedu.

The similarities between the Lowveld tribes forming the Lobedu complex and the Sotho tribes of the Northern Transvaal Highveld are not as great as those between Venda and Lowveld tribes. Among the culture elements held in common are the general system of agriculture and division of labour, including bird-scaring by magical means; the same initiation schools with minor modifications are

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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Venda FX 19

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common to both; the *gaka* as a social institution and the *komana* sacred drum cult with accompanying *dipim*. The position of women is relatively high, though not as high as among Lowveld and Venda tribes; women may own cattle, are not as strictly excluded from contact with the cattle as among Nguni, while father's and mother's sides of the family are of almost equal importance.

L S (71)

Cultural differences between Highveld and Lowveld are evident in the general aspect of villages, which cluster together in the Highveld with high-walled and well-smeared courtyards, as well as in everyday pursuits. The Highveld woman stamps, generally in a sitting position in a hole in the hut floor,[1] threshes her corn by means of sticks instead of stampers and grinds her tobacco on a potsherd instead of with a stick in a serrated earthen pot, as do Venda and Lowveld tribes. The chief, whose chief wife is obtained with cattle contributed by every district headman in the tribe, is surrounded by no great ceremonial or secrecy; ritual suicide of the chief is unknown; the autocracy of the royal family is less pronounced than in the Lowveld; the custom of submitting in cases of disputed succession to the ordeal of the door is foreign to Highveld tribes, while women can never rule as chiefs or headmen except as regents for minor sons. In local government we find a tendency towards fewer and larger districts with correspondingly more powerful district heads. In law the ordeal is unknown; the elaborate Lowveld system of 'mothers' at court poorly developed; the interesting modern development of dealing with witchcraft by a system of wagers and use of the Shangana *mokomo* absent. Possession, ubiquitous in the Lowveld, is hardly present on the Highveld, while the cult of the ancestors has in most parts either disappeared or lost much of its meaning. One gets the impression that, owing perhaps to a difference in attitude towards and method of dealing with wizards in the old days, witchcraft has not the same hold on the minds of the people as in the Lowveld. Longer and closer contact with Europeans and the strong hold of Christianity have led on the Highveld to greater breakdown of tribal custom than is found in the Lowveld.

The nature of the culture we have been describing will perhaps be

[1] This difference is a modern one, due to adoption by Lowveld Sotho of the Shangana-Tonga wooden stamping-block.

3: Krige E-S (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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thrown into clearer relief if we compare it with the more salient features of that of the South-eastern tribes, especially the Zulu-Xhosa, for, though differing from one another, Venda and Highveld and Lowveld tribes fall into line as opposed to the culture of South-eastern tribes. The virtual equality in social life and religion of father's and mother's side of the family and the relatively high position of women stand in contrast to the strongly patrilineal Zulu-Xhosa where wife-beating is said to be more common than among Sotho, where women are regarded as strangers in their husband's village, have all their lives to observe strict rules of *hlonipha* towards their husband's people, and are excluded to a greater extent than Sotho women from political and religious rites. For a woman to marry a woman, as among Lowveld Sotho, is unknown to the South-eastern Bantu; nor have they anything corresponding to the great influence and power wielded by women in the households of their brothers, in dividing out the inheritance on the death of the head of the household and in all religious matters affecting the family.

All forms of preferential marriage other than sororate and levirate are absent from Zulu-Xhosa society where the *ukuhlola* custom, whereby a girl can present herself for marriage at the kraal of a man she loves, gives girls somewhat greater freedom of choice than is enjoyed by Sotho girls. Courting in parties dressed up in their best, which takes up so much of the time of every young man among Nguni and Shangana-Tongs has no counterpart in Sotho society where, for the most part, husband and wife are 'born for' one another, while the use of love magic with its associated hysteria known as *ukukyiza* in girls of the South-eastern tribes is completely absent among the Sotho of the Northern Transvaal. Indeed, love magic is looked upon as a form of witchcraft and punished as such.

The private nature of the First-fruit ceremonies among Sotho of the Northern Transvaal in which strengthening and seclusion of the chief play no part whatever stands in strong contrast to the elaborate public eating of the first-fruits among Zulu-Xhosa which has a military character associated with the strengthening of the army unknown among Sotho. Initiation into adult life among the Zulu-Xhosa includes generally a puberty ceremony for boys which is not found in the Northern Transvaal, while the *komane* and *bucwere* for boys and

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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the *lyale* for girls are entirely absent in the South-eastern tribes. Even the circumcision school, where it is present among Nguni, differs very greatly from that held among Sotho. In political organization, female succession and ritual suicide found in the Lowveld, though not among other tribes of the Northern Transvaal, are absent also from Zulu-Xhosa culture.

Ancestor worship among Zulu-Xhosa and Sotho, though fundamentally similar in meaning and function, differs considerably in its practice, the shrines of the Northern Transvaal, the importance of the beer offering as opposed to the blood sacrifice of the Zulu-Xhosa, the prominent part played by the father's sister as priestess, the importance attached to ancestors on the mother's side and the whole ritual of the sacred drums being foreign to Zulu-Xhosa. Nor is there any counterpart of the Zulu-Xhosa sky-god among the Sotho. Similarly the doctor, having essentially the same functions in the two societies, differs in Sotho society in his initiation, in methods employed for divining, in his relation to the ancestors.

In Nguni society there is a recognized pattern of expression for the mentally unbalanced and for certain forms of neurosis and hysteria. It is common for women to believe that they have been visited by and had intercourse with *Nikaloke*, the water dwarf; hysteria in girls is of frequent occurrence and is thought to be caused by love-magic; many people other than those who complete their training as doctors are thought to be *thwasa*-ing, run amok at night, wander for days in the veld or enter pools in search of a snake. In this manner many mentally unbalanced people have their recognized place in Nguni society. Among the Sotho, on the other hand, hysteria in girls is infrequent and not associated with love-magic and the whole system of *thwasa* prior to becoming a doctor unknown. In the Lowveld, the new and foreign cult of possession can be said to be similar but much too stereotyped to fulfil quite the same function. Might it be that there is definite maladjustment associated with these South-eastern practices not found among the Sotho, or is their existence merely a variant pattern of culture reflecting no basic difference?

The military character and warlike proclivities of the South-eastern Bantu who bred Chaka, the Black Napoleon, and for a hundred years held the white man in check on the Eastern province frontier

3: Krige E-S (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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are conspicuously absent from the tribes of the Northern Transvaal. Military organization is interwoven with many aspects of Nguni life and has left its stamp upon the people. Their age organization, much stronger and stricter than that of the Sotho, has by its association with the regimental system a military character; enrolment into a regiment is an important step in the life of each individual; strengthening of the army forms an important part of the yearly first-fruit ceremonies, while the Zulu even had military villages in which the men spent much of their time. All this is absent from the Lowveld where war never involved more than one or two regiments in what was little more than skirmishes for cattle, and the chief weapons, the bow and arrow, supplemented by spear and battle-axe, made fighting at close quarters unusual.

The South-eastern tribes, as also the Shangana-Tongs, have a much greater sense of display than is found among Sotho generally. To the young Zulu who spends his days courting the girls, dress and general appearance have an absorbing interest that is not found among northern Sotho; the beautiful regimental dress of Zulu and Swazi has no Sotho counterpart; doctors do not dress up to distinguish themselves from others; the Sotho bride who goes to her husband's kraal fully covered in a blanket has little wedding finery; while Sotho dancing lacks the dramatic and spectacular qualities of Nguni dances. In Sotho culture there is no place for the *gya*-ing, jumping, and shouting one's own praises in public, that plays so prominent a part in Zulu society. Nor does song among the Sotho, who like all Bantu are musical, occupy quite the same important position as among Nguni, where every child has its lullaby, every wedding new songs specially composed for the occasion, and every sib its praise song.

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The Shangana-Tongs of the Lowveld fall midway between the culture of Zulu-Xhosa and that of the Northern Transvaal Sotho. Cattle in their society play no greater part than among Sotho; they have no milk taboos; in their agriculture they hardly differ from the Sotho except in having had one or two different crops which they are said to have introduced among Sotho. They are not strongly patrilineal like Zulu-Xhosa, the mother's side of the family plays as important a part as among Sotho in social life and religion, but they have no female

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priestesses and their joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother is not found in Sotho society.

Like the Zulu-Xhosa, the Shangana-Tonga have no marriage with relatives, while they differ from both Zulu and Sotho in allowing inheritance of the mother's brother's wife. Women do not marry women in Shangana-Tonga society; their sexual rites associated with the moving of a village have no parallel elsewhere. The religious system of Shangana-Tonga resembles that of the Sotho more than it does the Zulu-Xhosa in the use of shrines and beer offerings, but the sacred drum cult is absent and the use of fowls in sacrifice has its parallel among southern Lowveld tribes only. Their smelling-out doctor, whose methods resemble those of the doctor in Zulu-Xhosa society, is not found among Sotho, but the ordinary bone-thrower hardly differs from the Sotho doctor either in methods or initiation. Of the northern Sotho initiation schools, only the *Khuba* and circumcision school are found among Shangana-Tonga, while Shangana-Tonga love of display, manner of dancing and singing resembles that of the Zulu-Xhosa. The similarities between Shangana-Tonga and the Sotho of the Lowveld are to be accounted for more by common influences in the past than by recent borrowings, though there is a considerable amount of diffusion to-day. The Shangana-Tonga of the Northern Transvaal Lowveld are very mixed: one tribe, that of Muhlava, came originally from Zululand, settling in its present habitat after a sojourn in Portuguese East Africa; others, like that of Nwamitwa who belongs to the great Valoyi family, trace their origin to the Nyai country beyond the Limpopo whence they came southwards towards the Tonga.

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Peaceful conditions, closer contacts between members of different tribes in the service of the white man, subjection to a uniform system of European law and administration which calls forth similar responses among different tribes, all are tending towards gradual elimination of marked tribal differences and greater uniformity in tribal custom and conditions. To-day the old Venda initiation schools have all but died out while Sotho schools are rapidly spreading into Vendaland; Christian missions are exerting similar influences among different tribes; young men returning from work in towns bring home everywhere a changed attitude towards tribal customs and morality and a more

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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individualistic outlook on life. With the inevitable disappearance in the near future of such distinctive elements as ritual suicide of the chief, marriage of women by women, and other characteristics typical of the culture of the Lowveld to-day, the Lobedu of the Lowveld tribes will tend to lose their individuality and become more and more like their neighbours.

ELLEN JENSEN KRIGE.

Résumé

LA PLACE DES SOTHO DU TRANSVAAL NORD-ORIENTAL DANS LE COMPLEXE DES BANTOUS DU SUD

Les tribus sotho habitant le Lowveld du Transvaal nord-oriental, bien que faisant partie d'un grand ensemble culturel, englobant tous les peuples de l'Afrique du Sud qui parlent le sotho, accusent cependant un certain nombre de caractères distinctifs parmi lesquels on peut citer le suicide rituel du chef, la reconnaissance des femmes comme souverain, un culte des tambours sacrés. Ces phénomènes n'existent pas dans les tribus voisines. Les principaux aspects de cette civilisation sont brièvement indiqués sous les titres de: économie tribale; organisation politique et situation du chef; rêves juridiques et tribunaux; familles et clans; éducation cérémonielle; mariage; religion et sorcellerie. L'étude se termine par des comparaisons; les différences constatées parmi les autres tribus bantoues du sud, en particulier le groupe Nguni, sont indiquées.

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AFRICAN WORLDS

STUDIES IN THE
COSMOLOGICAL IDEAS AND SOCIAL VALUES
OF AFRICAN PEOPLES

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Edited with an Introduction
by
DARYLL FORDE

Published for the
INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN INSTITUTE
by the
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK TORONTO

[title page]

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THE LOUEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. Krige

The World View of the Lovedu

101 THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

144 Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to
177 have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and
563 Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern
642 Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

231 Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the
241 South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pur-
231 suits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

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231 creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and re-
alignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not
'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the
ancestor spirits.

433 The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough
556 for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with
beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his
kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any
case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an
430 economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a
431 doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated
by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the
47 general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not
business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate
in work parties for weeding, reap[illegible] building. Helpers are honoured as
workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot
be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vakokedi* or
beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer,
drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in
which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there
is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a
partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the
instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral
force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political struc-
ture.

612 The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates,
and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category over-
laps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and
other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-
groups that are significant.

582 One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and
583 sister whereby the cattle (*muyuwalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister
are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-link-
604 ing of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an
alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is
expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where
his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the
inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of
a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who
will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrange-
ment implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister
[568] of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may never-
theless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person
appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as
she wishes.

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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion.

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*nomalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*nomukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*nateni*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *nafukulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin.

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's

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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her
769 honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of
several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor
who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love
for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor
lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the
spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cog-
nates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member
of the kindred (*mudzi*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function
of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and
population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife
exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original
agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to
cofamou (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send
wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*muphalula*) and,
by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes
parent-in-law (*vumakhulu*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear
group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and re-
latives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system
to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiat-
ing from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way
that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and
became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the
queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in
return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies,
but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and
uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked
with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in
641 wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, con-
vert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned
ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need
for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the
queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also
there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of sub-
jects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a
sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
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ary, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu political pattern follows that of the centralized states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation. 643 772 182 [642]

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical. A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors. 773 [321] 773 776 [642]

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them, 772 821

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772 they deprecated his lack of practical sense and wondered whether he was losing his reason. What is significant to the Lovedu is not the origin but the
921 maintenance of the order of nature. Interest in the continuity of natural forces centres, however, not on an abstract system, but on the benefit of man or rather of the Lovedu people. Among these forces the most important are those governing the auspicious movements of clouds and their transformation into rain. But they stand in no relation to the forces that brought the world into existence. Among Lovedu, in contrast for example to Ottonian peoples, there is consequently complete discontinuity between mythological origins, or the forces that operated at the dawn of the world, and present realities or the forces maintaining the existing order. Even the ancestor gods do not bridge this gap, and man's dependence upon them—and hence the force of religious sanctions—derives not from their relationship to the beginnings of things but from kinship principles.

773 Myths play an insignificant part in Lovedu life. Almost the only myths are legends of the institution of the present political order which give a generalized account of the migration of the royal nuclear group from Rhodesia and of the reigns of the various chiefs. There is no attempt in them to internalize the beliefs or validate the institutional arrangements underlying the sacred kingship. It is not these myths that give warranty to the queen's mystical credentials and to the complex of customs that supports them. Indeed today scant credence is accorded by the younger men to the legendary royal ancestry which traces the descent of the nuclear group to the Karanga of Monomotapa in Southern Rhodesia, for the Lovedu find it difficult to believe that they are related to a people who now appear to them to be inferior, lackigg the prestige and aristocratic pretensions of their reputed ancestors. In one version of the myth the Lovedu broke away from Monomotapa under the younger 'chosen' son to whom the previous chief had given the rain-charms. He fled south as a result of his conflict with the eldest brother who had legal precedence. In another, it is a daughter who, having committed incest with her brother, escapes with the rain-charms and her infant son from her outraged father.

The legends are further concerned to explain the settlement of the
[73 Lovedu in their present environment: their choice was determined by the
242 absence of red earth which would soil their loincloths and the abundance of *marula* trees and mounds of edible termites, both of which are valued and ritually significant items in their diet. A later dissension between two claimants to the throne is presented as a conflict between chief son and chosen son, and again the victory of the chosen son vindicates the divine right of the rain-maker against legal precedence, and in that way appears to justify the present flexible system of succession as against the challenge of the Northern Sotho emphasis on primogeniture and certainty. Just as the title to becoming ruler of a new tribe is in one version validated by the incest of brother and sister, so the later and equally momentous change from kings to queens is brought into relation with father-daughter incest.

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But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasises in very general terms the 773
importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials.

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formu- 821
lations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going
its ordained way is implicitly rejected in their conceptions. The assumption 772
is that cosmic forces are controllable and, in fact, controlled at every turn
by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only 643
so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *vupuga* (the evil aspect of which is *vulu*), i.e. by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digoma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf
of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South [71]
Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and
position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the [769]
long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail.

Vupuga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic 789
in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these
attributes or powers (*maafa*) reside are mainly *melimo* (medicines) or *mere* 755
(plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct

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from the supernatural. While anyone who knows a cure for an ailment is manipulating the forces of nature and using *vupuga*, there are doctors who, by virtue of long training, know many medicines, have learnt how to divine and have been imbued with additional perspicacity and powers as a result of a special initiation. Medicine functions by virtue of the properties, actual or ascribed, of matter; the principles underlying the operation of medicines assume mechanical cause and effect and even the divining bones are read according to rule.

There are, however, two types of doctor who fall into a different category: the *lelipo* doctor, directly possessed and guided by an ancestor spirit, who largely confines his activities to curing possessed people, and the *magwai* or 'smeller-out' who is generally a foreigner. People using the forces of nature for evil purposes are *vulai* (witches and sorcerers) and are dealt with in another context. *Vupuga*, it will be seen, is the use of impersonal power inherent in matter, which is extracted by the expert (*puga*) and applied in the interests of the health and well-being of men; it is also the exercise of personal qualities or skills, either inherited or acquired through spirit possession or guidance.

Ancestors

Ancestors can influence for good and evil the fortunes only of their own descendants, who in the case of the chief's ancestors are taken to include the whole tribe. Their control over the forces of nature is not explicitly formulated; and what is expressly stated is not always confirmed in Lovedu religious practices. The ancestors are clearly conceived to exercise an overall control. A man will always assert that no harm or illness can befall him if his ancestors are watchful enough, for they have power to ward off all evil and misfortune. It is said that even witches cannot, without the will of the ancestors, enter a village or deliver the last fatal blow that kills a man. But in practice the will of the ancestors either is not interposed, for no ascertainable reason, or is ineffective to ward off attacks. If some great sorrow overtakes a man, it is said that 'his ancestors have had an accident' implying that he has been temporarily deprived of their protection and is at the mercy of his enemies. Even medicines are said to be ineffective without the co-operation of one's ancestors, the conception being not merely that their goodwill is essential but also that *vupuga* belongs to the ancestors. In fact, however, the ineffectiveness of medicines is never in any concrete case attributed to the lack of such co-operation.

Ancestors are appealed to and thanked for good crops, fertility, plenty, and all manner of good fortune and success. The desire to be remembered and given tendance is attributed to them, and they may themselves cause harm and sickness to descendants who neglect them; but somewhat inconsistently a man may with impunity neglect them for many years and give them tendance only when misfortune overtakes him. Ancestors may be approached and propitiated or thanked by means of offerings and prayer

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and the use of *dithugula*, objects such as beads which have once been in their possession; but they can also be constrained by medicine or the properties of matter.

Ancestors are capricious: their complaints as seen in the divining bones are usually about being neglected; but they may cause illness to those they love most in order to receive recognition, have their name perpetuated, or their beads worn. They are said to 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult labour, to afflict children with sore eyes, and even to prevent the queen from making rain. Their complaints need imply no omission or neglect on the part of the afflicted descendant, but merely some special desire that could not have been anticipated. The degree of either neglect or tendance bears no relation to their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, since the ascription of misfortune to the ancestors is always *ex post facto*: hence the paradox that a family that is assiduous in its tendance of the ancestors may suffer more ill health and misfortune than one that has neglected the ancestors for a long time.

Dithugula are instrumental in controlling nature not only indirectly through the ancestors but also directly by virtue of the substances used in them. A *thugula* may be a shrine to an ancestor (male or female), an animal dedicated to him, old beads or objects of iron to which, owing to their having once been in his possession, power to influence him is attributed. But a *thugula* may also be any charm of herbs concocted by a doctor and worn for protective purposes. The queen's rain-medicines are *dithugula*. The most important religious ceremony of the year, the annual offering of beer to ancestors as thanksgiving for the harvest, is also called *thugula*. *Dithugula* thus constitute a category of objects, usually closely associated with the ancestors (though they may be made by a doctor), through which they may be approached, and which have special virtue particularly to give health and protection against ills and epidemics.

Dithugula are found in every lineage which, through its shrines, dedicated animals, and charms, secures the general welfare of its members. The queen's *dithugula*, her rain-medicines, sacred objects, and shrines through which she intercedes with the royal ancestors, are the ultimate symbols of her power and the safeguards of the welfare of the country; and just as certain medicines (*diphaba*), which are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget their complaints, are pegged round the village by the paternal aunt or sister of its head to protect it against witches, so also the queen may *thugula* the whole country by sending boys to peg medicated sticks on its boundaries as a protection against evil, particularly epidemics that might threaten it from outside.

The queen's control

The basis of the queen's control over nature is her divinity. So bound up is she with nature that her very emotions affect the rain. The complex of royal institutions includes the conceptions that she must be without

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643 physical imperfections, not susceptible to the ills that befall ordinary men; that she cannot die a natural death but departs only by her own volition; that succession to the throne is uncertain since the choice of a ruler must in the last resort be made by the spirits of the tribe; that though she may not have a husband, lest political control become concentrated in him, yet she must bear the heir by a secret consort (a royal classificatory brother) specially chosen to maintain untarnished the purity of the royal blood; that she ensures the regularity of nature and the changing of the seasons; and, more 643 particularly, that her death dislocates the rhythm of nature, bringing 731 drought and famine, the abrogation of law and order. People today still speak with horror and fear of the years (1894–6) following the death of the previous queen, Majuji II. They were years, as we know from documentary sources, when drought, locusts, rinderpest and, in their wake, unprecedented famine and desolation, wiped out practically all the cattle and perhaps a third of the human population.

643 The preservation of the queen's sanctity requires that her life be subject to observances which shield her from the public eye and restrain her movements. She is 'the huckster in the hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) who sells her rain-medicines from the seclusion of her abode, and may not move about freely or leave the district of the capital. She was the only chief in the Union who, a few years ago, could not go to the Native Commissioners' Office to exercise the vote of her people in the election of a representative to the Native Representative Council. She cannot attend large assemblies of men, and is generally inaccessible except to her close relatives and great councillors. But otherwise her activities are not restricted, nor is her life a continuous ritual and, unlike other Divine Kings, there are no elaborate safeguards surrounding her every movement.

Tradition decrees that chiefs may have no physical defect, but not that [762] they must die while still young and strong. Ritual suicide of the queen is by Lovedu conceptions not a means of guaranteeing a timely death lest failure of physical powers should upset the regularity of nature, but rather a symbol of her divinity, for it proves that she is not heir to the weaknesses of ordinary man. It is mystically connected with the fourth circumcision school in her reign: she must see the boys going in but not coming back. The Lovedu queen is believed to be immune from disease, but age does not diminish—it even increases—her mystical powers over nature. The only disqualification to rule is inability to make rain in the early period of her reign. Once she [739 has demonstrated, by her ability to make rain, that the rain-charms have 821] been entrusted to her and that she has been divinely chosen, irregularities in the seasons are attributed not to weakness of her powers but to some extraneous factor, such as contraventions of rules associated with keeping the country cool, disobedience to the chief, and the anger of the ancestor spirits.

643 Arrangements connected with succession of a new queen also emphasize 766 her mystical relations with the cosmic order. The death of her predecessor 789

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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugɔ*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*figehela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *dere*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thetsa* 'establish' the season pro-
821 pitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gomana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time, people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken
821 to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain
789 in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*hu lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle,
731 or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lesugu*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[754] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale disperses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next
821 day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digoma

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
794 of man consists of *digoma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *goma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
881 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-vuhwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *goma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *goma* which is said to 'bite'

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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *gɔma*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794

With the *vyali-vuhwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*vyali*) and for boys (*vuhwera*), are associated many *digɔma*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khiudogane*, Bird of Muhale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *vyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *gɔma* and a symbol of the royal ancestors. 881

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *vyali-vuhwera* with its great *digɔma* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digɔma*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalaborwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir sits on the smallest drum while being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vadimo* (gods) as well as *digɔma*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gɔmana* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [794 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digɔma* are the *zwidajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thugula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gɔmana*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *lesugu* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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171 The *gɔmana* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend
778 *gɔmana* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an
881 outsider. The *gɔmana* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *zwidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and
772 magic (*vuŋaga*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of
821 the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digɔma*. The seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digɔma*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain
811 concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu.
821 To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: man and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of
772 the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from con-
811 ditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desiccation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon
821 the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Leswa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *dere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches.

'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mashɔthɔjɔ* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death.

Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is

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not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and contagious force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an invisible counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction, including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage (regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor. 'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*. A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi* affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhuma*) to those eating it. Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leshega*) are full of *muridi* and were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings from the teeth of the *leshega*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hosts infects these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long journeys from home.

Muridi is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will

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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife. 783 753

Makhuma (from *hu khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figchela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*hu thuswa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold. 751 783 [304 846] [768]

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'. 783 787 789

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on 783

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783 charms or *digoma*. *Makhuma* which arises from critical transitions causes mainly stomach trouble and general debility in men and cattle; but it also causes weakening of the mystical powers concentrated in sacred objects. These ritual forces do not strike down the guilty person: it is, for example, not the husband who will be revenged if the adulterer approaches the hut of his wife; or when a woman has procured an abortion, it is not she but her innocent lover who will be affected with *dere*, the most dreaded disease among the Lovedu. The harmful effects of all these forms of impurity are not sanctions against the acts or events causing the impurity, but sanctions for taking the necessary precautions to remove the impurity and prevent it from spreading to others, or from causing some calamity not necessarily affecting the guilty person. And, as so often happens in Lovedu society, it is generally *ex post facto*, and as an explanation of some illness or evil that these conceptions are invoked and steps are taken to put things right.

784 The concatenations of actions and conditions that must be avoided lest they bring about misfortune and evil to men are wider than what is included in the conceptions of 'heat', *muridi*, and *makhuma*. Many things or natural objects brought into relation with men have evil consequences and must be avoided: they are taboo (*hu ila*). Burning a certain kind of wood in the village causes quarrels; working in the fields the day after the first rain is taboo, not sanctioned by a penalty but the breach of which is a bane (*lesola*) that may portend evil. The breach of these taboos is disapproved but leads to no organized reaction or public indignation even where it affects the welfare of all, as in the case of a wrong burial. A man who sleeps with his wife while she is still suckling a child may thereby cause the death of his child; but it is his own foolish and inconsiderate conduct that causes the mother's breast to *khuma* (become polluted and weakened), and it is not the concern of outsiders. He is a fool rather than criminal.

753 Many things in nature are recognized as directly affecting man adversely; various foods and drinks cause stomach troubles; poisonous weeds may kill cattle which, like men, occasionally die of old age; many minor illnesses are attributed to natural causes, e.g. one may contract malaria by walking in the dew in the early morning. Epidemics may be brought about naturally by the air or wind (*phefo*). 'Ward off from us these winds' is a constant plea [821] in prayers to the ancestors. Hot, dry winds which drive away rain-bearing clouds or dissolve them in thunderstorms or gales are thought to be specially detrimental to the rain, and it is the duty of the ancestors to keep away [828] such winds. Even anxiety or worry wears a man down (*hu seda mutho a homchoa*, lit., scrapes a man thin). A woman who is prone to break her pots is not bewitched; she has *khifyaisa*, a natural propensity for breaking, which can be cured by medicine.

777 The Lovedu also have the conception of natural accident (*gozi*) and of luck (*leshuto*), though bad luck is sometimes attributed to breach of obligations to kin, to malicious gossip, or to the misconduct in one's absence of one's wife.

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An omen or bane (*lesola*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesola*, and so can a *leshega*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *tola* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 737 S25

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*vusola*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahava*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahava* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahava* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahava*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 777 602 [753] [769]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (Vulɔi)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *vulɔi* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Vulɔi* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Vulɔi* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *vulɔi* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *vulɔi* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*vulɔi vya vusiu*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*vulɔi vya matsiare*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 754 [577]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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754 standing of ordinary men; sorcery is the manipulation of lawful means for unlawful ends.

The night-witch belongs to an unholy fraternity whose members meet at night to dance to their drums and deliberate upon their deeds of darkness. She uses no medium of destruction and no medicine or spells, but has inborn powers to do what is physically impossible to ordinary men. She goes herself on her nefarious errands or uses familiars. Witches are almost invariably women, partly no doubt because it is difficult to conceive of women having the facilities to purchase medicines for purposes of sorcery, partly also because they are endowed with more mysterious powers than men. The sorcerer, usually a man, whose machinations involve the use of medicines and spells, is a day-witch because his power is derived from ordinary natural techniques 'of the day'. The essence of sorcery is the criminal use of the potency of medicines which can be, and usually are, used in the service of legitimate ends.

754 Many medicines are specifically good or bad and their use cannot traverse their intrinsic nature; but some of the most important are good and hence 673 moral, or bad and hence immoral according as they are used for socially approved or socially disapproved ends. *Madabi*, for example, has the power to transmute the nature of things. It is right for a husband to manipulate *madabi* in a way that will cause wild animals to appear while his runaway spouse works for her lover, for in this way he may frighten her into returning to him. But a jilted lover who takes revenge upon a girl is guilty of sorcery if he uses *madabi* to change her sex when her child is about to be born and thereby endangers her life. Such an act is unlawful vengeance, which is sharply distinguished from lawful restitution; it reflects a desire to injure another for personal motives which are not in harmony with approved social values.

754 Witchcraft and sorcery can always be counteracted. A favourite method of dealing with a witch is the use of reprisal magic whereby the evil is sent 789 back to him, but there are many charms and medicines, all relying on the power of *vuyaga*, by means of which witchcraft can be combated or rendered harmless. Villages are protected against witches and sorcerers by charms circling the village or placed at strategic points, while the witch within the village is treated by *hu fera*, i.e. a drug is introduced into his food which has the power of making him forget his frustration and seek compensation in day-dreaming and doddering. After witchcraft or sorcery has been established by divination as the cause of an evil, and the culprit has been identified (the diviner mentions no name but gives certain attributes, such as sex, clan, locality), it is open to the victim to make an accusation and risk the legal proceedings that will inevitably follow. But resort to law is not entirely satisfactory since appeasement, not the hardening of animosities that accusations occasion, is the function of law. Moreover, the initiation of legal sanctions against a witch may spur him to greater activity.

777 Witch beliefs reflect the Lovedu notion that almost all the misfortunes

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that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts. 777

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*ruŋaga*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare. 754 789

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *mahava*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the bones, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased. 829 777 753 [821]

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups is the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *gɔsha*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted. 181

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

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[8] attached to possession and no socio-economic stratification of classes; for a great man, whether he be poor or rich, is first and foremost a royal relative, and the purpose of economic activities is self-sufficiency and independence. Trade is disliked and competition is absent even in craftsmanship. So marked is the disinclination to make comparisons that it is difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things that Europeans quite naturally compare, such as the achievements of individuals or objects of craftsmanship.

Children are taught 'to be like others', not to strive to outdo them and precociousness is disliked. A child asking for sweets often says 'Give me also', even if no one else has been given any on that occasion. He begs for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors the prayer is quite often phrased, 'Give us also', or 'Let him have health like others'. To stress, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with or greater than that of others would be improper. Contrast with this the opportunities for and love of competition in Zulu society where every boy is constantly measuring himself against others, vieing with them in fights, in dress, in love-making, in dancing, for leadership and praise.

The give and take, absence of competitiveness, and lack of force in the social and political structure, make moderation the keynote of Lovedu social life. Outstanding individuals are not tolerated: a show of forcefulness on the part of a councillor one day, which appealed to us as an indication of efficiency unusual in the society, was apologized for with the excuse that he must have been drunk. Display of all kinds is disliked. The elaborate beadwork and interest in dress, so characteristic of the Zulu, are absent, and there is nothing to correspond to the institutionalized public boasting (*ukugiya*) —jumping and stabbing at an imaginary foe to the accompaniment of a string of praises—that plays so important a role in Zulu life.

Excess of every kind is deprecated. Speed is undignified. Things must be done *ga vuya*, slowly, at a regular pace, in a moderate and dignified manner. Excess in human relations, like heat in the cosmic order, is liable to bring [761] disaster. The reaction to death is calm, quiet grief, not the funeral wail of the Nguni or the terror reaction of the Tsonga. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to call down evil upon the next child born to her. Mputa was born a cripple, because, so we were told, his mother, Makwadu, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. Even in scolding moderation has to be observed, for scolding out of proportion to the offence, can, as we have shown, bring evil, even death.

Quarrelsomeness is one of the worst offences. Congruent with this out- [783] look, the murderer or the warrior who has killed an enemy must purify 181 himself to avoid becoming quarrelsome, the threat of which is so unpalat- able as to be a powerful sanction. But quarrels and conflicts do occur on 671 account of temperamental qualities, conflicting interests, and other causes; they are also precipitated sometimes through imperfections in the social

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institutions or their inadequacy for meeting all situations. In the resolution of difficulties of this nature arbitration and compromise play an important role, both judicially and extra-judicially. The genius of the legal system even in its most formal aspects is the skilful use of the restitutive sanction, in its spiritual rather than its material sense. The fundamental objective is the re-establishment of relations that have become broken or strained, and that objective is achieved, not so much by vindicating rules as by reconciling the parties. There is indeed a tacit assumption that the social equilibrium will be maintained if personal relations are suitably adjusted. The primary task of the courts is therefore to smooth out personal difficulties rather than to settle legal issues. For in law as in life it is not the rule that is important but the personal and social relations. The cattle-linking of brother and sister from different 'houses', ordinarily disapproved, is an arrangement that agreement between the 'houses' makes possible, and if the parties agree, even murder can be compounded. Even when a diviner has found a man guilty of witchcraft, it is felt to be necessary that the culprit should 'agree' with the findings, i.e. accept the verdict of the bones. In judicial proceedings a defendant will be asked if he agrees to pay the award; if he disagrees, full latitude is allowed him to expostulate. Should the court sense a genuine grievance it will reopen the case and bring its decision more into line with an amicable adjustment. As laws and institutions exist for human beings, they are not ends in themselves, and even the most fundamental duties and obligations between individuals and groups are conditional upon the ever-invoked 'if they agree'. If people do not agree there can be no relationship. If they have to be coerced there cannot be genuine agreement. This is why the execution of a judgement is left to the parties. The whole social and political structure relies upon the maintenance of good relations without resort to compulsion. Hence the use of the mechanisms of marriage and bride-price to hold in willing allegiance a great diversity of alien groups, who outnumber the Lovedu proper by nine to one; hence also the aversion from regimentation and military discipline.

Great importance is attached to the dignity of the individual. Every person has rights and obligations; even a child's rights to property are respected. If a man feels that he is not being given his due, it is right to complain (*velacla*) just as the ancestors do when they have not received proper attention. Any indignity to the personality, such as corporal punishment, is socially disapproved. Perhaps it is for this reason that a Lovedu soon becomes tractable if ordered by the court to carry stones or perform some other useless task when he has been guilty of 'despising' the court.

Suicide is not common, but when it is resorted to it is as a protest against wrongful accusations or as a result of the complete frustration of an individual forced against his will into an impossible situation, e.g. a girl forced to marry someone she dislikes.

A high value is placed on human life. An aspect of Western civilization that puzzles the Lovedu is that we tolerate the loss of human life involved

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in the use of motor traffic. Are not people more important than speed? The need for even a chief to respect the wishes of his subjects upon whom he depends for a following is summed up in the saying, *Vuhosi gi vatho*, 'chieftainship is people'.

The qualities or virtues that are stressed, then, in the moral code of the Lovedu are moderation and temperance, compromise and agreement, humility, respect for the personality and rights of others. Courage is not rated very high in this non-military society. Perseverance is often enjoined and is especially necessary in the monotonous tasks of hoeing, carrying heavy loads of wood, walking up steep mountain slopes; but it is never carried out with the single-mindedness that a European might expect. Theft is condemned and there are ritual sanctions against it. If the object stolen has been magically treated, for example, a painful sore will develop on the finger which defies treatment until guilt has been confessed and restitution agreed to. 'Don't steal, always beg (*hobela*) for what you want', children are exhorted. But theft is not a problem in this economically undifferentiated society, though nowadays cases of theft, even if extremely rarely, do come before the tribal courts. Drunkenness is bad only if it leads to neglect of duties or fights and quarrels. To be drunk is in itself no disgrace, it is merely pleasant and perhaps exhilarating, not a condition to be ashamed of. Indeed everyone looks forward to the *murula* season when all become slightly intoxicated from the cider made out of the fruits.

Right conduct is relative always to the human situation and morality is oriented not from any absolute standards of honesty or truth but from the social good in each situation. Conduct that promotes smooth relationships, that upholds the social structure, is good; conduct that runs counter to smooth social relationships is bad. Courtesy and the respect due to age or seniority are thus of greater importance than truth. A son-in-law who, tired of always being imposed upon by his wife's father, truthfully signified his unwillingness to help him by providing a goat would be guilty, in view of the special mutualities between families related by marriage, of unpardonable behaviour which might jeopardize his marriage. The correct procedure is to agree to help but to be always 'still looking for it' when approached for the goat. It took us a long time to discover that the right way to deal with incessant begging was not to refuse however politely, but to say 'I have none' or 'It is not mine to give'. The polite lie even if palpable is better calculated to maintain smooth relationships than strict adherence to truth. Truth is not good in itself nor is a lie always evil. Lies are objected to when they are socially inconvenient. Yet not only is it expected that a man will lie to get out of difficulties but there are cases in which lying is prescribed, as when children are told to lie to strangers if asked about village affairs. To keep tribal secrets and the secrets of initiation schools is of far greater importance than to tell the truth.

The social orientation of morality is clear in Lovedu sex morality. Sex is not regarded as a temptation to be resisted by painful efforts of will.

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There is nothing morally wrong in sex or the sex act; not only is sex play among small children connived at, but premarital sex relations are institutionalized. It is only having a child before marriage that is immoral. For adultery restitution must be made, yet a husband who is jealous and watches his wife too closely is despised, and most men and women have extramarital lovers (*vatavo*). The Lovedu attitude is less strict than that of the Tsonga living among them, for Tsonga married women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, and the compensation and fine for adultery are far higher than among the Lovedu. The Lovedu attitude to sex is matter-of-fact, and obscenity in ritual does not have a prominent role. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of promiscuity; they learn from their proverb that 'a woman's pubes may break up a family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are undeveloped.

To anyone brought up in the West European culture, where every breach of the moral code is also a sin in the eyes of a God who may punish the wrongdoer either in this life or the hereafter, an arresting aspect of Lovedu culture is that there is only a vague connexion between the ancestor-gods and morality. It has been said for the South Bantu in general, and by more than one authority, that the ancestors 'are the guardians of the moral code, it is they in the first instance who are thought of as visiting on their descendants punishments for some omission or commission'[1] There is among Lovedu a vague idea that failure to carry out one's kinship obligations may bring ancestral displeasure in the form of bad luck, and there may also be some connexion between such displeasure and *mahava*, the force generated by complaints of living kin, which causes illness. But a careful study of Lovedu religious practices over a period of years has brought to light no single instance in which ancestors have complained about anything not immediately concerning their own personal relations with their descendants—their right to tendance, remembrance, and propitiation; the manner of their burial; their desire to be told of major events in the lives of living kin. No ancestor has ever been known to concern himself with the theft, witchcraft, murder, or adultery of any descendant, nor do they trouble about the breaking of taboos which prevent rain and vitally affect the welfare of all. Lovedu ancestors are not upholders of custom in general; they are concerned only with those customs and taboos which affect their own welfare and that of their kin. Even royal ancestors do not concern themselves with the breaking of taboos that lead to drought. This is not a reflection of their carelessness or supineness, for they are quick to complain if, for example their graves are desecrated. On one occasion in 1938, when two men had cut firewood in the bush near the royal burial grounds at Maulwi, the *swidajani* wailed all night to indicate their displeasure. Again when Mologwane, deceased chief councillor and brother of the queen, 'held her

[1] A. W., Hoernlé, 'Religion in Native Life', in *Thinking with Africa*, edited by Milton Stauffer, 1928, p. 100. See also, W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, 1928, pp. 381–90.

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577 769 arms' to cause drought in 1938, it was because he had for personal reasons been buried, at his own express request made before death, in the Christian cemetery instead of in the damp shade of the forest, like his forebears.

577 593 It would appear that this lack of interest on the part of the ancestral gods in the morality of their descendants is in conformity with the pattern of the relationship between living parents and their children. Parental protection and care are given not by virtue of the morality or conduct of their children; it is one of the imperatives of the kinship bond. A parent loves his wayward, bad son as much as, if not more than, his well-behaved, virtuous children. It is only a bad personal relationship between parent and child or neglect of filial duty that could cause a parent to withhold his protection.

626 Sanctions for right behaviour are, first and most important, the pressure of public opinion and of the reciprocal arrangements of the political and social structure. A man conforms to the code because of his self-esteem and the high regard he has for his reputation for fairness and moderation, wisdom and ability to get on with others, generosity and helpfulness, not merely among his kin but in the wider circle of his friends and neighbours. The next important group of sanctions are the pain and misfortune that may follow if those he has injured use vengeance magic or resort to witchcraft and sorcery against him. Certain types of conduct carry their own automatic ritual sanctions which form a third group of deterrents, even though there is little pressure of public opinion against the conduct and no necessary or immediate consequence to the person himself, unless indeed he is repeatedly guilty. Finally, duties towards the ancestors, such as tendance and recognition, have the religious sanctions of ancestral anger in the form of illness, or misfortune. Ancestral displeasure can also be inferred as a sanction acting indefinitely and over a vague area of conduct to reinforce men's obligations to kin, generally those kin who stand to them in a relation of some authority. This inference may be made, not because ancestors ever directly cause misfortune to a descendant for breaches of correct behaviour to kin as they do in the case of neglect of themselves, but because bad luck may be attributed to failure in one's duties to kin.

626 769

[769] 577 Ancestor worship of the Lovedu plays hardly any part, then, in upholding tribal morality. Nor are people so delicately conditioned to the values of the society that they spontaneously react to conscience. Their moral code is not markedly internalized and Lovedu have no sense of 'sin'. Since there are few repressed fears the pressure of which on the mind can be removed by confession and atonement, a sense of guilt seldom moves men, and offenders very rarely repent merely at the dictates of conscience. Their sense of shame is more delicately internalized, but it drives men to make restitution only when the misdeed has been exposed or brought into relation with the system of reciprocities. Lovedu are sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system, and the moral code is upheld mainly

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by the institutions and by the reciprocal duties and responsibilities between individuals and groups inherent in the social structure. 577

Effects of Culture Contact

This picture of the world view of the Lovedu presents living practices and conceptions, not a dead and reconstructed past. Christianity has, indeed, modified some aspects of the culture: Christians are prevented from performing their kinship obligations in the traditional manner; they have accepted European ideas of trade for profit and use institutions such as the work-party for the exploitation of their fellows; but witchcraft, which they are supposed to have rejected, is as a result of increased tensions even more rampant among Christians than pagans. Christians substitute God for the ancestors, but continue to believe that the queen makes rain, albeit by the will of God. They tend to discredit the powers of charms but not of *ewnaga*, while 'heat', *makhuma*, and 'shadow' are still real forces, and the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and misfortune still hold sway. Even these minor modifications have to be viewed in the light of the fact that Christians constitute only about 5 per cent. of the tribe and are relatively isolated. 177 795 771

The influence of Western culture as a whole is more insidious. The knowledge acquired by young men working in the towns and returning to the tribe holds implications as regards the nature of the universe and the destiny and purpose of man which they cannot harmonize with the traditional world view. They tend to despise what the old men cannot or will not make intelligible to them, such as the significance of the *digoma* and the *ewidajani* which appear to them to be shams. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect for their elders and for traditional values and institutions. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older, begin to play a part and to have a stake in the culture. Moreover, they are sensitive to insinuations that their doubts are due to the white man's insidious influences and soon repress them as unworthy and disloyal. 177 771

The younger generation tend to shirk unpleasant responsibilities. Thus Jim refused to take over the family office of keeper of the rain-medicine, fearing the risk of sterility which handling of this medicine entails. The absence of many adult men, who are away as migrant labourers, makes the organization of the great ceremonials difficult. Reconciliation and the restitutive sanction are no longer the great forces they used to be, since the closely knit system of reciprocities, everyone's dependence upon day-to-day mutualities and the imperativeness for social life of co-operation, no longer exert the irresistible pressure on the parties to carry out compromises reached in the courts. Aggrieved litigants, reluctant still to invoke European intervention, increasingly resort to magicians who have developed a whole new system of revenge magic to even up matters. The trend is to put their faith in magical retaliation rather than in the sanction of reciprocity. 178

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178 But the rewards of participation in reciprocal give and take and the penalties of being denied these reciprocities are still strong sanctions.

On the whole, therefore, culture contact has not yet brought about profound changes in Lovedu conceptions of the order of nature or of the relations of men to one another. The old outlook is still intact, even though some of the values supporting it cannot be maintained for much longer at an intensity sufficient to make them effective forces.

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THE FAMILY ESTATE IN AFRICA

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Studies in the Role of Property in Family Structure and Lineage Continuity

Edited by

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African Studies Program
Boston University

[Title Page]

BOSTON UNIVERSITY PRESS
1964

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A	B	C	D	E	F

Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.
[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-195. See category 116.--Analyst]
[Facing kinship diagram.]

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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
559 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
588 [582] woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[634] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1945 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term mokoko or
613 *leloko* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[787] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhobo* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours
[476] and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

[562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[582] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhobo*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

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421 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship
571 and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable
[476] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily
[273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintain-
[177] ing social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes
571 the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the
431 form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new
571 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small
602 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even
421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and
571 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples.
431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went
931 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour
643 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies.
571 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a
[588] *thari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge loda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga mosadi a de a nthsidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

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431 I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The
583 643 girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to
571 the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom
[588] she is now living at the Capital.

437 Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic
583 character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions
[728] have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained
[434] by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without
[436] having to pledge a daughter.

675 The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the
437 old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two
583 families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described
[562] below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

581 It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept
[645] in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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ships between the families involved but upon it rests the whole 581
character of the domestic group. Payment of bride-price trans- 581
fers the reproductive powers of the woman to the husband's 583
agnatic group. The husband has genetricial as well as uxorial 593
rights. Genetricial rights apply not only to any children born 851
after the marriage whoever their biological father might be, but also in retrospect, so that any child born before marriage automatically becomes the child of whoever pays the bride-price, with full rights of succession and inheritance from its sociological father. There is thus, in contrast to other tribes such as the Zulu, no way in which a Lobedu man can obtain the right to his biological child other than by marrying its mother. Emphasis on sociological as opposed to biological fatherhood among the Lobedu is very strong and this is an important factor in Lobedu social structure. The rights of a father to a child involve control over it; the right to the bride-price of a daughter (subject to the right of her brother to marry with his sister's cattle and of her mother to the services of the woman married with her daughter's bride-price); and corresponding to his right to his daughter's bride-price the duty to help his son to marry. A father may and often does marry an [595]
additional wife with his daughter's bride-price. A father also has the right to be cared for in his old age by his sons.

The levirate is practised, the junior levirate being more 587
common than the senior levirate. The brother raises seed to 851
the deceased and takes over the responsibility of a father and husband though the children he begets are counted as belonging to his deceased brother. Frequently the heir, eldest son of the chief 'house' inherits a young wife of his father. In this case, similarly, the children born of the union are looked upon as the deceased's, i.e., as brothers and sisters of the heir, not his children. The sororate also is practised in all its forms, sororal [595]
polygyny being very common. Where a sister is sent to 'awaken the house (*ho dsosa ndo*)' of a barren or deceased wife full bride-price is due for her although, since bride-price is never an absolutely fixed amount, less may be asked for than in the first marriage.

The marriage of a woman transfers to her husband's group 581
the right to her labour. Initially it is the husband's mother 602
even more than the husband himself that benefits, as we shall

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Monoalo a o feds*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tsetse* (or *mudukulu*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*mudukulu*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even 582
a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 583
'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her 604
husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked 588
brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that 604
even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *noeji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, [601]
who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The 588
children take the surname of the husband of the woman just 604
as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises 851
as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own 553
cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mosha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage 588
—for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an 613
heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the [584]
girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the 588
lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. 583
Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman 851
the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on 582
behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband' 588
601

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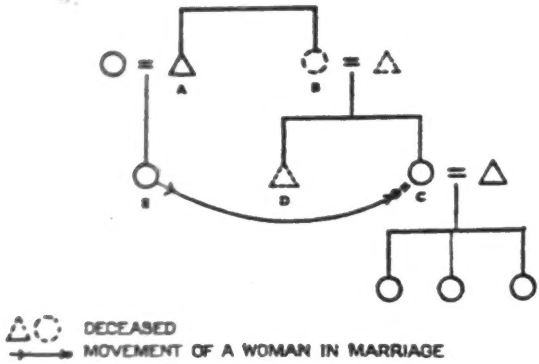

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepize's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepize (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepize's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepize and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepize (*o mo bekile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepize (E) not '*noeji*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mohadibo*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

[E-01]

562 (*monna wa ka*) by their 'wives' *batanoni* when they marry on
588 behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children
601 of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

582 Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter
583 appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maseriba's
583 bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years
588 later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batamedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that 583
Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be 588
averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maseriba because she is *khadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho ruka leloko*)'. This desire to keep alive 582
the links between brother and sister and to maintain and 581
renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dsosa moloko*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter 582
marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations con- 583
nected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 2a), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there 586
were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1930's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's 582
daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the 58
mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price 602
are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

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58 602 between descendants of brother and sister that is valued. In cases where a man has received cattle on the 'security' of a small girl, to all appearances a predominantly economic transaction, the creditor also hands over cattle a second time when the girl comes over to be married. This is puzzling. When asked about it the Lobedu usually quote the proverb '*mobula ndo oa nywala*—the opener or establisher of a "house" pays marriage cattle', i.e., every girl commands bride-price. The explanation possibly lies in regarding the passing of property in the case of wife No. 2 of D in Figure 2a and also the first handing over of property in an economic transaction on the security of a girl as the creation of a cattle-link similar to handing over to a brother the bride-price of his sister to acquire

582 583

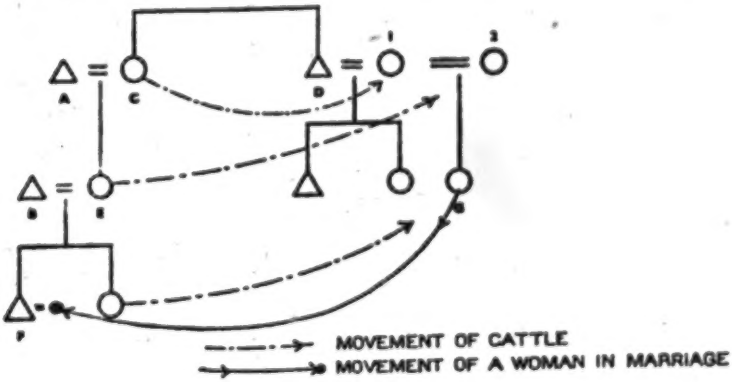

FIG. 2A.

58 602 a wife. The subsequent transactions are then on a par with ordinary preferential marriage between the children of cattle-linked brother and sister.

If, in contrast to the case illustrated in Figure 2a where the cattle-linked sister has no son to marry her brother's daughter, it is the brother who has no daughter to give in marriage to his sister's son then sometimes, as in a recent case, the preferred marriage takes place in the next generation. Here (see Figure 2b) the daughter (G) of the son of C's cattle-linked half-brother (D) married the son (F) of the son of the cattle-linked sister (C). In this case E had a brother to use her cattle and there was no need for her cattle to be sent to the mother's brother to establish a new 'house' or 'open a gate', as it is sometimes phrased.

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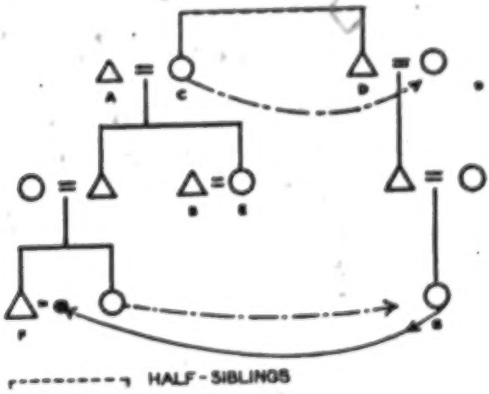

FIG. 2B.

Once a marriage has taken place, even where originating in an economic arrangement, the relationship is self-perpetuating as is shown in Sedena's case. Sedena's elder brother (A in Figure 3) used the bride-price of their only sister; so when Makeakati, his daughter (C), was born this elder brother said to Sedena (B), 'There are your cattle', indicating his baby daughter. When the girl was eight years old and her father already dead, Sedena (B) took her to Mogodo (D), a relative (a classificatory 'sister's son', descendant of his father's half-brother), and, indicating that she was his *ledolo*, asked for cattle to marry a wife. He was given cattle which he used to marry Marita (E). In due course when Makeakati (C) grew up she was sent to marry Mogodo (D), who gave five head of cattle as bride-price (five to eight is the usual amount). Many years later Marita's only daughter, Mojaji (F), followed her 'sister'

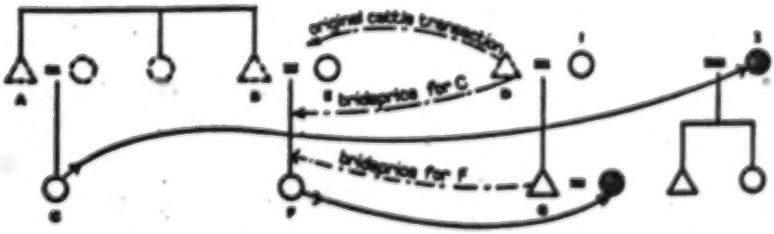

FIG. 3. Preferential marriages arising out of an economic arrangement.

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and married Nakampe (G), Mogodo's son by another wife. Makeakati's (C's) 'house' had first claim on the daughter of the man (her father's brother) who had used her cattle, but as her son was a Christian the girl was given to the son of a different 'house'.

Once a link has been created by a marriage a bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship follows, which tends to be reinforced not only by one but by numerous subsequent marriages. Thus, A married a girl from lineage B. Both his sons and his grandson followed in his footsteps (see Figure 4).

The same tendency is present in Lobedu polygyny where the sororate is very popular. Most Lobedu who are not Christians have more than one wife. But it will almost always be found

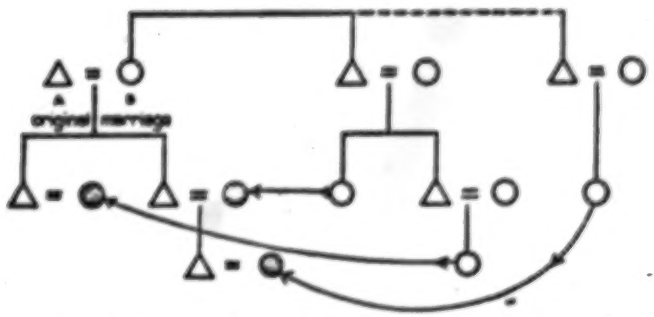

FIG. 4. Reinforcement down the generations of a marriage link between two lineages.

that at least one is a sister or younger relative of one of the other wives. Thus M, a chief councillor, married seven wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's daughter; (2) his mother's half-brother's daughter; (3) his mother's half-brother's daughter's son's daughter; (4) a non-relative; (5) a non-relative; (6) his mother's brother's son's daughter (brother's daughter to No. 2 and therefore a wife's brother's daughter); (7) a sister to (1) by the same father but a different mother.

S, a man in his thirties, has three wives: (1) his mother's mother's brother's daughter; (2) a non-relative and (3) the uterine sister of his first wife.

Old K had five wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's

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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a 595
distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's 602
brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a different mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the 586
interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the [837]
bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two [85]
girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two [583]
daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when [728]
P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*monila mobe o beya le noto ea hwe*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went [517]
with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

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586 administration came the introduction of the Pedi idea that a man has a claim to both the cattle and the children in the case of malicious desertion. Old men in the 1930's called this a white man's law; today people are claiming it as a Lobedu custom. Only two of the oldest men at court were able to tell me in 1962 what had been common knowledge in 1936. The present custom is for the husband on receiving back the bride-price to return some of it (one beast for each child or sometimes two for a girl) for the rearing of the younger children that remain temporarily with their mother. A father's hold over such children is in practice tenuous though the court will always uphold his claims.

The issues in divorce are rarely simple. The simplest case I came across was one in which a man became insane. His wife left with her children to live with her brother who returned the bride-price. Usually, however, there are endless complications and cases continue for months, even years. If, for example, a man chases his wife and children away and the wife wants to return, he may in the end lose both the children and the bride-price despite the proverb quoted above.

The Domestic Group and the Importance of the 'House'

595 We have discussed the role of property in establishing and maintaining marriage relationships and links between families. Control over material resources also plays an important part in the structure of the polygynous domestic group with its economically independent 'houses' so characteristic of the Lobedu.

As head of the family the husband has full control over all family resources. Yet each wife forms with her children a unit of production and consumption, the independence of which as against other 'houses' has to be respected even by the husband, whose control thus becomes limited the moment he marries a second wife. This is why a Christian woman among the Lobedu never has the economic independence that a woman in a polygynous household has. There are safeguards against the infringement of the principle of the independence of the 'house', as we shall see.

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu husband is expected to play his part in producing food for his family. Every married man, therefore, has a field of his own which he cultivates with the help of his wives. The produce of this field is used for any beer- or work-parties that the man may wish to give and is a kind of bank upon which his wives may draw when they run short. If, however, a man helps one wife from his personal stores he must give all his wives an equal amount irrespective of their needs. When he first marries, the husband works with his wife in their common field. On marrying a second wife he acquires a field of his own (in addition to the one for his new wife) which his wives take it in turn to weed. It is said that if he had no field of his own but were merely to help each wife in turn to cultivate her field there would be endless trouble in maintaining equality between them. One of them for instance might say, 'How is it that when you come and work in my field you just sit but when you go to the field of the mother of So and So even the shade doesn't tempt you!' 595 241 [462]

A father is responsible for helping his sons to marry. But since a man seldom possesses cattle other than those already involved in bride-price exchange and a son uses the cattle of his sister, boys in a 'house' in which there are no girls often have to go out and work or with the help and advice of their father acquire bride-price in other ways. In the old days an orphan usually hired out his services to carry salt or iron ore from far countries in order in this way to acquire marriage hoes or cattle. Expenses in goats and money over and above the cattle given in marriage are met by the boy himself with the help of his father. A father should see to it that his son is provided with a field when he marries but in practice it is very often the mother who concerns herself with this problem. The father has jural control over his sons and is responsible for their debts. 593 583 [464]

The wives in a polygynous household differ in status. The chief wife is the daughter of the mother's brother—the cattle-linked or any uterine mother's brother or mother's half-brother. She will bear the heir and future head of the village. Where there has been no marriage with the mother's brother's daughter it is the first wife, the one married with his father's cattle that is chief wife. A chief wife exercises no control over 595

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other wives. When the mother's brother's daughter is one of the younger wives in a polygynous household she may be completely overshadowed by the first wife. The eldest son of the first wife occupies a position of importance in the family. He is said to stand in the shoes (literally 'footprints') of his father and after the latter's death has a right to be *suma'd*, i.e., given a portion of any animal killed by any of his brothers long after they have dispersed and live in separate homesteads. There are instances, especially in the case of district heads and where the chief house has no male heir, in which the eldest son of the first wife married tries to usurp the position. But though he may appear for a time to be succeeding as seemed to be the case in more than one instance in the 1930's when first we went into the field, I have not come across any cases in which he has succeeded in the long run.

Each wife has her own fields which it is her duty to cultivate for the needs of her 'house'. On her death her sons have first right to inherit her fields unless their father wants to use them himself or arrange for their cultivation to provide food for the younger children; but they may not be used for the benefit of any other 'house'. A daughter may be given her deceased mother's field to cultivate while she is still in her parental home, but she cannot inherit it. A wife is expected to feed herself, her children, her husband and her mother-in-law from her fields. Each time she cooks she sends food to her husband and to his mother. What is left must be returned to her 'house' unless the husband himself gives it to the herd-boys or other children as a group. In the case of special dishes eaten in-between meals, such as cakes of sesamum or ground peanuts, a little will be sent to each of the other women of the homestead with whom the wife is on good terms. In a large homestead this may be confined to the wives of one man. Beer brought to any one 'house' is usually drunk by all in the village and neighbourhood.

In addition to having her own granaries and cooking utensils every wife has a right to raise livestock. She may keep chickens; she may acquire goats by the exchange of her produce; she may get pigs by feeding other people's pigs in return for a pigling. She may even acquire cattle if she is a doctor. In contrast to the Zulu, where the 'house' like that of the Lobedu is

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also an economic unit, the Lobedu wife enjoys considerable 595
economic freedom in the disposal of her property. Though she 425
should act in consultation with her husband in the disposal of livestock or large amounts of surplus crops she will often, especially if on bad terms with her husband, act on her own. All these activities, it should however be remembered, are for the advancement of her 'house', which belongs to the husband's lineage. These goods can neither accrue to nor be used by the wife's own relatives. If, for example, she leaves her husband or 586
is divorced she cannot take any of the produce of her fields with her. On the other hand the husband could use such crops or livestock only for the advancement or to feed the children of that 'house,' not for other 'houses'. The only goods a woman may take with her on divorce are cattle or other livestock earned by practising as a doctor because in this case, it is said, she has spirits guiding her which are of her own, not her husband's family.

The Lobedu husband does not in the manner of the Nguni 595
allocate cattle to the 'house' of each wife (milk plays little or 422
no part in the diet). It is said, however, that even if a cow were 583
to be allocated to a house for milking purposes it would not 262
belong to that 'house'. Cattle that come in from the marriage of a daughter are the property of her mother's 'house' and should be used for acquiring a wife for a son of that house. If the son is young and the husband wishes to use his daughter's cattle for a wife for himself, such wife would have to cook for the woman of that house from which the cattle came in the manner of a daughter-in-law. In theory a husband has the right to decide how the cattle of any 'house' are to be used. But he rarely in practice acts against the wishes of the wife. Her right over any woman acquired by the cattle of her daughter gives her great power and makes it difficult for her husband to marry a wife with them himself against her wishes. The bride might run away or her people refuse to let her marry if they hear that the woman the bride will have to 'stamp for' opposes the marriage. That is why so often cattle are handed to the wife's brother in the manner described above.

It is said, '*mosha ha o le yo mongwe*—houses do not eat one another', i.e., the property of one house cannot be used for the advancement of another. Hence bride-price of the girl of one

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house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families) and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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592 often, if at all, only after the death of both the father and his
571 heir, the eldest brother who succeeded him as head of the homestead. Full independence is not an ideal that is striven for.

592 In its early stages the new unit or incipient 'house' is still
571 dependent on the bridegroom's natal house (house of orienta-
593 tion). The new bride works for her mother-in-law. She has no
606 fields of her own to begin with, no utensils, nor a hearth and very often not even a sleeping hut of her own, the young couple using the mother-in-law's sleeping hut while she sleeps in her kitchen hut. The bride cooks on her husband's mother's hearth, works with her husband in a field allocated to them and helps her mother-in-law in hers. The husband will, if he has not done so before bringing his bride home, build her a new hut after the marriage at any time convenient to him. Simeon made sun-dried bricks himself, paid one pound to have the walls built, had a work-party for the framework of the roof and did the thatching himself. A man's father may help him but usually a young man uses his own money earned by previous migrant labour.

A woman cooks for her mother-in-law until a new bride, either of her husband's brother or of her husband arrives when she may be given her own pots. When Simeon's second wife arrived both wives cooked together for the mother-in-law for a while. Then when they began to disagree one (the younger one in this case because she was unrelated) was given her own pots to cook separately. Being given her own hearth is an important thing in a woman's married life marked by a little ceremony and a visit home to announce her new status. Even when she has her own hearth, however, she must continue to provide food for her parents-in-law. Children are thus an insurance against old age and it is the duty and responsibility of a son, more particularly the youngest son, to care for his mother in her old age. The father may have young wives to care for him when his elder sons are married.

593 Even after his marriage a man remains under the jural control
591 of, and subordinate to, his father. Only after his father's death
571 is he free to choose whether to remain in the village under the heir or to hive off. Sometimes, though rarely, a married son does, however, quarrel with his father and move away. Mostly

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him. 593 591 571

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking. 592 571 603 462

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *mosha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*muduhulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people. 592 571 602 604

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact 592 571 606

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592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[602] he also is a *muduhulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

768 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[604] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[583] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

768 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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wife also died, he sent the children to her sister to be reared and 768
gave her his deceased's wife's fields to cultivate to provide food
for the children. When they are big they will be brought back [591]
with a gift of beer and their father will give a thanking gift of [431]
an ox or money for the rearing of the children.

The utensils of a deceased wife remain in her hut to be used 428
by her children or son's wives; and her eldest son has the right [768]
to inherit her fields. Until twenty years ago when it was still [583]
the custom for a mother to receive a cow and calf on the marriage of her daughter (if a virgin) in recognition of having reared her, this portion of the bride-price was the special inheritance of the youngest son with whom she generally lived until her death.

When the father of a polygynous family or the head of a homestead dies there is, owing to the property arrangements characteristic of the Lobedu and their attitude to its possession, never a great deal of heritable property. The property of each house is inherited by the eldest son of that house. The heir to [592]
the position of head of the homestead is the eldest son of the chief wife. Only he or the uterine brothers of his father are responsible for his father's debts—not the sons of other houses. It is generally stated in discussions that any cattle or goods acquired by the father as his personal possessions should be inherited by the chief son and heir. In practice it is more common to divide out such property among all the sons and daughters.

When Ramalepe, a rain doctor, died about three years ago all his cattle and goods were divided equally among his sons. His rain medicines and his field went to his chief wife's son; his mealies (from his own field) were equally divided between his wives and his uterine sisters. When Philip's father died there was no sister of his father still living so Philip went to the queen and asked her what to do. She told him to call his sisters and to divide out the property in consultation with them. He then called his sisters (eldest and other daughters of his father) and showed them the property—thirty-six goats. They agreed on dividing the goats as follows: the deceased's two elder daughters by his first wife were given ten goats each; Philip, a son by the second wife, received eight; Mutzere, sister's son to deceased, was given one goat to kill and eat at his home; one goat was

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428 given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted one goat was
[586] him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *leshupe*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.
[587] The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility
[765] to hold the family together after the death of his father. The division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the
428 relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for
429 the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's
[587] brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

429 When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation
634 with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a
429 district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a
562 widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died,
[595] the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a
[692] widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting the court cases.

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home- 634
stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, 562
a married woman who does not live in the area was made 729
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from 604
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting 692
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable 604
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's 634
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to 643
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The 634
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some- 602
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thoga monye bo dula muduhulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging 592
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance 592
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portion 591
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become 591
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels 578
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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woman, K, has, during her husband's prolonged absence in a labour centre, moved away from her fellow wives into another district in order to be near her married daughter. She lives in a small homestead with her married son, who is absent doing migrant labour, and her other children. In contrast to this is the homestead of a neighbour of hers who has five wives and

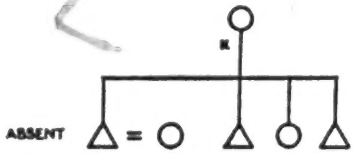

FIG. 5. Composition of a very small homestead.

whose ten brothers together with their wives and children still live with him in the homestead—a total of sixty-eight inmates (twenty-nine adults, thirty-nine children). Of these three married and two unmarried men are away doing migrant labour.

The domestic group indicated in Figure 6 originally lived in one homestead.

On A's death his chief son, B, inherited his youngest wife (No. 3) who as yet had no children. They all moved out of the old homestead, the sons (B and D) of A's two elder wives

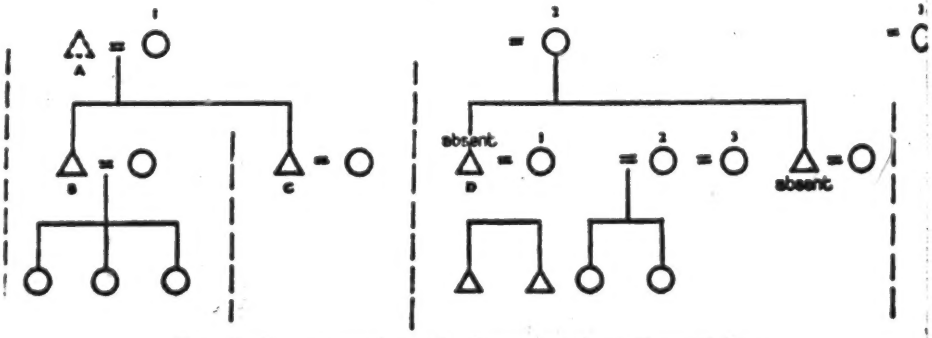

FIG. 6. Segmentation of a homestead on 'house' lines.

building separate homesteads next to one another, where I found them in 1938. The women in the homestead of D considered themselves part of the homestead of A and in the

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

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its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old. M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

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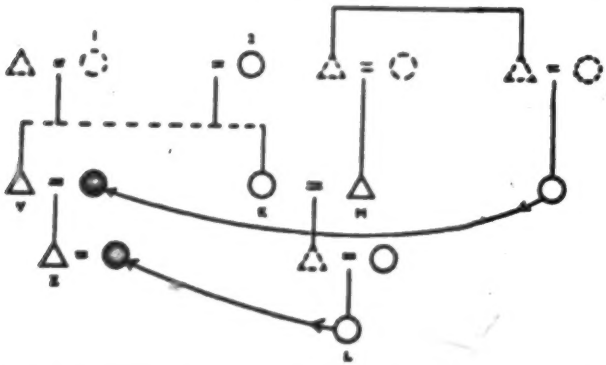

FIG. 7. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*ruka leloko*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine 582
brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor 613
worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and 769
mother's sides so that they become *moloko o motse*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an 755
illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage 893
(which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions 603
to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their 769
lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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603 is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children
769 that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated
[728] goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

621 The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among
602 the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

621 A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbour-
592 hood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,
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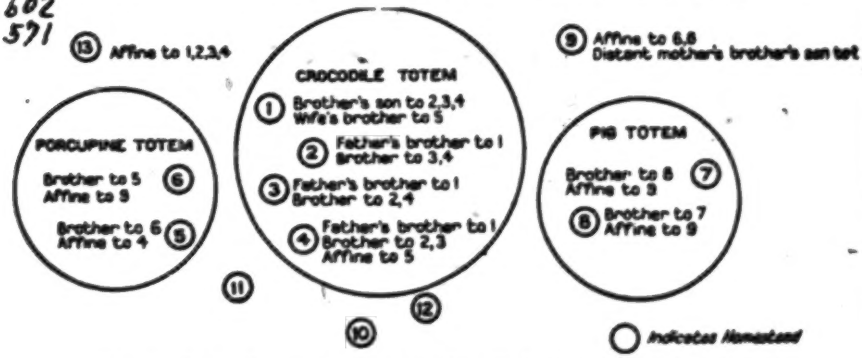

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group. 621 592 602 571

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*baduhulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment. 621 602 431 476 [273] [415] [272] [574]

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Conclusion

182 Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of
421 property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu
571 social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

595 The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the
602 Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djealane ke ba khonane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and
[613] their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

582 An important principle in the social structure is preferential
602 marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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one hand a means of binding the women of the lineage, even 582
after their marriage, by strong links to their father's family 602
and on the other of maintaining from generation to generation the bonds with the maternal kin created by the marriage of the parents.

A woman has a dual role in the social structure. On the one 562
hand by establishing a 'house' in her husband's lineage, she is 613
the means whereby his lineage is perpetuated and its numbers increased; for even after the death of her husband his brothers will raise seed to his name and in the absence of sons she can herself ensure the continuation of her husband's lineage by marrying a woman on behalf of a fictitious son. On the other hand a woman remains important to her own lineage: if she is the eldest child of her 'house' she will officiate at all important religious offerings (if her brother is older he may officiate but she will always be called to collaborate with him); when she dies her name and those of her sisters will be included among the names of ancestors called upon in prayer; she divides out the inheritance on the death of her uterine brother; she guards the interests of the children of her cattle-linked brother's 'house' whence she will obtain a daughter-in-law; upon her falls the responsibility in the absence of her parents of providing an heir in her mother's 'house' (of her father's lineage) should there be no son; and she may even act in the place of her deceased father as ruler over a district until the heir is of age or until one can be raised.

The maintenance of links with married sisters and its com- 593
plement marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter, 582
by means of which one's links with one's wife's (or mother's) 602
family are perpetuated, are supreme values in Lobedu society. 1181
That is why a wife who has no son has little difficulty in persuading her husband to hand over her daughter's bride-price to her brother rather than create links with a strange family. It is possible thereby to 'build a house' (or 'make a gate') at her brother's home from which her daughter's son will obtain a wife. This may at first sight appear to be very like the transfer of rights from mother to daughter but this is not the case. It is made possible by the transfer of cattle belonging to the daughter's husband and is bound up with the great desire to maintain links between the descendants of brother and sister. The right

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of a woman to 'someone to stamp for her' from the 'house' created by her bride-price also enables the father of a woman who has no uterine brother to control to some extent, by the placement of his daughter's cattle, the marriage of her sons. Her husband 'follows the tracks of his cattle' to find a wife for his son but it is her father who determines where these 'tracks' will lead to.

There are thus to be found in Lobedu social structure a neat balance between the various kinds of kin; a combination of patrilineal principles with strong matrilineal bonds; a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family; and an equality in the importance of paternal and maternal kin which is seen on all social and ritual occasions and is reflected also in the composition of local groups.

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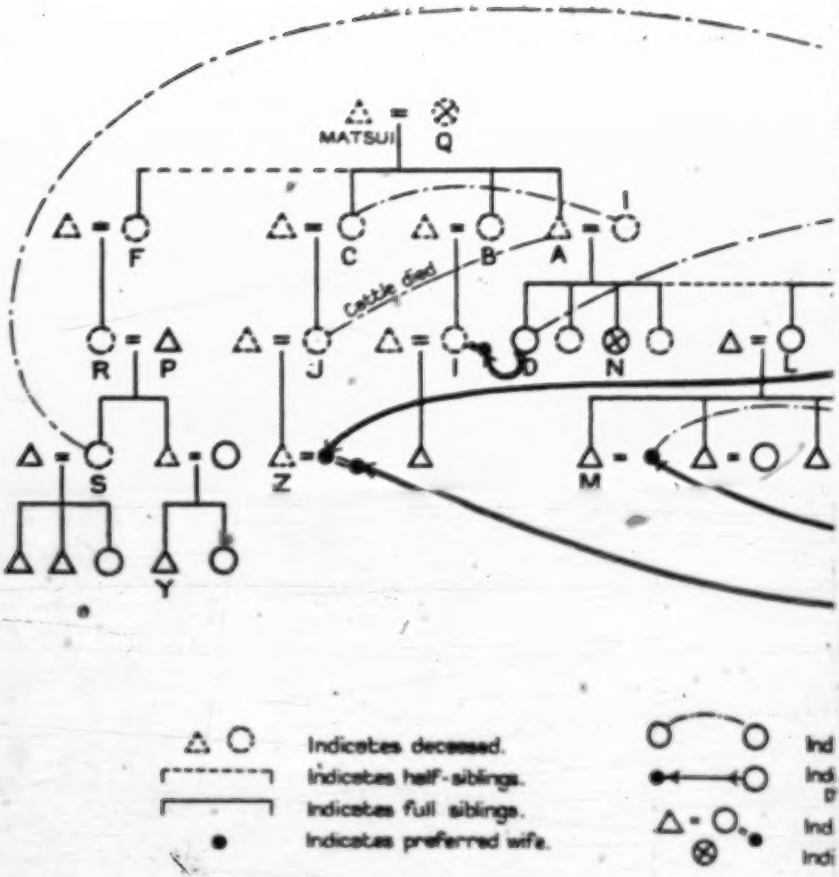

[p. 192-A]

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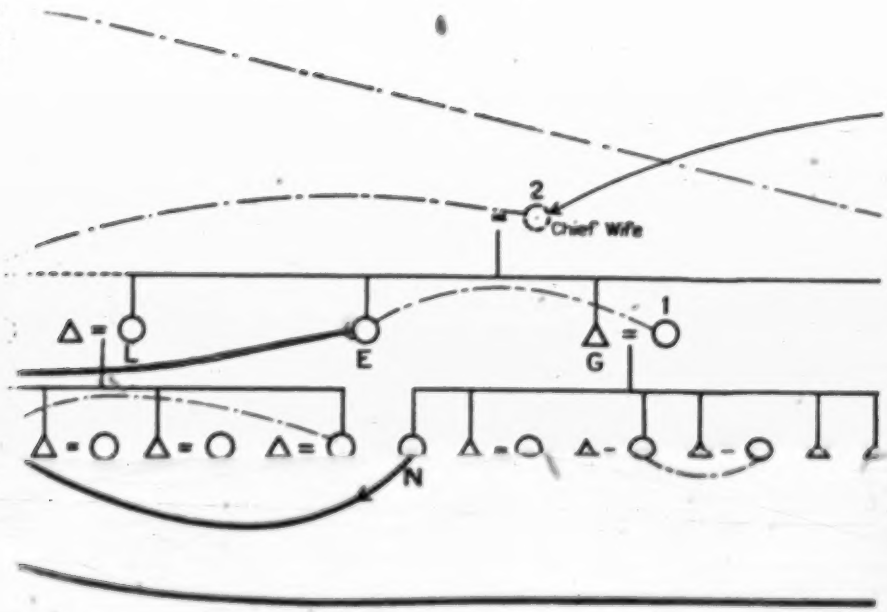

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a women in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wives
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her de

Indicates women marriage of a girl with a married female relation.

Indicates a women who is or has been a motanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[p. 192-B]

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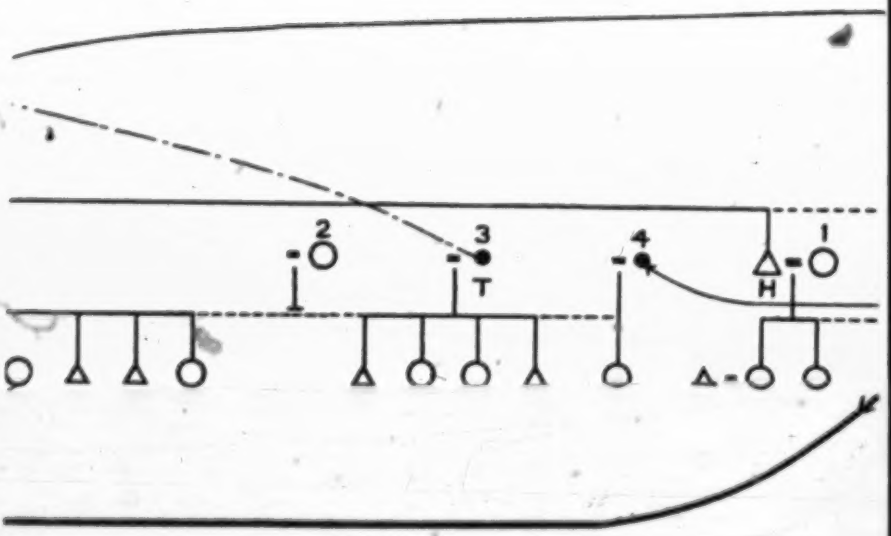

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
nooming wives from the same lineage.
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FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a lineage

[p.192-C]

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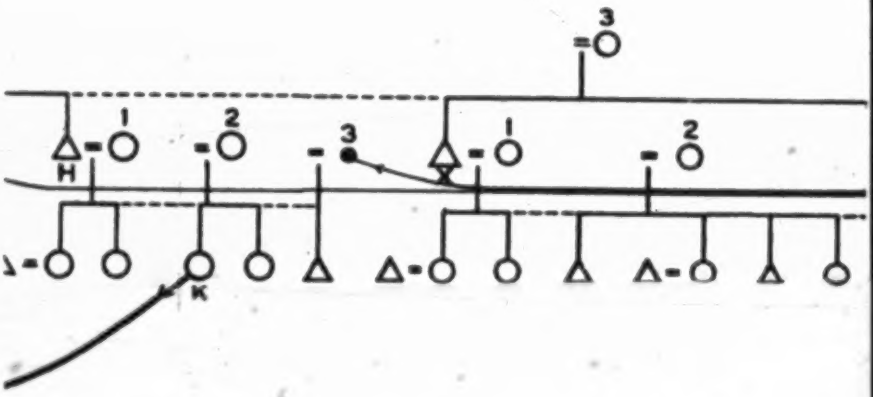

links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-D]

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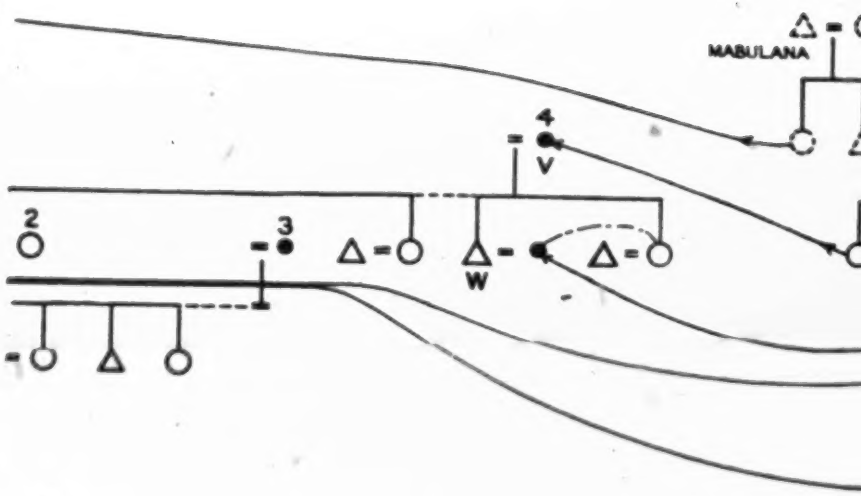

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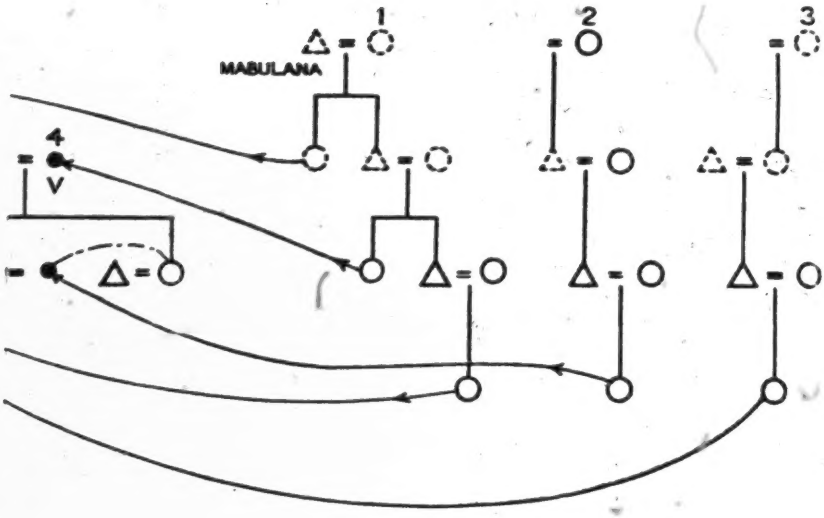

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

APPENDIX I

THE manner in which many of the characteristics of Lobedu marriage arrangements operate in practice is illustrated in the case of the lineage segment of A and his descendants set out in Figure 9. The arrows in the diagram all represent the passage of women in preferential marriage from their parental home to that of their husband: single arrows indicate women of the mother's brother's family (i.e., the Mabulanas) who have married into A's lineage (Matsui); double arrows indicate the departure of women of A's lineage to marry at their father's sister's. The following are points to be noted: 582 591 602 613

(a) The tendency for Lobedu polygynists to marry more than one wife from the same family is seen in Figure 9 in A's marriage to his fourth wife who was his second wife's brother's daughter. [595]

(b) The manner in which cross-cousin marriage perpetuates links with the wife's kin down the generations is illustrated by the marriages of A's sons G, H, W and X. G's fourth wife, H's third wife and W's first wife all come from the same lineage, that of their mothers (A's second and fourth wives). A's son X's third wife is also his uterine cross-cousin but it was not practicable to indicate her family of origin also in the diagram.

(c) Besides reinforcing links with the maternal kin, mother's brother's daughter marriage serves also to knit together descendants of a man and his sisters. The bonds between A and his sisters B and C have been kept alive over a span of two generations of their descendants by the marriage of A's daughter D to I (daughter of his sister B) as indicated by the double arrow in Figure 9, and the marriage of A's daughter E to Z (son of J, and grandson of A's sister, C). Similarly G's daughter N by his first wife is married to the son (M) of his sister L (see double arrows), and H's daughter K is married to her father's sister E, widow of Z, a marriage which took place in 1961.

(d) The part played by cattle links in ensuring preferential marriage is also illustrated in the diagram; but it is clear too that children of brother and sister who are *not* cattle-linked often also marry one another. Z married E because of cattle-links two generations above him as is explained below. But when E grew old and needed a 'wife' G had no suitable daughter; so H's daughter K 'married' her. Cattle-links also did not account for the marriage of A's daughter, D, to his sister I, nor of G's daughter N to his sister L's son M. These indicate the tremendous value attached to maintaining links with married sisters. The reasons for the marriage of 582 583 591 602 613

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582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realizing he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

588 591 (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I; that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. [634] In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *motanoni* of the queen.

613 582 588 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.

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(h) The incidence of cross-cousin marriage and its variations in two generations of descendants of A (counting only the actual members of his lineage as shown in Figure 9) over a time-span of over sixty years (i.e., from about 1895 to 1962) was 31 per cent (nine out of twenty-nine marriages). 582 613

The arrangements in the above lineage segment are by no means unusual. This lineage is that of a district head, but it is representative of numbers of cases that could be chosen from among non-Christian traditionalists who still form the majority of the tribe. 58 613 178

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PREFACE

121 643 THIS book presents the life and culture of the Lovedu, a Bantu tribe in South Africa. Its central figure is a sacred queen. Against the background of our world, she no doubt appears unreal in some respects, like the baseless fabric of a dream, but in others she is real enough. We can, for instance, readily visualize her, without official husband to cramp her authority, bearing her successor by a secret consort; or maintaining her strategic position at the centre of the tribe by re-distributing as favours the wives she receives as tribute. But it is a different and far more difficult matter to depict as real what we regard as mysterious; for, hallowed by a heritage of incest, she is chosen for her role by the ghost of her predecessor, and her destined end is death by her own hands, in order that she may rule by divine right. We have tried to show that these mysteries become realities when we see them as means to the supreme end of consecrating her power to make rain, and when we realize that this power implies control of half the cosmic forces and gives men faith to do their daily tasks.

121 182 Our main object has been to describe the culture of the Lovedu. We have set ourselves the task of showing the nature of its parts and their relation to one another. Some space is devoted to the royal institutions; the network of links woven by kinship, marriage and marriage cattle; the legal procedure of compromise and appeasement; and various aspects of magic, witchcraft, and religion. Considered as a whole, the culture emerges as a structure supporting and in turn supported by the Rain-Queen. We may think of the royal institutions as the foundations upon which men build for safety against famines and foes; the culture dispenses with reliance upon garden magic for success of the crops and upon a military system for national defence. Marriage cattle and the kin can be regarded as forging a frame which firmly holds the society together, binding its families, foreign groups and territorial units to one another and to the queen. Stresses and strains are taken by flexible devices for adjusting disputes by conciliation. A cult of masks and man-made mysteries appears to surmount the edifice like spires and pinnacles; we may envisage it as the cultural handling of those enigmas of nature, the exalted themes of growth and fertility.

Next, we have tried to outline the attitudes and interests of the people. They appear as carriers of the culture oriented toward the central figure and helping one another to bear the burden of a timeless society. Our chief concern has been to show how their ideals and motives have been moulded by the culture; why, for instance, they frown upon competition and appraise moderation, and how it is that they are not troubled by sex-guilt or inferiority complexes. We have finally turned to consider some aspects of culture contact, such as the fear and distrust of the agents of an acquisitive society against whom the carriers of the culture have no weapons save secrecy and deception.

In describing these lineaments of Lovedu society, as its stands facing the onslaught of Western civilization, we have set forth the general

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principles, but eschewed the details. Upon a limited canvas we have 121
striven to draw the main outlines in such a way as both to maintain the proportions of the culture and to interest the general reader as well as the student. Much is left unsaid about such aspects of the culture as the manner in which men try to harness the powers of nature and to condition the individual to his social function, the basic assumptions of the magico-religious world and the elements imparted to the culture by contact with other peoples, both African and European. We have not touched upon many aspects usually dealt with in the larger anthropological monographs. In view of our general object, we have omitted not only whole subjects of interest to the anthropologist, such as birth and death ceremonial, arts and crafts, village organization and kinship terminology, but also details on practices of importance to specialists, such as care of cattle, cultivation, diet and diseases, land tenure and medicine. While we believe that the many omissions do not detract from the essential balance and unity of the whole, it is our intention to fill in the gaps with articles on specialized aspects of the culture, and with additional books on larger topics such as law and judicial arrangements, marriage and social organization, magic, and religion. Too much must not be expected in the present volume.

Our contacts with the Lovedu began more than ten years ago with 114
short visits of a month each in 1928, 1930, and 1932. These visits served as an introduction, but sustained field investigation was rendered possible only when, between 1936 and 1938, we held a Fellowship of the Inter- 122
national Institute of African Languages and Cultures. During this period we were in the field sixteen and a half months in all: April to July, 1936, November, 1936, to July, 1937, September and October, 1937, and May to August, 1938. In some of the intervening periods, while one of us was ill, the other as far as possible maintained personal touch with the Lovedu and, in order to verify some of our observations and to investigate a ceremony not held since 1905, we also paid some visits of a few days each in 1939.

Except to mention two points, we shall refrain from expounding our 123
methods of investigation. The principles we adopted were, on the one hand, personal and intensive local observation, and, on the other, comparative investigation over a large area. Personal observation is essential because, though verbal accounts given by reliable informants may serve as useful starting-points, they generally not only are unconsciously idealized, but assume a background unknown to the investigator and often entirely escaping his attention. Accounts may reflect theory and ideals, but often give a very wrong impression of practice and real life; they never convey atmosphere and personal relationships. By comparative study, we obtained a mass of valuable clues as to lines of inquiry or interpretation which we could follow up and check by further local and intensive as well as extensive observation.

Personal observation is tiring, slow to yield results, and usually objectionable to the Lovedu; but in the end the rewards are great. After a long day's work, it is distasteful, but often essential, to keep awake all night sitting in the stifling atmosphere of a hut crowded with dancing,

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CHAPTER XVI

TRIBAL TRAITS AND ATTITUDES

Harmonizing the bases of social security with outlets for personal expression—the role of beer—moderation as an ideal and in the spheres of sex and authority—preoccupation with the quest for health—attitudinal reaction to the Western world.

121 WE have drawn a rough outline of Lovedu culture and have lightly sketched in some of the forms of its institutions. From this has emerged the shape and structure of the society. The picture is, of course, incomplete, but we may perhaps give it tone by filling into the forms the shades of movement and motivation, and character by adding the colour of traits and attitudes. We have to undertake this task without the many forms which we have not sketched at all and, far more serious, without the wider background of surrounding cultures which would throw our picture into true perspective. To make good these omissions at this stage is impossible; all we can do is to orientate ourselves from a few familiar principles which will guide us in presenting our picture of the traits and interests of the Lovedu. These are the principles of man's wish for security, for achievement and for recreation.

Man must feel free to act without undue fear and uncertainty, and society must so order its arrangements that its members feel safeguarded against threats to their welfare; hence we in European society have our insurance systems which reduce the risks of our ventures, our legal sanctions which ensure the fulfilment of our expectations, and our conception of a righteous providence which consoles us in the face of a ruthless fate. Man's striving towards self-expression and recognition must also be satisfied, and society cannot neglect to demarcate spheres for, and to reward, individual achievement, though this is no simple matter because the opportunities that stimulate must be co-ordinated with the stability and security by which men may calculate the probability of the success of their ventures. Man also craves for recreation, adventure, and change from the monotony of those activities that are necessary to keep body and soul together; and here again the avenues that society provides must be integrated with the requirements of security and self-expression. Each society handles and co-ordinates these themes in a different manner; in one society, for instance, achievement is defined in terms of wealth or of ousting a rival; in another, in terms of wisdom or co-operation with others. The manner in which any particular society defines or handles these themes determines the interests, aims, values, and attitudes of its members; and it is from this point of view that we shall attempt to portray the Lovedu.

241 Lovedu culture is diversified: it is not like a man motivated by a one-track mind, or a fanatic obsessed by a single overpowering mania. But among its many interests, agriculture takes the first place. More time and energy are given to agricultural than to any other activities; no competing interest will move man to neglect ploughing and reaping, and no

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174 Sekhɔpɔ, splitting off from the Lovedu royal group (*c.* 1800) and subjected to Pedi-highveld-Sotho influences, though only twenty miles from Ulovedu, are less like their present-day Lovedu royal relatives than are the Tswale. But the Tswale are foreigners, tracing descent from the Venda royal house of Thɔhɔ-ya-Ndɔu; they entered the Lovedu sphere of influence (*c.* 1730), and they lost close touch with the main body of the Venda (*c.* 1840). In language and almost all major aspects of culture the Tswale have been Loveduized. They have not adopted the specialized Lovedu royal complex of institutions, but equally they have lost their characteristically Venda elements. Thus, of Venda elements, they have given up the *dɔmbɔ* and *thɔndɔ* 'schools' and the attribution of extensive powers to a high god; even the peculiar Venda disposition of forces and persons in the political organization is little more than a memory; and differences in detail from the Lovedu, such as peeling the skin off a goat's tail before killing it ritually, which is a royal Venda feature, are no greater than the differences found between one district and another in Ulovedu itself. These are not isolated instances of divergent cultural evolution in response to divergent environments and contacts. Dozens of examples emerge from an historical and comparative investigation of the Northern Transvaal alone.

●121 In the whole of our field investigation, nothing has been more fruitful and stimulating than our visits to twenty-six Northern Transvaal tribes. There can be no doubt that, had there been time to study ten times that number of tribes over a much wider area, the value and suggestiveness of the comparative and historical background would have been correspondingly enhanced, against which the direction. nature, and magnitude of cultural changes might be evaluated. There arise problems of method, even of the legitimacy of making inferences from one tribe to another. We shall not deal with them here except to say that breadth and depth of observation and fertility of interpretation largely depend upon the range of one's knowledge and experience. If inferences from variations within the tribe are legitimate—nay, absolutely necessary—for the most elementary presentation or generalization, by the same reasoning they must be legitimate across the boundaries of tribes. Culture elements, culture patterns, and the major cultural configurations do not stop short upon the borders of districts, nor of tribes, nor even of culture areas.

Comparative study has enabled us to see in actual being the diffusion of culture elements across the boundaries of districts, tribes, and culture areas. The different handling by different cultures of the same cultural material, according to the needs of their environment or the genius or emphases of their patterns, can be observed and its results established without any doubt by comparative investigation. Once it can be determined that the raw cultural material is the same, deductions from variations in forms and functions or in purposes and goals are far from being illegitimate, but illuminate the distinctive trends of the cultures in which they occur. Inferences from incommensurable variations are illegitimate; but the wider the range of comparison and the more intensive the functional investigation, the easier it is to eliminate this error

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and the more precisely can be estimated, not only the nature, direction, and magnitude of change, but also the relation of the change to the forms and purposes of the culture in which it is found. 121

Comparative study, as a technique of interpreting culture and its evolution, must go hand in hand with historical investigation. Both the past that survives in the memory of the carriers of the culture and the present are functionally important. They give us some of the clues to the psychological forces that cause or resist change and they provide data upon the nature of institutional evolution. But man is more than his memory and the living past is far more than the remembered past. So much is self-evident to a carrier of the culture that it will never be mentioned by an informant and will wholly escape the investigator's attention unless, with the aid of sustained comparative and historical study, he discovers the key that unlocks the memory and opens the way to the socially unconscious, that system of codes and standards which, without being conscious, condition experience and behaviour and are themselves conditioned by the social, psychological determinants of the past. Historical study is important for understanding the attitudes and reactions of the present, for estimating the evolution of forms and institutions, and for evaluating the relation to and reaction upon one another, not only of attitudes and forms, but also of the psychology of the people and the material content of the culture.

Culture change, according to this approach, must be investigated and interpreted, not merely functionally, but also relatively to the past and to reactions in other tribes. The method may be called relativistic functionalism. It implies observation and interpretation, not merely of the forms and functions of institutions within tribes, but also of the differential process of incorporation or rejection, under different conditions and in different tribes, of new culture elements.

This is not the place to justify this approach or to examine its theoretical and practical implications. All we need say is that, among the Lovedu, exceptionally good material exists for applying this method. Various sections of the Lovedu, as well as of numerous other tribes, of diverse origin and culture, have been subjected to diverse cultural influences for different but determinable periods of time, and their interpenetration can be studied in relation to both time and space. Particularly instructive are the differential responses to such patterns as the Venda royal complex of institutions and the transformations and modifications impressed upon such cultural material as the 'schools'. Thus, for instance, the royal pattern of the Kwindɛ (Venda royal group) can be studied in a chain of tribes of Kwindɛ ancestry extending into Ɔulovedu, some of whom have been subjected to intimate and long continued, others to less intimate and shorter, Lovedu contact. But this royal pattern has also interpenetrated other cultures, imposing itself upon the heterogeneous peoples incorporated by the Kwindɛ, like Koni, Karanga, Nyai, and Laudi, and leaving diverse impressions upon politically independent tribes such as the Ɔokwa, Ɔirwa, Nareni, and Lovedu. The differential interpenetration, especially of the various branches of the Lovedu, enables us to arrive at important conclusions.

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Oral traditions of the past, it is said, are unreliable and unverifiable. 121
Accounts by informants about the present are also unreliable and often, unless one lives a lifetime in the society, unverifiable. Even the most elementary facts observed do not speak for themselves and have to be interpreted, and the verification of objective facts becomes a complicated process not unlike verification of historical material from such circumstantial evidence as is provided by comparative study. Certainly, in our experience, what was impressive was the substantial agreement among all the tribes upon the main events and migrations, which also provided useful clues to diffusions of culture in the past. The lack of discrimination as regards place and time and the dramatizations and justifications were difficulties which gradually disappeared as the background of comparison was enlarged. Even the discrepancies, seen against the total background, illuminated the local trends and motivations, and proved to be more apparent than real.

Most men of the Lovedu royal group to-day deny their Karanga ancestry, 121
although ten years ago they admitted it. You will tap their memories in 177
vain to discover either the truth or the reason for the change of attitude. But in the light of comparative investigation—for this phenomenon is not unique among the tribes—and of a study of reactions between 1926 and 1936, the change is intelligible. The suspicion that the releasing of land to the Native under the Land Act, in pursuance of a segregation policy, might be a device to dispossess the tribe engendered a profound disturbance to men's sense of security, which could be re-established only by affirming the title of immemorial occupation of Vulovedu. The method of relativistic functionalism ensures, not merely perspective, but also balanced and comprehensive interpretations.

INTERPENETRATION OF THE TRIBES

Lovedu culture as it is to-day is the result of a complicated historical 174
process. For some indication of the genesis of the tribe and of its culture, the reader is referred to the accompanying map; we cannot discuss the evidence in this book.

More than 300 years ago there were tribes sparsely scattered over the whole of the Northern Transvaal. This area lay outside the main migratory currents: Nguni and Tonga coming down on the east, Sotho-Tswana circling the curve of the Limpopo on the west, and Karanga halting between these two to the north of the tsetse-fly belt along the Limpopo. The date of these migrations and their relation to one another is lost in oblivion, but trickles from these currents and backwater eddying from them, particularly from the Sotho-Tswana current, penetrated into the Lovedu lowveld. There were, however, Kwena and Ngwato who descended the escarpment in force only after arrival on the highveld of invaders from the east (Koni, *c.* 1700), the south or south-west (Dokwa, *c.* 1760, and Moletahe, *c.* 1750), and the north (Virwa, *c.* 1780). Some of these Kwena and Ngwato form a chain of peoples, no longer independent, from the north, round the west and to the south of Vulovedu, into the political and cultural structure of which many have been incorporated.

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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

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● 123 sweating humanity. After an exhausting walk of ten miles or more over difficult country, in order to witness a ceremony, it is discouraging to be refused admittance to the performance or to find it postponed until the European leaves; but occasional success amply repays perseverance. In the timeless Lovedu society, even if the investigator is welcomed, he may have to wait hours for a performance to begin; but the time need never be wholly wasted. Personal observation brings to light bewildering variations in the culture. There is no such thing as rigid conformity, and rules are made for man, not man for rules. Until the observer's own cultural conditioning is re-conditioned by intimate touch with the society, he cannot hope to penetrate its meaning.

In this book we are concerned to describe custom and life as they are to-day, after fifty years of European contact. Every custom, every ceremony, every case in it, has been personally seen except in those instances, always clear from the context, in which the event, such as the death of a Lovedu chief, did not occur during the period of investigation. We have written about everyday things as they are enacted in the tribe to-day, not as they were in the past. For obvious reasons, names mentioned in illustrative cases are all fictitious, save only where they are essential for the subject matter, as in the chapters on tribal history, social groupings, and political organization.

At the outset of our investigation we planned a rough division of work. One of us, E. J. Krige, concentrated upon magic and religion, family life, and women's activities; the other, J. D. Krige, upon laws and political organization, history, and man's activities. But our method of studying human situations as and where we found them, and of recording things as and when they occurred, precluded any rigid division, and each obtained information upon all aspects of culture. Each of us independently studied many institutions, such as marriage, economic life, and medical practices, and the diversity of our information and impressions—often reflections of our personal differences of outlook—provided useful clues to further observation and interpretation, besides showing that in field work the temperament of the investigator is a vital factor. In the preparation of this book E. J. Krige is responsible for Chapters II, V, VII, VIII, XII to XV, and J. D. Krige for Chapters I, III, IV, VI, IX to XI, XVI, XVII and the maps; but each has carefully gone through the work of the other and the whole is the result of the fullest co-operation between us. It does not seem necessary to mention in detail which of us took the photographs reproduced.

197 As regards the language of the Lovedu, we found that, difficult as it was to acquire, a working knowledge was absolutely essential, because implicit in it is a vast background of associations which can never be recaptured in translation. Khilovedu is now practically a dialect of Sotho, yet it cannot be adequately written in Sotho orthography. It approximates to Venda in much of its vocabulary, falls midway between Sotho and Venda in grammatical structure, and is Sothoized in phonology,
104 but many of its sounds are unknown in Sotho. Generally speaking,
194 we have adopted the orthography recommended by the International Institute with some modifications. For dental *d* and *t* we have used *ḍ* and *ṭ*

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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602 were to go to court for a return of the cattle her brother used or if a brother were to accuse his cattle-linked sister of witchcraft, they could no longer be on friendly terms; it would then be said, '*vushaka vu file*', their relationship is dead. But since life in Lovedu society can hardly be lived without the social usages and mutual obligations associated with kin, a man will always find some one among his large number of sisters to take her place. The manner in which close alliances with relatives is built up is shown in the case of Eliah and Thagu. Eliah has moved into an area ten miles from his nearest relations. Thagu, who lives in a large kraal near him, has a sister who married a far-off father's brother of Eliah. Eliah, therefore, stands in the relationship of a remote *tsazi*—that is, son-in-law—to Thagu, for, since Thagu's daughters should marry sons of their father's sister (i.e. sons of Eliah's father's brother and therefore his brothers), these daughters regard the whole of that family and therefore Eliah and his sons too as possible husbands. Therefore, when the last child of Eliah was born, Thagu sent beer 'to see the child', as Eliah's wife's parents would do, even though they had never known each other before. Because they live close together and get on fairly well, steps have been taken to tighten the kinship bond between them. Mabulani is another example. Mabulani's fellow wife is the one married with her husband's sister's (Munyamani's) cattle, and her daughter should therefore marry Munyamani's son. But the fellow wife is old and all her children already married. Now Mabulani, in spite of the fact that she is disliked by Munyamani for having been instrumental in alienating her fellow wife from her husband's affections, is assiduously trying to build up good relations with Munyamani's household. She sends beer and pays visits because, as it is believed, she has two daughters, one of whom she would like to be married there.

A factor that completely nullifies traditional patterns of behaviour between relatives is that of age. Obviously the respect due to a father's sister, with all the prestige of a generation older than oneself, must fall to the ground in a case where the father's sister is younger than oneself. In this manner, polygyny plays the strangest tricks with kinship relationships. Since the youngest wife of a man may be considerably junior to his eldest children, some mother's brothers and father's sisters may be very much younger than oneself. Bilowi, aged about twenty-three, and Badama, aged five, live in one village. When Badama cries or fights with Bilowi's youngest brother, she pacifies and mothers them both. Yet Bilowi is Badama's 'child', since Bilowi's father's mother and Badama's mother are fellow wives.

602 Kinship is the greatest bond between people; beside it, taken all in all,
● 123 any other single tie fades into insignificance. Even a fictitious bond of kinship established between ourselves and the head of an area in which we stayed served as a basis for the removal of suspicion and the building up of a better understanding between ourselves and the people with whom we came into contact. We were never admitted to the ceremonies connected with birth and early babyhood till our 'sister's' child had a baby. Then as a grandmother with a natural interest, which all could understand, in the welfare of our grandchild, we were permitted to be

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

present. Here was a legitimate human interest—not merely the idle curiosity of a European or the recording of customs that might end in police intervention. 602 123

The kin share your joys and sorrows, give support in your hour of need and advice in the affairs of life. When you are in trouble and have to pay a fine which you do not possess, it is your brothers who will come to your aid. On the marriage of your children, your brothers are called to hear the matter and to give their advice; when there is death your kin rally to your side. A widow is never faced with destitution; her husband's brother will care for her, and to-day, when, as among Christians, this sometimes entails help in training the children for a career, it is often a heavy liability. In working parties or when meal has to be stamped for beer-making, it is the relatives living near who are most relied upon for their help. A woman whose husband is in town depends on her male kin to help her in the yearly renewal of storage receptacles, hut-building and ploughing. She will, where possible, reward them with beer, but this is by no means always done. People like living near their kin. An elder and a younger brother, one living near Tzaneen, the other in Ŭulovedu, both died. Then the grown-up son of the younger brother called the wife and family of the elder brother to come and build near them, saying that the children of his *ramuhulu* would not know him if they lived so far away. Kinship, as we point out elsewhere, knits together the political system. But it is worth repeating that the kin are the core of the district and the bonds between districts; that, in general, the father's relatives live largely in the same district, the mother's or the wife's in some other area and visits and gifts of beer serve as an introduction to the districts in which they live; and that all the heads of districts, by virtue of having to send a daughter to 'marry' the queen, are linked to the capital by a kinship bond. 736

One would expect that, in a society like that of the Lovedu, with a strong sense of kinship obligations, the position of orphans would not be very different from that of other children. Yet the Lovedu feel the position of an orphan, any one wholly dependent on relatives for food and shelter, to be a peculiarly sad one. Hence the riddle, 'Little fountain full of muck', and its answer, 'The heart of an orphan'; hence also the proverb, 'It takes a woman with a generous heart to keep an orphan well'. The smoky side of a fire is called 'the side where orphans sit', and if you sit chin in hand, people always say, 'Why are you so sad? Are you an orphan?' Even old women, those skilled and inveterate beggars, think that a sure way of enlisting your sympathy is to plead that they are orphans with no one to give them things. 602 736 524

It is said that orphans have to do harder work than other children and have many a time to hear complaints that they eat too much. When the children of the house receive clothes as presents from relatives, the orphan gets little or nothing; and nowadays, while the children of the house may be sent to school, the orphan remains at home herding. None of our own personal contacts with orphans bore out these tales, and when we cited them as examples contradicting their statements, informants admitted that those cases did not bear out the general principle. Indeed, what impressed us most were the conscious efforts made, 736

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

By FERDINAND KRUGER

101 The Lovedu are a Bantu-tribe residing in the East of the Northern
128 Transvaal. The history of the tribe which is published here is the work of a Lovedu. With assistance of a number of old Lovedu-men and some teachers I tested the facts and rewrote the whole paper in correct Lovedu-dialect. The translation given by me is as literal as possible.

104 Vowels: *a, e, i, o, ɔ, u.*

Semivowels: *y, w.*

Consonants:

Nasals: *m, n, ɲ* (dental) *ŋ* (velar).

Fricatives: *v, f,* (both bilabial); *z, s,*; *ʒ ʃ*; *hh,*[1] *h*; *l, ɬ* (dental); *ɮ*; *r.*

Plosives: *b, p*; *g, k*; *d, ɖ* (dental) *t, ʈ* (dental).

Affricates: *tsh, tʃh.*

Diacritical letters:

h after a symbol=aspiration.

w after a symbol="back labialization."

y after a symbol="front labialization."

y after a nasal=palatalization.

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[1] *hh* voiced aspirate *h.*

[2] *ɮ* see A. N. Tucker, M.A.—*The Comparative Phonetics of the Suto-Chuana Group of Bantu Languages*, p. 48, 143. London 1929.

[P. 89]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

group there are many other groups, each with its own historical background, subtly linked up though it be with the royal background; secondly, great as the glory of the queens is, we must not fail to see their people in their true perspective against the masses of foreign tribes and against the stature of the European Colossus; and, thirdly, however greatly men rely for their sense of security upon ultimate values, their lives are immediately and predominantly concerned with very simple matters, with tilling the soil and caring for their cattle, with getting and preparing food, with securing shelter and warmth, with gossip at beer drinks and with petty domestic squabbles.

The Lovedu to-day are predominant in an area of some 5,000 square miles, the area of the Lovedu lowveld which is bounded by the Game Reserve, the escarpment, the Klein Letaba and the Olifants Rivers. On all sides of this area there are mightier peoples. Shangana-Tonga to the east. Pedi to the south, Venda to the north and several highveld tribes to the west—all these overshadow the people of Mujaji in numbers, in organization, and in power. But within the Lovedu lowveld, if we count all branches of the Lovedu, the subjects under them (about 50,000) outnumber the rest of the Sotho-speaking tribes put together (some 40,000). There are in addition many people (perhaps 25,000) under Shangana-Tonga chiefs, and in the eyes of the European one of them has far greater stature than Mujaji.

The Lovedu live in a location marked out in the early 1890's, immediately after the advent of European settlers and the conflicts that resulted. The original location, just short of seventy square miles, was enlarged during the 1930's by the purchase of tribal farms, and now the whole reserve is about 150 square miles in extent. This falls far short of the 600 square miles within which Mujaji used to exercise effective jurisdiction. She held the area between the Moketsi, the Great Letaba and the Mulodozi Rivers, from where the latter joins the Great Letaba at its northernmost bend, and from there westwards to the Moketsi; beyond it for another 400 square miles, but rather indefinitely towards the north, north-east, and east, where the population was sparse, Mujaji's writ ran, through uncertainly and spasmodically.

The population of the reserve we estimate at 33,000, which is considerably in excess of the official census figure for 1936.[1] The average

[1] Official census figures for 1936 are available, not for the Lovedu reserve, but only for two separate units of areas: (*a*) the Lovedu location and (*b*) an area to the north of it, about half of which falls within the Lovedu reserve. For (*a*) the figures are 11,636 and for (*b*) 7,205. If we assume that half of the population of (*b*) falls within the Lovedu reserve, its total population would be 15,238, or only about 46 per cent of our estimate of 33,000. We arrive at our figure from three sources: (1) Kraal-to-kraal countings in three sample districts with a total area of 14·5 square miles and a total population of 3,500. These districts represent different localities, some valley, some hill, and constitute a fair sample. On the basis of the average density of population in them, the total figure for the Lovedu reserve of 150 square miles should be $150 \div 14{\cdot}5 \times 3{,}500$, or 36,207. (2) The proportion of people who, according to Native accounts, our own impressions, and independent European eye-witnesses, escaped official enumeration. Despite instructions that the people of each district should collect in their respective districts, the enumerators, finding the districts inaccessible by road

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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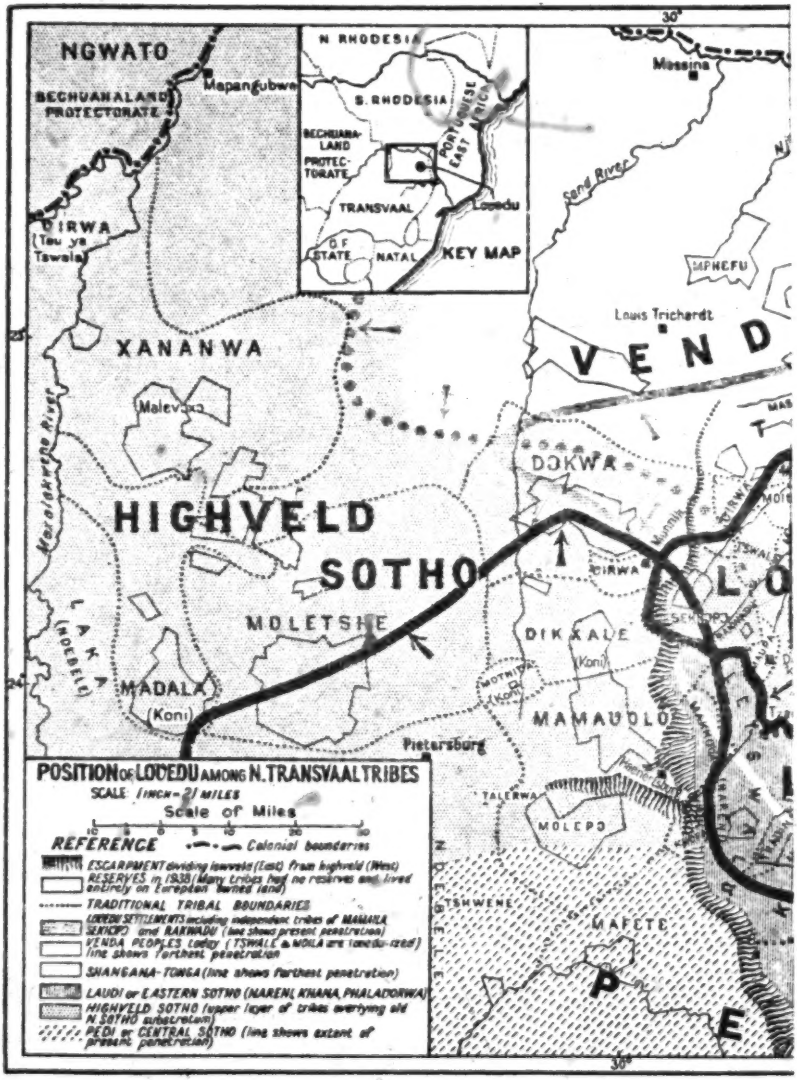

[End map A]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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[End map B]

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6
Venda FX19

AFRICA

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

VOLUME XI | JULY 1938 | NUMBER 3

THE PLACE OF THE NORTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL SOTHO IN THE SOUTH BANTU COMPLEX

EILEEN JENSEN KRIGE

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THE Sotho of the North-Eastern Transvaal Lowveld occupy an area with fairly well-marked geographical boundaries. To the east, the Game Reserve, low-lying, unhealthy, very sparsely populated even in the old days, remains an effective barrier to contact with and further migrations from the Shangana-Tonga of Portuguese East Africa. South are the Olifants River and the towering Drakensberg range curving north-west then northwards to merge into the well-marked escarpment on the west dividing Lowveld from Highveld. On the north the Klein Letaba river roughly demarcates our area from the Venda and the Shangana-Tonga of the Knobnose Location. The Sotho-speaking Venda of Tswale and Moila, who fall well within this area, resemble in culture their Sotho-ized neighbours more than their own Venda kin to the north; but the Shangana-Tonga, who occupy most of the lower-lying eastern and north-eastern portion of the area and comprise at least one-third of its total population, are unassimilated strangers of different stock coming from the north-east and east. They have been entering since about 1840, usually in small bands, at first seeking the protection of and subjecting themselves to the Sotho owners of the land. On the arrival

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'Africa': the Journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures is published by the Institute, but except where otherwise stated the writers of the articles are alone responsible for the opinions expressed.

[p.265]

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Venda FX14
Thonga FT6
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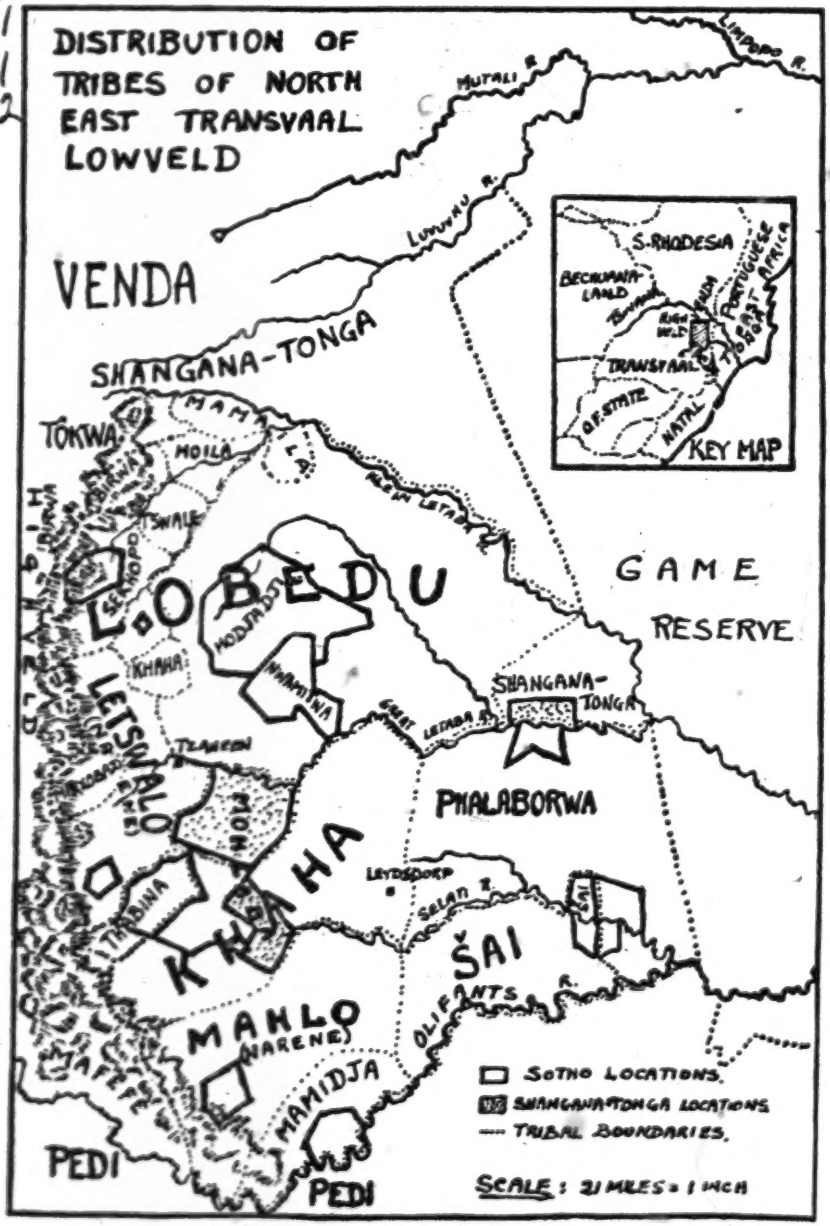

[p. 267]

5;Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Rɔka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhɔpɔ, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigɔa, the Dgɔna and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

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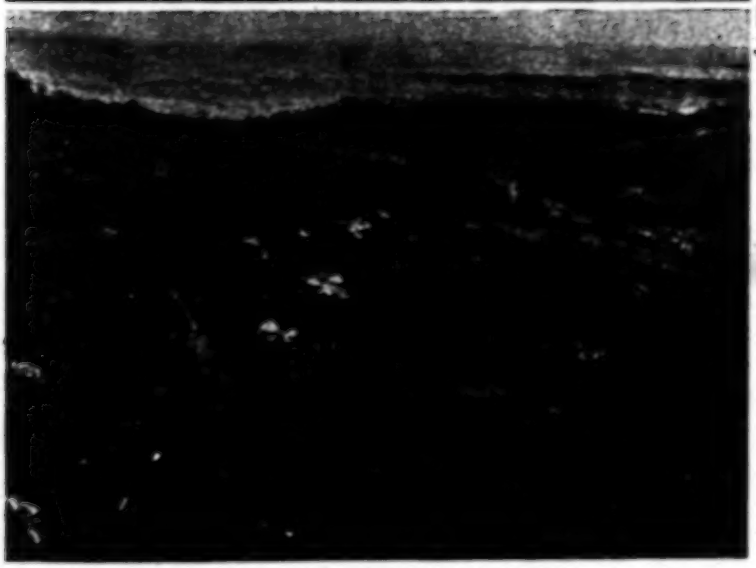

I. THE LOVEDU LANDSCAPE

(a) THE HILL OF CYCADS

(b) FIELDS AND VILLAGES ON THE FOOTHILLS

[facing p. 16]

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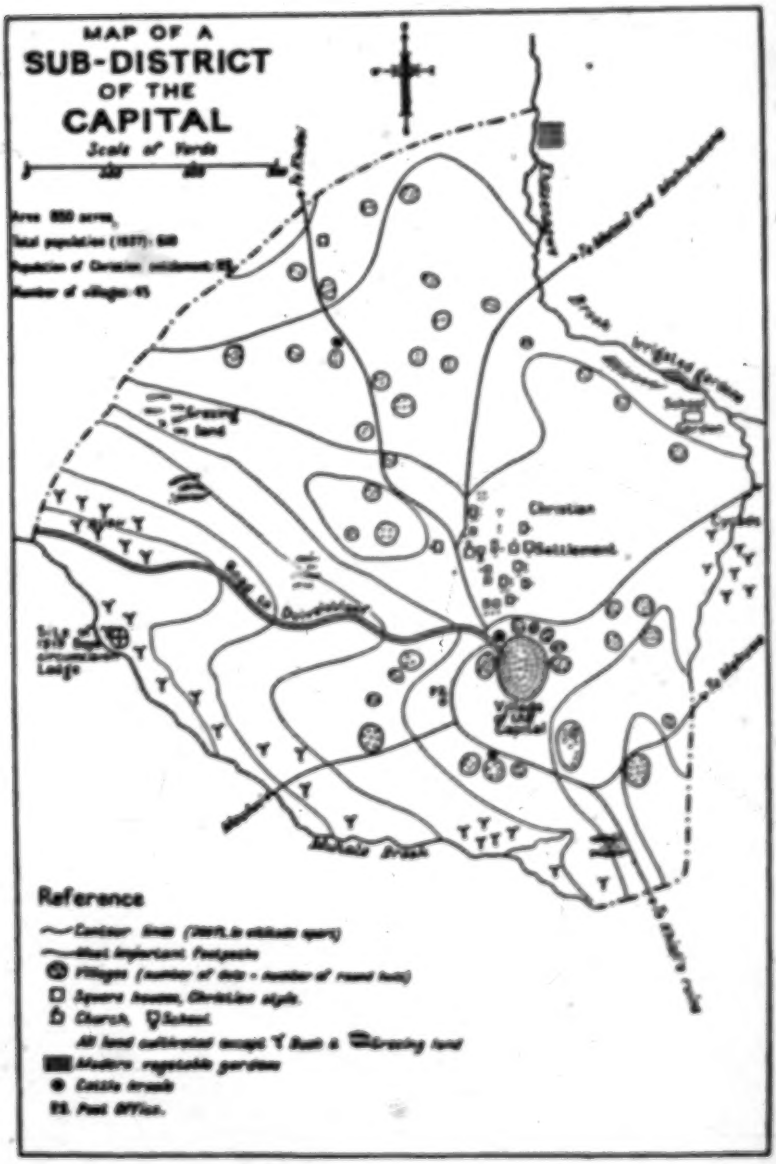

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2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Nevines place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do.

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new alinements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions: it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet.

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *hu fisa*, the care of cattle by others.

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness.

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass.

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tongas introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant, the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders

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177 planted with sweet sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of
241 stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its
134 utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

177 A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money
437 subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them,
[182] and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The
182 suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes attributed to Nyasaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures
[164] with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894–6. The psychological determinants of change are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutri-
146 tion. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation
182 that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

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161 density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-
estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the
450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.
133 The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The
132 rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is
very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather un-
certain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main
rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat
262 fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*)
501 used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one
is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate
834 knowledge of the names, the qualities and the uses of the flora. Their
dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes,
and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The
134 soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game;
136 but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of
the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the
132 summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by
bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps sum-
mer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agri-
241 culturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more
531 numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots
of social relationship.

563 The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Roka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhopo, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigoa, the Dgona and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 25 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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FOREWORD

AM interested in this book for two reasons. The first is that the 114
authors are my nephew and his wife—both devoted anthropologists,
whom this painstaking research into the least known of our South
frican native tribes has been a real labour of love. While earth's
undations were shaking in the convulsion of our times they were
sorbedly probing into the mysteries of the Rain-Queen and her
meless' society. To me this seemed an almost unnatural devotion to
ience—until I came to read the MS. of this book and found it a fascin-
ing distraction to the war problems which form my daily life. Perhaps
e curious reader may find it no less entertaining.

The second reason is that for at least half a century the Rain-Queen 643
d her people and the curious stories about them have interested me.
he was said to be very light coloured: was she a descendant of one of a
uple of Boer girls who were said to have been spared by those natives,
hen early in the nineteenth century they massacred the Van Rensburg
rty without leaving a trace behind? What was the mystery about her
hich made it almost impossible for Europeans to catch a glimpse of
r? Had the Natives adopted a white queen as something divine? Even
these were mere baseless fancies, other points of personal interest
tracted me to the subject of the queen. Long ago one of my daughters,
hen a college girl, visited the country of the queen with a company of
iends in the hope that they might be able to see her. In that mountain-
s, almost roadless country the party was overtaken by a violent rain-
orm and late at night arrived at her headquarters drenched, exhausted,
d more dead than alive. The queen ordered a huts to be cleaned and
epared for them where they stayed the night; and next day, having
obably heard that she was the Prime Minister's daughter, gave a
rsonal audience to her. Imagine the thrill! That established a personal
nd between the queen and my wife, suitably recognized in the custom-
y South African way. Then many years after, my nephew and his wife
ere staying at the headquarters of the queen in order to gather the
aterial for this book. From time to time they informed me of the most
teresting anthropological finds they were making. I also learnt that
ar her headquarters was a forest of cycads (*Encephalartos transvenosus* [137]
ow-Davy), one of the most unique botanical features in South Africa.
his decided me at last to spend a holiday in the queen's country, and,
ith my relatives as guides, I had a most interesting experience. I saw
w they had, through simple humanness, overcome the fears and the
yness of the people and were on most familiar terms both with the
een and her subjects. I saw my cycad forest. Best of all, I saw that
nderful woman, well over sixty, but strong in body and character—
ery inch a queen. We exchanged information and gifts in the tradi-
onal style, and I could thank her for her kindness to my daughter in
e distant past. She was much taken up with all the useful domestic
ticles my wife had sent her. A couple of years afterwards I was once

[i.e. J.C. Smuts--Analyst]

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I. THE LOVEDU LANDSCAPE

(a) THE HILL OF CYCADS

(b) FIELDS AND VILLAGES ON THE FOOTHILLS

[facing p. 16]

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CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

s you drive along the winding road on a visit to Mujaji's reserve, 361
you find yourself in a narrow valley between the two ranges of
lovedu mountains, where flows the Mulodozi River, fed by countless
eams from the bush-covered slopes above. It is the month of March.
e mealies in the fields, visible on all sides through the bushy vegetation,
nd dark green and high, appearing to grow right to the very doorsteps
the villages you pass. At first and to the untrained eye the country
ms relatively empty, so well do the dwellings merge into the general
w. On looking more closely, however, you see cluster after cluster
conical, thatched roofs peeping out from the bush on the hillsides,
ne of them perched on ledges like eagles' eyries. For the reserve is in
lity very thickly populated. The villages are small, five to fifteen huts
ng the average size; a few large villages of from forty to eighty huts
present the old order of things, just as those of only two huts do the
w. But the Lovedu village was never very large and never could
mpare, either in size or arrangement, with the great towns of the
wana and of some Sotho.

As you go down a steep dip to cross a stream, a sullen-looking woman 482
lancing a wide-mouthed basket on her head, her legs heavy with leg 301
gs which reach almost up to the knee, suspiciously turns her back on 291
1. She wears a cloth of red salampore behind and before, knotted on 276
e shoulders; while from her neck dangles the ubiquitous snuff box on
necklet of plaited string, black with dirt, but holding three or four
assured heirlooms, large deep-blue or white beads and perhaps some
all blue, red, and yellow ones of the kind that were brought from
odesia long before the European had come. A little further on you
r a shout, '*Makhuwa, Makhuwa*' (Europeans, Europeans), as a group
herdboys runs towards the road. The younger ones among them,
re toddlers playing outside their village, scurry away crying to their
thers, and scatter the chickens from the ash-heap as they do so. A
dboy, wearing nothing but his loin covering and an old tattered coat
ich was once his father's, shouts 'More Bass,' European words he has
kad up from his elders; but the rest run joyfully after the car, rending
air with their shrieks.

The road begins to ascend steeply up the hill to the capital, but here, 487
ou wish to visit headman Raselaka, you must get out and walk. As
go in single file along the narrow footpath, bounded on either side
creeper-covered bush or long grass higher than your shoulders, you
come aware of a strong smell somewhat reminiscent of turpentine. 137
a few moments you discover its cause—the ripening fruits of the

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137 morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is
[272] made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga*
[533] *dzwala ga fəlɔja, ga vutla vuphabaleni*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise
431 song of a district in Ulovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach
[364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiṭhuleleni*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiṭhulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

62 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any
789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lentchea* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the
[417 protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or
824] *mudutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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241 (*Phaseolus aureus*). Several varieties of sugar-cane (sweet sorghums) are planted on the boundaries of fields or between the other crops.

Njugo beans are ancient groundnuts which require a good deal of attention by way of mounding, restrictive taboos and careful pulling up, although they are very welcome as a change of diet. In this respect they [177] resemble peanuts, which were popularized by the Shangana-Ṭonga not so long ago. These nuts sometimes answer well where other crops have failed; in certain years they may flourish while the cereals wither in the sun. Then you may hear people say, but it is only by way of joking among the Lovedu, that the Shangana-Ṭonga witches have called the cereals to undergo circumcision (*hu cba*). Some people in the valleys are half-inclined to believe the claims that the Shangana-Ṭonga make for their witches, because it is undoubtedly uncanny that, when the nuts succeed the cereals fail, and vice versa. But usually the claim is ascribed to the desire of these outcast people to assert their importance—the Lovedu know nothing of inferiority complexes, but they are shrewd judges of human nature.

Sesamum used to be popular in the valleys and is said to be an old crop of the Roka. But peanuts have ousted this wholesome, albeit very troublesome, crop. You will be told that the reason lies in the growing laziness of people; this is a reason given for the neglect of many other old crops, but in truth we have here merely a shift in the application of the available resources. A delightful commentary on some of the values of the society, though we must warn the reader not to judge them from our standpoint, is the name *lenɔnya-ɔadimo*, 'sesamum of the gods'. It is [182] a wild variety, unsuitable for human consumption, but good enough for the gods. It is not given to the gods, yet it reminds one of the sprouted eleusine merely mixed with water that is offered to the gods with the words, 'This is not water. Truly it is beer.'

261 There are other crops and the variety furnishes a well-balanced diet. But that is not considered to be the virtue of variety. A food is good if it fills. That is why they prefer their hard cakes of porridge to our watery oatmeal. They are inured to that feeling of fullness since the day of their birth, when Grandmother rammed porridge down their throats. But there is comfortable fullness and uncomfortable fullness—that after a good porridge meal and that after eating too much *njugo* bean. The stomach is not insensible to certain distinctions, though they are not our distinctions. Filling is not the only virtue of a food. Some foods relieve the monotony of the round of porridge and blackjacks, and some are [44] tasty dishes or rare delicacies. But no one thinks of the virtues of a balanced diet, for nutritive and protective qualities of foods are not recognised. The old diet, simple though it might be from our point of view, was sufficiently varied to maintain people in good health; but it is not realised that, precisely because it was so simple, even a small change might eliminate essential ingredients. That change has not yet come among the Lovedu, but it is near at hand. Subsidiary crops are becoming less popular. You still see cowpeas, mung beans, water melons, even *lerwa*, sweet potatoes, and native beans. Yet, on the whole, what is most impressive is the growing reliance upon cereals and pumpkins, and the

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241 178 planted, disappear before the advance of European vegetables. This is as yet not a great change, because there are very few of these gardens, and it is far beyond present resources to construct irrigation furrows.

The balance is also upset by other tendencies. Agriculture is still a vital interest, but others are beginning to compete with it, and the various cultural devices by which interests were massed behind the various stages of agriculture are no longer as effective as formerly. Mobilization of energies by the seasonal calendar and their concentration at the strategic points of time and place are only partially effective. The unfolding of nature, the increasing signs of the coming spring, the more and more auspicious banking up of the thunder-clouds used to be like the culmination of intensive propaganda playing upon the emotions of the people. As the first rains fell and the scent of the veld rose to men's nostrils, they seemed to liberate internal secretions which drove men to action; and the example of the first workers in the fields made the impulse irresistible. But to-day, though much of this is in evidence and one still sees an impulsive restlessness canalized into productive activity, the reactions are, according to Native accounts, much weaker. Neither internal secretions, if such there are, nor suggestion in a tense situation have their old overpowering effect.

[461] Translation of the impulses aroused into useful action is to some extent inhibited by enervating listlessness, at least among a proportion of the people. They are people puzzled by the changes around them or caught in the vicious circle of malnutrition and weakened incentives. They seek solutions in smaller exertions, lotus-like inactivity, and excessive beer-drinking, and in the hierarchy of ideals, these values are beginning to become unduly prominent. It would be disastrous if they created a cultural pattern, as the tendency suggests, in which agricultural work is mere drudgery and people concentrate upon easy crops, thus over-simplifying a wholesome simplicity in food and, as a cumulative result, [146 164 754] not fulfilling, but draining the joys of life. Even to-day, weakened by unbalanced nutrition, many more people succumb to tuberculosis, bilharzia, tape-worm, even dysentery and malaria; as disease spreads and shakes the sense of security, sorcery and witchcraft become more common interpretations, and men must rely upon magic to restore their confidence. It is in agricultural practices that some of the greatest changes have occurred in the society. But, as will be seen, the changes are not of a simple nature.

These are the tendencies; but we must remember that the foundations of the society are deeply laid and the tensions are evident only in the upper superstructure. The people have a remarkable capacity for making adjustments, at least when no profound social arrangements are affected. They have adopted new crops, changed from hoe to plough cultivation, and adjusted themselves from unlimited to limited land. Unfortunately, they do not as yet have faith in manure. They have seen, they say, that manure raises an excess of weeds and that for *nyugo* beans it is useless, even dangerous. One cannot appeal to the value of medicine, because only witches 'doctor' their fields, not indeed to fertilize them, but to steal the crops of their neighbours. Garden magic is never

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[182] Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The
182 suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes
[164] attributed to Nyasaland boys, who *are hated for their sexual* adventures with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894–6. The psychological determinants of change are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutri-
146 tion. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation
182 that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the 177
groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when 146
we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is 182
right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one 177
of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was 325
that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police 177
boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doc- 754
tored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European 578
justice are compensated by magic (*hu niclela*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digoma* and the *zwidajani* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become *part of and have a stake in the culture*. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching 177
but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

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moving her to pity and by 'cooling' the heat of the earth and the anger of the ancestors. Frenzy and excess are outlawed, moderation and balance are honoured. They have little conception of the Buddhistic Nirvana or annihilation of human existence, of the fanaticism and fatalism of the soldiers of Allah, or even of Western concentration and intensive striving. From the point of view of our values, the Lovedu are Laodicean, 'lukewarm, neither hot nor cold', happy-go-lucky. They are always saying that they will 'try', never that they must succeed. But there is nothing intensive about their striving. A man faced with a difficulty is always advised to 'persevere', but that does not imply our grim determination, being more like the leisurely manner in which they set about all their tasks.

This theme permeates every aspect of the culture. In the boys' circumcision the object is to break the child of his wildness and lack of balance, and the purpose is achieved, not by excessive tortures and privations, but by the mature guidance of the old men. Neither strength nor stoicism are much made of, and the virtues inculcated are balance and self-sufficiency. The Lovedu tolerate ostentation only on occasions appropriate to exhilaration, quite unlike even such nearly related tribes as the Maḓala and Phalaborwa, who have institutionalized boasting displays by those famed as hunters or warriors. In the field of the magico-religious, fastings and visions do not figure, except among the possessed and the smellers-out, the latter always foreigners, the former a recent introduction. Possession in its Lovedu context has been shorn of its paranoic elements, its exaggerated trances, and its inception in a mental cataclysm. Cataleptic seizures do not serve as inductions to the supernatural as among the Nguni, for fits are due to witchcraft, and, unlike the smeller-out, who is a Shangana-Tongs and works by insight and exaggerated procedures, the Lovedu doctor divines by his craft and acquires power by learning and experience. Prayer is not an emotional outpouring of the heart, but a communication as between man and man. Dissension in her country upsets, and anger in her heart inhibits, the power of the queen. Spells are not characterized by intensity or malevolence; *they are often merely directions to the medicine* to bring about justice or to restore the balance. Even at a death or burial, there must be no display of distress, no undue weeping; both the dying and the survivors resign themselves with a calmness that is the admiration of Europeans who know the Lovedu well. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to injure her next child; Mputa, now thirty years of age, was born a cripple, it is said, because his mother, Makwada, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. We have never seen weeping at a funeral, and the property of the deceased is not so contaminated that it has to be destroyed, though in the midst of the Lovedu the Shangana-Tongs phrase death as a terror situation, even pulling down the hut of the deceased and removing from his village. Suicide is an escape, intelligible enough when a man is insane or (in the old days) has been condemned to death as a witch; but otherwise it is attributed to witchcraft, not to frustration.

In the method by which the themes of both sex and authority are handled there is the same aversion from excess or ostentation. The Lovedu

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166 444 become to interpret economic forces as operating, not *in vacuo*, but against the whole background of social life.

182 It is likewise not economic forces alone, but the diffusion of a new ● 157 outlook that has caused the major changes in the old co-operative system. Individual achievement was of little account; no one was penalized because he attained only a very indifferent standard of efficiency or industry; people were devoted to a non-material ideal. A man's whole upbringing and training conditioned him to the ideal of reciprocity and helpfulness. Yet in the modern world, where personal achievement is important and rivalries must necessarily arise, the life-adjustment value of this ideal is doubtful. To some extent, the individual adapts himself by accepting European standards when he is in town and relaxing from the strain when he has returned home. He comes back mentally tired, and it is recognized that he is entitled to take a long holiday, even though there is pressing work to be done. His failures in town are attributed, not to causes within himself, but to the operation of external forces. His dismissal is ascribed to the jealousy and witchcraft of a competitor for the same position, and the success of his rival to magic. Rivalry is an unfamiliar situation in economic activities at home, and the competitive, individualistic struggle in the towns is never phrased as being between members of the tribe; the magic that is used to oust him from competitive positions or to cause an employer to favour another is always magic used [189] by members of another tribe, such as the Zulu or Xhosa. The Lovedu traditionally regard luck magic with some suspicion, at least as applied in economic situations. But it has become increasingly necessary in order to re-establish their sense of security; a whole new technique of charms, burning medicines to attract custom, chewing roots to give confidence (what the European might call 'effrontery'), and the like has developed. Many invoke, as before a dangerous enterprise in the old days, the blessing of the gods. Even within the tribal economy itself the spread of ideas of competition has been accompanied by the extension of magic and sorcery to new spheres of activity.

476 That this answer to contact with the *new economy may not always* 182 suffice, we see among many neighbouring tribes—for instance, the people of Sekhopo, 'brothers' of the Lovedu. Among them beer, the quintessence of situations of reciprocity and co-operation, is converted into an article of sale. Beer is provided, even at *majoma*, as wages, and hence only to the workers; visitors may join the beer-party, but must pay for each calabash they have. This commercialization is deplored by the Lovedu; it is regarded in the same light as charging strangers for board and lodging, a practice that prevails among highveld tribes; and it is almost as bad as what the Lovedu imagine to be the European custom of making relatives who come on a holiday pay their hosts. 'Our hosts are our relatives', said a Lovedu man to us; but while he was prepared to justify the commercial pattern in which salt, meat, tobacco, European vegetables, even money, oust beer in the *lejoma*, the sale of beer seemed to him intolerable. This view fairly reflects the general opinion, as well as the attempt to harmonize the two patterns, among the Lovedu. Rewards are sometimes given to individual *lejoma* workers, who are

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241 couples sleep for the first few nights. Among the Lovedu these practices
789 have no counterpart. Given rain, what is necessary to make the crops prosper is work and good soil, not medicine, and as a result one receives the impression of a practical attitude, not only to agriculture, but, by extension, also to most economic activities. But success both in hunting and in pastoral activities to some extent depends upon the use of magic, although by comparison with the Nguni and Tswana the cattle cult is very much attenuated.

461 Thrift and industry are regarded as virtues. It is the hard-working bride who is sought-after, while the most eligible bridegrooms are the *dibuglu*, those who by industry have filled their grain pits. But what is valued is not just work; it is work to attain self-sufficiency, that will make one independent, rather than work which places one in a subservient position. Even, as they phrase it, 'In work for the chief, it is only the fool who kills himself'. Hard work must not be thought of in terms of our conceptions, for the outlook of the Lovedu is far less dominated by intensive striving and deep concentration and more by care-free, easy-going standards than ours. Work has dignity, for the maxim, 'It is not the gift-pumpkin [but the produce of one's own garden] that is juicy', is meant, not to deprecate the gift, but to foster pride in the products of one's labour; it is a tenet appropriately urged when the clothes which a youth displays have been acquired, not by his own efforts, but as a present from his parents. Work is accorded recognition: the child who begins herding is said also to begin to deserve the food he gets. Work excuses failures and losses, for as they say, 'The one who loses cattle is the one who herds them', or, more generally, 'The one who breaks is the one who works'. On the other hand, there is scorn of indolence in the proverb, 'The sluggard has no locusts even if they sleep in his courtyard', and a warning in 'He who sits with staring eye-balls [idly] will die, but he who scratches for food [cultivates assiduously] will live'. Considering the craving for beer, it is almost heroic for a man, when refused this elixir of life, to console himself with the thought that 'He who stints me is he who helps me' [because I shall better be able to attend to my work]. But the work that is honoured and considered most congenial is work in situations in which, as in the work party, the reciprocities are fundamental.

693 The weakness of the queen as a woman is also her strength and the
698 source of the prestige of the tribe. Her foreign policy is appeasement, not war; for, as they phrase it, 'The queen does not fight'. Reciprocity is the basis of her relations with her district heads, reconciliation the method of settling difficulties. Appeasement, one of the great values in the society, harmonizes with, supports, and is in turn supported by the reliance of the whole social structure upon compromise. This value and the traits corresponding to it interpenetrate every aspect of culture and of life. The hard régime of the initiation 'school' has been softened: there is no need to direct its procedures towards hardening the youth or instilling manly courage, and military discipline and regimentation are of little or no importance. Diplomacy works hand in hand with the
157 methods of the *khoro* and of reconciliation (*ho khomelana*), but it also

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strengthens the tendency towards cunning and duplicity (which safe- 157
guard the secrecy of the rain charms) and has given rise to the impression among Europeans that the Lovedu are cowardly and deceitful, lacking the manly qualities of their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga. Foolish valour is discredited, for 'It is at the home of the coward that the porridge bowl is not thrown away': he lives to eat another day. The prestige of a 562
queen as ruler also maintains the high status of women in a patrilineal society. Nowhere else are so many women heads of districts or in such important political positions. Women own cattle, have wives and may aspire to headship of large villages; and in the social system the main forces are oriented from the pivotal position of the cattle-linked sister. A wife or mother is queen of her establishment, as its old Khilovedu name, *mulago*, indicates: *ha laga* means to control like a leader, while *le lago* describes the excessive control of some overwatchful kraal heads.

Agriculture is not important as a field of achievement, for stores 556
cannot be accumulated; immoderate success is suspect and a man cannot 555
establish or alter his status by economic means. 'Yours is what you eat; what you set aside is another's', means both that expending energy upon accumulating goods is lack of balance and that the 'haves' cannot be ungenerous to the 'have-nots'. Nor is the royal complex of institutions, except in so far as it interpenetrates the social system, a field of achievement for ordinary men. It is the social system which, besides being one of the great pillars of security, provides the scheme in which man seeks self-expression and recognition. There are wide avenues of achievement for men, especially in the *khwo*, and women may aspire to influence within the *munyamalo* complex and its 'houses'. There are other fields of achievement: men may find satisfaction in the circle of the huts of their wives, women in spirit possession, and both men and women may become doctors, district heads, craftsmen, or story-tellers, while the adventurous may seek expression in the fantasy of manipulating the forces of witchcraft.

But all these avenues are available only within the arrangements of the 181
social structure, which on the whole are designed to eliminate competition 692
and to reward co-operation. The activities of the *khwo*, in which men seek and display their highest self-expression, throw into bold relief the qualities and traits that are most esteemed in the society: mature wisdom, appeasement, reliance, not on force, but on agreement, and confidence in the effective operation of the long-run reciprocities of the social system. The task of the *khwo*, the most honourable and most arduous of all tasks, is successfully achieved only if the disputants can be guided towards reconciliation and acceptable compromises. Certainty—the idol of security set up by our aggressive society, the fetish worshipped by legalistic practitioners and the obsession impelling our courts to adjudicate upon conflicting rights according to strict law—is not a feature of the *khwo*. The *khwo* is oblivious of the fear that hard cases will make bad law, for it need not, as we do, steel itself against tenderness for the hardship of the unwitting offender, lest exceptions upset the certainty of the law and that elegant symmetry which, as we conceive, guarantees security. In

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administration came the introduction of the Pedi idea that a man has a claim to both the cattle and the children in the case of malicious desertion. Old men in the 1930's called this a white man's law; today people are claiming it as a Lobedu custom. Only two of the oldest men at court were able to tell me in 1962 what had been common knowledge in 1936. The present custom is for the husband on receiving back the bride-price to return some of it (one beast for each child or sometimes two for a girl) for the rearing of the younger children that remain temporarily with their mother. A father's hold over such children is in practice tenuous though the court will always uphold his claims.

The issues in divorce are rarely simple. The simplest case I came across was one in which a man became insane. His wife left with her children to live with her brother who returned the bride-price. Usually, however, there are endless complications and cases continue for months, even years. If, for example, a man chases his wife and children away and the wife wants to return, he may in the end lose both the children and the bride-price despite the proverb quoted above.

The Domestic Group and the Importance of the 'House'

We have discussed the role of property in establishing and maintaining marriage relationships and links between families. Control over material resources also plays an important part in the structure of the polygynous domestic group with its economically independent 'houses' so characteristic of the Lobedu.

As head of the family the husband has full control over all family resources. Yet each wife forms with her children a unit of production and consumption, the independence of which as against other 'houses' has to be respected even by the husband, whose control thus becomes limited the moment he marries a second wife. This is why a Christian woman among the Lobedu never has the economic independence that a woman in a polygynous household has. There are safeguards against the infringement of the principle of the independence of the 'house', as we shall see.

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu

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group there are many other groups, each with its own historical background, subtly linked up though it be with the royal background; secondly, great as the glory of the queens is, we must not fail to see their people in their true perspective against the masses of foreign tribes and against the stature of the European Colossus; and, thirdly, however greatly men rely for their sense of security upon ultimate values, their lives are immediately and predominantly concerned with very simple matters, with tilling the soil and caring for their cattle, with getting and preparing food, with securing shelter and warmth, with gossip at beer drinks and with petty domestic squabbles. [73]

The Lovedu to-day are predominant in an area of some 5,000 square miles, the area of the Lovedu lowveld which is bounded by the Game Reserve, the escarpment, the Klein Letaba and the Olifants Rivers. On all sides of this area there are mightier peoples. Shangana-Tongs to the east. Pedi to the south, Venda to the north and several highveld tribes to the west—all these overshadow the people of Mujaji in numbers, in organization, and in power. But within the Lovedu lowveld, if we count all branches of the Lovedu, the subjects under them (about 50,000) outnumber the rest of the Sotho-speaking tribes put together (some 40,000). There are in addition many people (perhaps 25,000) under Shangana-Tongs chiefs, and in the eyes of the European one of them has far greater stature than Mujaji. [3] [4]

The Lovedu live in a location marked out in the early 1890's, immediately after the advent of European settlers and the conflicts that resulted. The original location, just short of seventy square miles, was enlarged during the 1930's by the purchase of tribal farms, and now the whole reserve is about 150 square miles in extent. This falls far short of the 600 square miles within which Mujaji used to exercise effective jurisdiction. She held the area between the Mokotsi, the Great Letaba and the Mulodoqi Rivers, from where the latter joins the Great Letaba at its northernmost bend, and from there westwards to the Mokotsi; beyond it for another 400 square miles, but rather indefinitely towards the north, north-east, and east, where the population was sparse, Mujaji's writ ran, through uncertainly and spasmodically. [3]

The population of the reserve we estimate at 33,000, which is considerably in excess of the official census figure for 1936.[1] The average [4]

[1] Official census figures for 1936 are available, not for the Lovedu reserve, but only for two separate units of area: (a) the Lovedu location and (b) an area to the north of it, about half of which falls within the Lovedu reserve. For (a) the figures are 11,636 and for (b) 7,203. If we assume that half of the population of (b) falls within the Lovedu reserve, its total population would be 15,238, be only about 46 per cent of our estimate of 33,000. We arrive at our figure from three sources: (1) Kraal-to-kraal countings in three sample districts with a total area of 14·5 square miles and a total population of 3,500. These districts represent different localities, some valley, some hill, and constitute a fair sample. On the basis of the average density of population in them, the total figure for the Lovedu reserve of 150 square miles should be 150 × 14·5 × 3,500, or 36,207. (2) The proportions of people who, according to Native accounts, our own impressions, and independent European eye-witnesses, escaped official enumeration. Despite instructions that the people of each district should collect in their respective districts, the enumerators, finding the districts inaccessible by road

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density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legapoe*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Roka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhupo, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigna, the Dgana and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangement caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 25 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,258 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,272. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,258 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,272 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do.

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new alinements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions: it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet.

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is

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571 622 619 distinguished, but more often, especially among the common people, they are identified or hopelessly confused. But if to swear by one's totem means something in some cases and among some groups, it usually signifies as little as when we swear by Jupiter.

571 619 Before embarking upon a further elucidation of these names, let us look more closely at an area in Uulovedu so as to obtain a better idea of the distribution and nature of these constituent groups. We select an area towards the south-west, of about four square miles, because if we go to the centre we shall obtain an exaggerated impression of the proportion of *kucro*, the royal group, whereas in the extreme north we may well think that we are in a tribe of Shangana-Tonga.

[161] In this area, which has a population of about 830 people, there are, counting the group names of both men and women, Elephants, Cattle, Crocodiles, Leopards, Porcupines, Goats, Lions, Pigs, Duikers, Impala, Wild Dogs, Khalaga and Sia without totem, besides a fair sprinkling of Shangana-Tonga and even people using the name Zimbabwe. There are two individuals calling themselves Oorlams, one Bush and one Kapa (Cape coloured), which is most unusual and does not reflect the position in the tribe as a whole. There are, finally, some whom we must merely designate Venda because, as they say, they swear by no animal or object and they do not know to what Venda group they belong. That is not the end of the matter, for in the Elephants (*ɸou*) cluster there are fifteen different groups. Some of them may be remotely related, but they distinguish themselves by different secondary names and know of no common ancestry or of any links in the past; indeed, as they come from very different parts, they positively deny a common origin. For instance, there are *ɸou* of Khalaga, recent-comers from Rhodesia, *ɸou* of Tsubye, far away to the south-east near Phalaborwa, *ɸou* of Thovolo in the Game Reserve to the north-east, *ɸou* of Rerothata, the messengers, it is said, of the royal group when they migrated from Rhodesia, *ɸou* of Sefareni, whose nearest relatives are in Nareni (Mahlo) country. Similarly, there are ten different groups of Lions: some, like the Khiogo, were the aboriginal inhabitants, who are said to have known no fire and no political organization, and were ousted by the Lovedu; others, like those of Selowa, come from the far east with the cult of the possessed, which they might have adopted from the Ndau in Portuguese Moçambique, and still others hail from Vendaland and Uuḓaḓwa. There are likewise clusters of Crocodiles with four, of Duikers with four, of Pigs, Khalaga, Sia, Impala and Wild Dogs, each with two different secondary designations (division or group names). Among the Shangana-Tonga, though they are comparatively few in number, there are no less than four different totems and nine different other names (*ahlongo*), such as Loyi, Khosa, Mavunda, Mathie and Ngoveni. Reckoning all the differently named groups as distinct, we have over sixty such groups in this area alone.

The following table gives a rough representation of the position in the area in question:

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of the white man, some of their headmen were granted independent locations which have served as nuclei for the building up of more united tribal groups. (See accompanying map.)

The most important Sotho tribes of this area are the Lobedu, the Narene and the Khaha who together comprise about three-quarters of the total Sotho population.[1] The outstanding demographical feature is, however, the numerical predominance of the Lobedu who, with a population of well over 40,000, are not only the greatest tribe, but outnumber all the other Sotho-speaking tribes put together.[2] The pre-eminence and cultural influence of the Lobedu in this area does not rest solely upon their numerical preponderance. It is based largely upon the fame of their queen, Modjadji, who, as the greatest rain-maker in the Northern Transvaal, is not only regularly approached with gifts by other chiefs but also sometimes places them on the throne (*ho bea bokoni*) and is appealed to in cases of disputed succession.

This area, though forming part of a greater cultural whole including the Northern Transvaal Highveld and probably Pediland to the south, is, however, sharply characterised by distinctive features, such as ritual suicide of the chief and recognition of women as rulers in their own right, that are not found elsewhere. These are sufficient to form a fairly well-defined culture pattern, which, owing to the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the Lobedu, if for no other reason,

[1] The Sotho population of our area is made up as follows, according to van Warmelo:

Lobedu	8157 taxpayers.		
Narene	5181	"	(Mahlo 1332, Letswalo 1185).
Khaha	3608	"	
Thabine (Mosesheye)	1688	"	
Phalaborwa	332	"	
Makwebe	700	"	
Bale Mamidje	413	"	
Shai or Tsolye	256	"	
Tswale	337	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.
Molele	260	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.

The only large tribal groups among Shangaan-Tongs are

Mokhale	2918 taxpayers.	
Nwamirwe	1347	"

[2] The proportion is Lobedu 8157 taxpayers.
[illegible] 7333 "

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterised by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bekhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936-8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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food as often as not being brought to them there. Sometimes the women take with them cobs of mealies preserved by being cooked and dried in the summer months, which they have softened by boiling again before use. In stony places and along steep hillsides, where ploughing is impossible, hoeing is to-day still done by hand. Here one can generally see mealie meal spread out to dry near at hand, out of reach of the fowls and goats that would play havoc with it at home, where there is no one to watch it. For it is chiefly the women that hoe while the men plough. Bushes or branches that have grown out from tree stumps in the fields are cut in readiness for planting, and a typical feature of this time of the year is the small fires in the fields every day towards sunset, when dry mealie stalks that have been collected in heaps are burned. Relishes have been reduced to a minimum, blackjacks (*Bidens pilosa*), *thzabi* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) and *mafye* (*Solanum nigrum*) being the mainstay, and cooking is done only once a day. There are no nuts or mealies to roast or eat casually, and in years of scarcity this is the time when the pinch of hunger is felt. At night people retire early to bed, tired from the hard work of planting and, later, weeding during the day. Dancing is rare; there is no time for social activities, all energy being directed towards getting the crops planted. Beer parties there are, chiefly work parties for weeding, but they are not as frequent now as in winter. As yet few cases of malaria will have come to light; it is rather the season of dysentery and of cuts and bruises received in hoeing. As the season advances, the first termites make their appearance to relieve the monotony of relish of blackjack leaves, the grass grows longer and weeding becomes imperative.

As a relief to the dullness of the planting season comes the *morula* season, which marks the first two months of 'summer' (February and March) and which from the point of view of seasonal activities can be looked upon as a distinctive period. Everything is green; the grass stands high and weeding is the order of the day, for rain is plentiful. Masses of golden *morula* fruits are falling to the ground. Green mealies from the first-planted fields are beginning to be eaten, spinach of maize pumpkin flowers and, later, leaves, make porridge cakes more interesting; and there are sugar-cane and dishes of unripe monkey nuts. People have looked forward eagerly to this time. They are tired of their work and, though much weeding and mounding of *ojago* beans has still to be done, the exultation grows as the cider begins to appear. To those whose granaries are empty, the *morula* season brings a blessed relief from the pangs of hunger, and they drink it as if it were the elixir of life. Much of the day is spent in the fields where the cider is prepared, and from under the trees there is a mighty hubbub of voices. At nightfall, when they return as from a bacchanalian festival, there are opportunities for romantic intrigues, the result rather of exhilaration than of the reputed aphrodisiac effects of the cider. Soon the air is rent by songs and drumming of the possessed, who at this season receive medicine to eat with the *morula* and other green foods of summer. And as the *morula* season draws to a close, the green foods of summer become more plentiful and the beginning of reaping activities ushers in the rich abundance of late summer.

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•164 Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *merula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which
221 are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things
[262] cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudanzdi*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ku vula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green
[351] mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for
[352] winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *mushhouse* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and
281 sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass,
221 which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first
461 finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their
[273] fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption
535 and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *guba*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law.
231 Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on
957 the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

221 In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's
461 seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *mudulahar* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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planted, disappear before the advance of European vegetables. This is as yet not a great change, because there are very few of these gardens, and it is far beyond present resources to construct irrigation furrows.

The balance is also upset by other tendencies. Agriculture is still a vital interest, but others are beginning to compete with it, and the various cultural devices by which interests were massed behind the various stages of agriculture are no longer as effective as formerly. Mobilization of energies by the seasonal calendar and their concentration at the strategic points of time and place are only partially effective. The unfolding of nature, the increasing signs of the coming spring, the more and more suspicious banking up of the thunder-clouds used to be like the culmination of intensive propaganda playing upon the emotions of the people. As the first rains fell and the scent of the veld rose to men's nostrils, they seemed to liberate internal secretions which drove men to action; and the example of the first workers in the fields made the impulse irresistible. But to-day, though much of this is in evidence and one still sees an impulsive restlessness canalized into productive activity, the reactions are, according to Native accounts, much weaker. Neither internal secretions, if such there are, nor suggestion in a tense situation have their old overpowering effect.

Translation of the impulses aroused into useful action is to some extent inhibited by enervating listlessness, at least among a proportion of the people. They are people puzzled by the changes around them or caught in the vicious circle of malnutrition and weakened incentives. They seek solutions in smaller exertions, lotus-like inactivity, and excessive beer-drinking; and in the hierarchy of ideals, these values are beginning to become unduly prominent. It would be disastrous if they created a cultural pattern, as the tendency suggests, in which agricultural work is mere drudgery and people concentrate upon easy crops, thus over-simplifying a wholesome simplicity in food and, as a cumulative result, not fulfilling, but draining the joys of life. Even to-day, weakened by unbalanced nutrition, many more people succumb to tuberculosis, bilharzia, tape-worm, even dysentery and malaria; as disease spreads and shakes the sense of security, sorcery and witchcraft become more common interpretations, and men must rely upon magic to restore their confidence. It is in agricultural practices that some of the greatest changes have occurred in the society. But, as will be seen, the changes are not of a simple nature.

These are the tendencies; but we must remember that the foundations of the society are deeply laid and the tensions are evident only in the upper superstructure. The people have a remarkable capacity for making adjustments, at least when no profound social arrangements are affected. They have adopted new crops, changed from hoe to plough cultivation, and adjusted themselves from unlimited to limited land. Unfortunately, they do not as yet have faith in manure. They have seen, they say, that manure raises an excess of weeds and that for years hence it is useless, even dangerous. One cannot appeal to the value of medicine, because only witches 'doctor' their fields, not indeed to fertilize them, but to steal the crops of their neighbours. Garden magic is never

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

304 Scarification, except in the mutual inoculation and blood mixing of
757 husband and wife prior to their first sexual intercourse after marriage and after the death or miscarriage of a child, is a treatment that is directed less at the evils of blood than towards a strengthening of the body or part of the body by the insertion of medicine. It is used in curing headache, for
[752] sprains and broken limbs, and for all 'strengthenings', such as that prior to taking a child out of the hut for the first time or the 'fixing' of one's body against witches. For general strengthenings, incisions are made on all the joints and on other parts of the body, such as head and neck depressions, which are considered important. Scarification is, with the drinking of medicine or eating of powders, quite the most common form of medical treatment; it is used in the home as much as by diviners and forms part of many other treatments, such as the vapour bath. By far the most
751 interesting form of scarification is, however, *ku shwele* (vaccination) against smallpox in which matter from the pustules of affected persons, mixed with other medicines, is inoculated to introduce the disease in a mild form. It is done on the dorsal side of the wrist or on the forehead, a pattern which supports the claim that it was known prior to the advent of the European; moreover, the ingredients of the serum used by Euro-
[77] peans are not known. Possibly the treatment was borrowed from Arabs, who were the first to study smallpox and measles. The old method was
[44] still widely practised in the 1938 smallpox epidemic; for, though it was realized that it 'called' the disease instead of curing it, people noted that, despite European vaccination, there was still much illness.

757 Steaming and the vapour bath also form part of the practical elements in Lovedu medicine. There are various forms of steaming and smoking, all of which go by the same term. To 'loosen' a cough, chips of a certain
[78] root may be placed in a pipe with a live coal and smoked; to purify a person after a death, chips are charred on a potsherd and the smoke
[44] inhaled through a reed; before being taken out of the hut, a new-born child is held naked in the smoke of burning chips or root and back; boils and other swellings are brought to a head by the application of the steam of boiling roots. To cure fever or general weakness of the body after an illness and for purification of husband and wife after the death of a child the procedure is more complicated. Red-hot stones are put into a large pot of medicated water and when it bubbles and boils the patient, naked except for a cloth passed between the legs, is covered with a blanket and steamed. After much spluttering and sweating, he is taken out, sprinkled or washed down with cold water and then either scarified on the joints or subjected to *ku hata*—that is, a river stone is pressed on the joints and is later taken back to the river. This treatment is considered too drastic

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177 294 194 planted with sweet sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

177 457 A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, [442] and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 182 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its 'Rangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes attributed to Nyasaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures [444] with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894-6. The psychological denominants of charge are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 446 182 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutrition. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and *makwa* nuts, for even blackjacks are scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when European vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, specially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. These, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes.

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of these different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

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231 465 young goat, 'the payment of the herding', to-day, even if the goats have not prospered, because herdboys are no longer willing to work for nothing. Moreover, the *mafiosa* of cattle is nowadays asked to help the owner with his ploughing and he often (illegally, by traditional standards) charges herding and grazing fees. This charge is levied on the model of European farmers and is exacted even in areas within the reserve, where grazing fees are unknown. *Ho fisa* differs from *ho diejo* (to cause to graze), an arrangement whereby one man allows another's cattle to run with his own, usually because he has no herdboy; for this no consideration passes.

461 Service, just like the various forms of co-operation, thus hardly ever implies subservience. Where it does, as in the old *ho pafa* or in the various modern forms of service, its incidents are regarded as derogatory, because they are incongruent with the emphasis on reciprocity. Even 567 *ruthelwa* (slavery), which arises from captivity and was practically unknown, implies no real bondage. There is to-day still one 'slave', an old Shangana-Tonga woman captured, not by the Lovedu, but by the Shangana-Tonga, who sent her as tribute for rain to Mujaji. The institution of slavery is unknown among the Lovedu; so she, just like other wives of the queen, was handed over to one of the nobles, who accepted her as a daughter. As we have mentioned, there is a tendency to adopt European patterns of labour, both in the more or less solitary and in the co-operative activities.

•166 #67 The most important change is the migration to towns and farms in search of cash wages. The cash amount that enters the tribe, as compared with the total income of an average family, is small, not more than 7 per cent. The effects of the migration itself are proportionately small. It is not so much the absence in town of the men nor even the ideas that they bring back with them that are of the first importance. More men, not less, are idle to-day, and more crops, not less, are reaped than in the old days. Moreover, what the men have learnt in the towns is on the whole so different from the practice at home that it has to be laid aside. The greatest changes are not the direct introductions by these men, but the indirect reactions to the rule and the economy of the white man. Many of these reactions are unintelligible in relation to local conditions; they have spread from the highveld. We are concerned at present only with changes in the outlook towards economic arrangements. At first sight they appear to be very great, but the longer one looks the more superficial they appear and the firmer the old foundations stand out. The Christians are a notable exception, not because they migrate more to the towns (on the whole the difference is negligible), but because, orientating themselves from an anti-tribal angle, they have eagerly accepted whatever differentiates them from their heathen brothers. They are competitive and money-conscious; they exploit their brothers.

For purposes of comparison, we may briefly consider two areas: A, with a population of 822, and B, with a population of 610. The census in A was taken in April, 1936, of B in April, 1937, the seasons 1936 and 1937 not being significantly different. A is 40 per cent. Christian and on the whole Christian standards of living prevail; B is 16 per cent. Christian

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and heathen standards prevail. The main differences between A and B are that in A tribal life is at a minimum and economic obligations are slightly heavier than in B upon both Christians and pagans; and in B, where tribal life is at a maximum, Christians have far better opportunities of economically exploiting their heathen neighbours. The extent of the migration to towns turns out to be a function mainly of economic considerations, but social factors play an important differentiating role, as the following figures will illustrate. The figures refer to males only, as there were no females absent in towns, and they are expressed as the approximate percentage of males absent for each of the age groups that are enumerated.

PERCENTAGE OF MALES WORKING IN TOWNS DURING APRIL (A, 1936; B, 1937)

	Pagans and Christians			Pagans		Christians	
Age Group	A & B	A	B	A	B	A	B
6–14	8	8	1	3	0	0	5
15–19	25	31	11	40	13	16	8
6–19	10	14	4	17	4	7	6
20–25	60	55	68	47	71	58	17
26–29	43	33	33	50	33	33	33
20–29	50	34	49	49	44	36	29
30–	1	2	0	0	0	3	0
All ages, 6 upwards	25	28	21	27	22	31	18

As one would expect, the total exodus in A exceeds that in B, but while the proportion of Christians who migrate is comparatively large in A, it is small in B. On the whole the Christians rely for cash income chiefly upon wages earned in town in A, but not in B, where there are far better opportunities of trade. There are, however, striking differences in the relative numbers of Christians and pagans who migrate in the two areas, especially for the age groups 6–19 and 20–25. This is not the place to give a full explanation: it will be sufficient to note the significance of the fact that for the first-mentioned age group four times larger a percentage of pagans migrate in A than in B, though for Christians there is no marked difference, and, on the other hand, the corresponding percentages in the second-mentioned age group are so strikingly different as to suggest the operation of entirely different factors. Whereas in A it is the pagans, in B it is the Christians who start migrating at an early age. There are many complicated factors that account for these differences, but mainly they are due to the less realistic adjustment of adolescents among pagans in A and among Christians in B, for among them there is little scope for recreational and other activities; and upon young men the burden of providing for the older men, whose social duties and inclinations keep them at home, falls heavily, especially among pagans in B, where tribal life is still in full force. Above all, the figures indicate that the more closely we examine the situation, the more necessary does it

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166 464 become to interpret economic forces as operating, not *in vacuo*, but against the whole background of social life.

182 It is likewise not economic forces alone, but the diffusion of a new 151 outlook that has caused the major changes in the old co-operative system. Individual achievement was of little account; no one was penalized because he attained only a very indifferent standard of efficiency or industry; people were devoted to a non-material ideal. A man's whole upbringing and training conditioned him to the ideal of reciprocity and helpfulness. Yet in the modern world, where personal achievement is important and rivalries must necessarily arise, the life-adjustment value of this ideal is doubtful. To some extent, the individual adapts himself by accepting European standards when he is in town and relaxing from the strain when he has returned home. He comes back mentally tired, and it is recognized that he is entitled to take a long holiday, even though there is pressing work to be done. His failures in town are attributed, not to causes within himself, but to the operation of external forces. His dismissal is ascribed to the jealousy and witchcraft of a competitor for the same position, and the success of his rival to magic. Rivalry is an unfamiliar situation in economic activities at home, and the competitive, individualistic struggle in the towns is never phrased as being between members of the tribe; the magic that is used to oust him from competitive positions or to cause an employer to favour another is always magic used by members of another tribe, such as the Zulu or Xhosa. The Lovedu 189 traditionally regard luck magic with some suspicion, at least as applied in economic situations. But it has become increasingly necessary in order to re-establish their sense of security; a whole new technique of charms, burning medicines to attract custom, chewing roots to give confidence (what the European might call 'effrontery'), and the like has developed. Many invoke, as before a dangerous enterprise in the old days, the blessing of the gods. Even within the tribal economy itself the spread of ideas of competition has been accompanied by the extension of magic and sorcery to new spheres of activity.

476 That this answer to contact with the new economy may not always 182 suffice, we see among many neighbouring tribes—for instance, the people of Sekhopo, 'brothers' of the Lovedu. Among them beer, the quint-essence of situations of reciprocity and co-operation, is converted into an article of sale. Beer is provided, even at *majema*, as wages, and hence only to the workers; visitors may join the beer-party, but must pay for each calabash they have. This commercialization is deplored by the Lovedu; it is regarded in the same light as charging strangers for board and lodging, a practice that prevails among highveld tribes; and it is almost as bad as what the Lovedu imagine to be the European custom of making relatives who come on a holiday pay their hosts. 'Our hotels are our relatives', said a Lovedu man to us; but while he was prepared to justify the commercial pattern in which salt, meat, tobacco, European vegetables, even money, oust beer in the *lejema*, the sale of beer seemed to him intolerable. This view fairly reflects the general opinion, as well as the attempt to harmonize the two patterns, among the Lovedu. Rewards are sometimes given to individual *lejema* workers, who are

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of the parties objects to the decision of the *khoro*. It is the queen's pre- 692
rogative to settle disputes between royal relatives, but she also privately 643
settles differences which, for reasons of public policy or of the prestige of the parties, should not be publicly discussed, and sometimes, to avoid the hardening of transient differences into permanent hostility, even withdraws cases, especially witchcraft cases, from the jurisdiction of the *khoro*. The queen has an unshakable reputation for integrity, and acts independently, if she likes, though often she consults trusted advisers, some of whom at present are not her councillors.

The role of the queen is not unconnected with the institution of 693
'mothers' of districts. 'Mothers' are appointed by the queen or with her approval, and are usually her relatives, living at the capital and having direct access to her. Generally they report in the first instance to the councillors, especially to the son of the queen's mother's brother, who is the greatest councillor. The office of 'mothers', though hereditary, often changes hands because of its responsibilities and inadequate rewards, the opportunities of favourably placed persons and the requirement of residence at or near the capital. Often a widow, familiar with her husband's arrangements, takes over the position, enlisting the help of a relative, who at her death naturally steps into her shoes. Since the fees received cannot meet the needs of taxpayers, usually only old people are 'mothers', but inability to cope with long journeys forces them to entrust some of their work to available sons or relatives, who in turn may succeed to the position. 'Mothers' are often related to, but may be only fortuitously linked with, the heads of districts under their charge. A foreign chief or headman may be introduced at the capital by a friend or relative or stranger, who thereupon becomes his 'mother'. In 1912, when a [67]
colony of settlers from Basutoland came, Masheoli, who had no previous association with them, took the message of their arrival to the queen and henceforth acted as their 'mother'. Independent foreign chiefs also have their 'mothers', who sometimes live far from the capital.

'Mothers' have politico-legal and other functions. They receive their 'children', the district heads or foreign chiefs, and act as intermediaries whenever formal relations with the queen or great councillors are involved. When it is impracticable for a district head to bring beer to the queen, he may send mealies, which are deposited at the 'mother's' and there converted into the tributary beer. The arrival of beer from a district is always reported to the 'mother', who receives one calabash. 'Mothers' are the messengers or ambassadors of the queen sent to settle disputes among their 'children' or to represent her, for instance, at the formal installation of a district head. Important links in politics, they are the master links in the legal system. Some 'mothers' supervise the legal interrelations of many districts with the capital. As some districts are far off, eight to ten miles, they may delegate the work, in respect of some districts or of some of its aspects, to others, such as sons, wives, sister's sons, or wife's brothers. Thus Khidima, 'mother' of Maoulana, Mazaga, Madumani, Gabiazi, Musugududzi, and a European-owned farm, sometimes puts cases coming from the first three districts in the hands of his sister's son, but, since Khidima's own son has reached years

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431 some day reciprocate and the old man again 'thanks' him with beer given in his honour. And this is an essential aspect of these gift exchanges. The most striking illustration is in respect of *mawundo* (bride-price). The *ferai*, it is said, never completes *mawundo* payments (*mawundo a u file*); even in his old age he must still respond to the call for assistance from his relatives-in-law; and they in turn never cease bringing him beer. But whatever he gives falls into the *mawundo* and must be returned should the marriage be dissolved; the chain linking the parties into relations of reciprocity has snapped.

574 535 471 The *gwhe*, essentially a dance performed by the young men of one or more areas, provides the setting of an interesting interchange of goodwill and of commodities. The main object is undoubtedly recreational, and the main participators are not kin, but members of a territorial unit. The district head is not necessarily involved, except as far as he must know what goes on in his district. The old Lovedu word *lacho*, a musical [54] entertainment, emphasises its salient features: youths, blowing on reed flutes, dance round in a circle to the accompaniment of four drums beaten by girls. There is much preliminary practising under the leadership of the dance-master (*malogwane*), but in the actual performances leadership is not marked and changes continually as one performer after the other takes his stand in the centre of the ring of dancers. The artistic aspect, the making of the sets of reeds, their tone compass, the rhythmic counterpoints and the various melodic and harmonic sequences of sound may be dismissed in a sentence: close by, one is reminded of the pealing of bells thrown into ever new combinations by complex steps and movements; at a distance one listens as if to an *ensemble* of brass instruments strongly supported by drums. We are concerned with the socio-economic aspects only.

171 A slight comparison with the Venda *matongwe*, a word also used by the Lovedu (*matagwe*), is instructive. A Venda creditor wishing to collect a debt calls the dancers, gives them some work (such as the building of a hut or the repairing of a fence), and sends them to the recalcitrant debtor. There they stay feeding at the expense of the debtor and of his neighbours until the debtor pays. But the beast that the debtor pays is slaughtered and consumed by the performers, the creditor receiving only a small part. Apart from using the *matongwe* to enforce payment by debtors, the Venda also send such dancers to express sympathy when there has been a death and in that case there is a return visit to get back the beast slaughtered. It has also other uses not relevant to our present purpose.

574 535 431 Among the Lovedu the *gwhe* is somewhat different. Private individuals send it to friends or relatives to express sympathy or to notify a death as well as to celebrate the occasion of the latter's marriage or setting up a new home; and there are special rules for each kind of *gwhe*. The *gwhe* of condolence, for instance, lasts one day, drums are not allowed if the deceased is of a foreign tribe, and refusal of the entertainment is impossible. Generally speaking, a *gwhe* entails special food and lodging arrangements, food for the visitors being collected from households in the district which also provides sleeping quarters. The old rules designed

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queen. And in the system these wives, after a period of training at the royal court, were re-allocated to district heads and royal relatives.

The system is not unknown elsewhere. Among the Shona, so we are told by Bullock, when one tribe conquered another, the survivors were incorporated by being given wives; in time of famine, tribes sometimes exchanged their daughters for food; and some of the Mambo handed their wives to their bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but faithful service. The Rozwi appear to have maintained their dominance over subjected chiefs, not by deposing them, but by assisting in their ceremonial appointment and the superimposition of the cult of Mwari, the high god, which had its priesthood and could withhold rain. This cluster of institutions is interesting to us because the Lovedu came from those parts and have retained some of their features. Lovedu district heads give 'tributary' wives to the queen in exchange for rain and these wives are re-allocated to important men. But the form and setting of the institution has changed; the circulation of wives, drawn into the network of the political and social scheme, subserves the purposes of the Lovedu cultural configuration.

By singling out for brief consideration the complex of royal institutions and of districts, we are giving prominence to certain aspects of the political structure. That is unavoidable in a generalized account, which must largely ignore the variations among the 140 districts (of which fifty are on European-owned land). We have often referred to cultural divergences and the tolerance towards them. In the autonomous districts they are very much in evidence. You may be told over and over again there is no such thing as ancestors represented by snakes, except among the possessed and in their cult; and the conception seems alien to a religion in which ancestors are not reincarnated in an animal, but animals may be dedicated to ancestors. Yet suddenly one day you may find that the sacred object (thagula) of a head of a district, such as Relele, is a snake. The lack of uniformity and the tolerance of almost contradictory customs may give the impression of ineffective political institutions. Conformity there must be in the interests of economy and solidarity, but the conformity need not be that of a regimented society such as ours. As to the royal cluster of institutions, we shall consider those maintaining the confidence of the people in the powers of the queen, and those converting tribute of wives into the visible links of the social organization. The elaboration of the royal institutions must not, however, obscure the essential humanity of the queen; we do not deal with the latter, but we must remember that it is a factor of great importance in the dynamics of these institutions.

In 140 years there have been only three queens, and Mujaji III, after having already ruled for over forty-three years, is still physically strong and is said never to have had a day's illness. The Lovedu attach little importance to the longevity of their queens, who in other tribes have been immortalized. In the north, whence the Lovedu came, kings ruled only for brief periods; they were not allowed to become old or decrepit, lest the kingdom suffer; and either they committed suicide or they were killed. Don Santos, writing in 1607, records that the kings of

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643 Sofala had formerly to take poison when disaster or a natural defect fell
171 upon them. Among the Lovedu, tradition decrees that the queen shall have no physical defect and must poison herself, not when she is old, but at the end of the fourth initiation (*vudigo*) of her reign. The emergence of physical imperfections and the holding of the fourth *vudigo* cannot both determine the date of suicide. In fact, no reign has been cut short because of bodily defects, though the conception of the relation survives. The queen is believed to be immune from disease and it is thought that her first will be her last illness; it is even said that Mujaji III's elder uterine brother was excluded from the throne because of his weak ankles. At the same time, not kings, but queens are wanted, there are no tests of physical fitness as are recorded for tribes in the north, and in the legends
173 of the Lovedu and of tribes which, following the Lovedu, have ritual suicide, physical defects do not figure as a theme. In this complex, heirs to the throne have been disqualified or chiefs have been deposed because of inability to make rain, disobedience to their sovereign, or adultery with his wives. Among the Mamaila, a branch of the Lovedu, one chief is said to have become a cripple because he forced open the door which magically yields to the touch of the true heir, and the Nemesis that overtook him is attributed to his sin, not to his defect. Impotence disqualifies in the north, but Mujaji II was barren and, in the pattern as adopted in some tribes, such as the Khaha of Maake, barrenness of the queen is expected; for, as the queen may have no official husband, it is a virtue to have no children. That conception is not accepted by the Lovedu, for Mujaji II's barrenness was a source of sadness and strife and every effort was made to cure her. Physical fitness is an aspect of the perfection and divinity of the queen, but it has no practical relation to the right of succession.

643 The relation between the length of a reign and the initiations is far
778 more obscure. In many tribes where ritual suicide is enjoined (Thaulna,
171 Khaha, Urwa), the number of 'schools' is said to be seven. The 'schools' are there held more frequently, and possibly there is some connexion
177 with the number of sacred drums (*digoma*), for the Khaha have seven and the Lovedu four. The chief's life, as we have seen, is intimately bound up with the drums; both drums and 'schools' are great *digoma*, objects or activities in which power is concentrated. Power is also concentrated in *dithugula*, a category of objects chiefly associated with the gods. The distinction is not that between magic and religion; the *digoma* and *dithugula* appear to belong to different cultural complexes. The one was characterized, we may suppose, by 'schools', drums, and cults linked up with national calendric observances, dramatization of the crises in life, and the sanctity and power of the chief; the other, by sacred beads, shrines, reincarnation of ancestors in dedicated animals, and ritual suicide of the chief. In the process of merging, the great *digoma* were, we suggest, grafted on to the royal institutions and brought into relation with the life as well as the death of the chief. This is little more than speculation, for it is difficult to isolate the oldest cultural substrata and their distinctive patterns.

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly,

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101 one might call the Lobedu culture complex, though it is not at all clear what the origin of its differentiating features is. In its most typical form this culture is found among the Lobedu of Modjadji, the Letswalo and the Khaha. To the north-west it merges into the not very different Venda culture complex; to the south, Pedi influences, noticeable on the edge of the Drakensberg, become increasingly apparent among the Mahlo and eventually predominate among the Baba Mamidja on the banks of the Olifants. In the east, the Phalborwa have developed specialized responses to the challenge of an [184] arid bushveld environment; while to the west along the escarpment, Tokwa influences are so marked that the Sekhopo branch of the Lobedu, who live there, differ more from the Lobedu of Modjadji than do the unrelated Khaha and Letswalo.[1] These gradations are to some extent hidden by the fact that owing to the mixed composition of every tribe differences in custom in any single tribe are often as great as differences from one tribe to another. The nature of this Lowveld cultural pattern, those features peculiar to this area and those held in common with other tribes, will best be shown by a short account in general terms of various aspects of the social and economic organization of these tribes.

361 General Aspects of the Lowveld Village. The Lowveld
171 village, nestling among the trees and shrubs of the surrounding bushveld vegetation, which usually provides a natural fence, differs in general aspect from that of the Highveld tribes with its well-smeared, high-walled courtyards. While there is a tendency in the south, among Nzene of Segororo and to a lesser extent among Thabina and Maake's Khaha, for villages to straggle in lines along the hill-sides, there is nowhere any sign of the large agglomerations of dwellings so typical of the Tswana town and present in an attenuated form also among Tokwa of the Highveld. The Lowveld village is not large, consisting generally of from two to twenty huts; but there is evidence that when times were more unsettled and the need for protection kept

[1] The Birwa who live partly in the Lowveld, partly in the Highveld, probably belong to the Lobedu culture complex. Though their culture differs in many respects from that of the Lowveld tribes there are also marked similarities, such as ritual suicide of the chief.

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in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 361
quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 171
larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [582]
two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the cob and beer-making activities.

Tribal Economy. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 241
agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 231
adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [262]
are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 241
a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop, men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pumpkins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
trees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

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241 of the agriculture of the more mountainous portions of the Lowveld is the use of terraces, or rather contour walls of stone, for there is no levelling of the ground in between, to prevent excessive washing away of soil. With the absence of men in the towns and the introduction of the plough with subsequent preference for valley cultivation, these contour walls are tending to fall into disuse.

162 Division of labour between the sexes is the same here as among Venda and the Highveld tribes of the Northern Transvaal. While care [171] of cattle is the province of men and agricultural work is done by both sexes, cooking and housekeeping is confined to women. Men are responsible for the erection of storage receptacles, renewal of pantry and village enclosures and the lion's share in hut-building, including thatching, for women do only plastering of walls and preparation of the floor. The crafts confined to men are ironwork, work in skin, and all wood-work such as the manufacture of drums, platters, spoons, milk pails, stamping blocks, porridge twirlers, and flat winnowing baskets. Pottery is confined to women, but weaving and basketry (other than the making of winnowing baskets) is done by both sexes.

142 Political Organization and Position of the Chief. The most 143 outstanding features of the Lobedu culture complex, which clearly differentiate the Lowveld tribes from their neighbours to the south and west, are ritual suicide of the chief and the possibility of women ruling in their own right.[1] Among the Lobedu the chief reigns for a period of four circumcision schools, each 'school' being separated from the previous one by a period of almost ten years, and then has to drink poison and die. The institution can hardly continue when its supporting background of ritual and belief is crumbling, but it has survived to this day; the immediate predecessors of the present Lobedu and Letswalo rulers died unnatural deaths in the traditional manner, Modjadji II in 1894 and Mamathola in 1905. There is in this area no conscious belief that growth of the crops, welfare of the cattle,

[184] [1] These two features occur together in the most important tribes of the Lowveld such as the Lobedu, Khaha, Narene, Thabina. The only tribes to whom this institution is foreign are the Phalaborwa and Tsubye and the two Venda tribes of Moila and Tswale. Sekhopo and Radwadu, sections of the Balobedu, broke away when the first woman succeeded and themselves have only men rulers.

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643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men,
and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
588 or *batkanwi* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to
644 be a *mutkanwi* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Batkanwi* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tutse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *batkanwi* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the village and permission to have children. A *mutkanwi* of noble birth
[565] ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaba and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the
• [771] Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage.

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881 established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on either
794 side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dajaw* or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, wailing manner.

794 An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tendency for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools, to set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where they are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they are a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Highveld have no *komana*; but a Narene man who has come to live in the area has brought *komana* drums and holds schools to which many Dikxale go.

836 Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowveld
837 tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa in having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved of by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adultery, which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in any way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widows, especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even though
[694] they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attached to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness is better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where there is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act will
[695] send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the bare word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepted.
[696] Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adultery, with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head of cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more than a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in the fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the parties concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a boy whose people they do not consider suitable.

582 Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution of
• [171] preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu-Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully 40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with the

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RELIGION. In common with the other Bantu tribes of South Africa, the people of the Lowveld have ancestor worship. The form which it takes here bears many resemblances to that found among the Venda and also to that of the Shangana-Tonga though it differs from both in a number of ways. Characteristic of the religion of Lowveld tribes are the predominance of the beer offering to the almost complete exclusion of the blood sacrifice, the use of shrines and dedicated goats or cattle, the powers attributed to old beads and other objects once in the possession of the ancestors, the prominent part played by women, the virtual equality of ancestors on the mother's and father's side and the cult of the *dzjaw* in which old men deceive women and the uninitiated by acting the part of ancestors supposed to be returning to the village after certain ceremonies. 771

The creator-god, to whom however no worship is directed, is known as Khudzwane, use of the term *Modimo* in this sense being in the Lowveld probably a Christian innovation. Belief in a sky-god, such as that of the south-eastern tribes, is absent, while spirits such as the mountain and river spirits believed in by Venda, and Tikoloshe, Impundulu and other half-mythical creatures who play so important a role in the everyday life and beliefs of Pondo and Xhosa are quite unknown in the Lowveld. Instead, one finds the *dzjaw* or *dzocjaw*, ancestral spirits who come after sunset after important religious ceremonies in the royal family, during the *kamana* drumming and sometimes, among Lobedu, at the installation of an important headman, and call in thin, wailing voices. Often they whistle out their own names or throw stones at the village, scolding people for having broken customs, till beer is brought to them and they are appeased. They are ancestors, yet they are only half-men with one leg and one arm instead of two;[1] they dwell in the sacred woods, and when they come no one is to leave the village, women and children shutting themselves up securely in their huts. The fact that the part is acted by a few old, trusted men is not known to many. 776 [17] [887]

The sacred place at which offerings are made is not the cattle kraal 778

[1] Among Venda, *dzatjawi* are thought to be mountain spirits with one leg, one arm, &c., the sight of whom brings death to the traveller. They have no connexion with ancestor worship and are said to be mostly of Sotho origin. This is clearly a borrowing.

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754 i.e., telling the medicine, without any set phraseology, what to do, is important. Day wizards are chiefly men and it is said that, owing to the facility of obtaining bad medicine in towns and from foreign tribes to-day, this type of witchcraft has greatly increased.

In everyday life, however, a person is called a witch, whatever methods he has used, and in an accusation of witchcraft there is never any discussion whether the culprit is a day or night wizard. Moreover, there is in the minds of ordinary people considerable confusion about the type of witchcraft associated with each class, and it is possible to live among Lowveld people a long time without coming upon these distinctions. The night wizard is thus in Evans-Pritchard's terminology the witch, the day wizard the sorcerer; and the great distinction between sorcery and legitimate magic lies not in method but in intention.

273 535 SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF BEER AND THE DANCE. It would be a mistake in discussing the main features of Lowveld society to leave out of count the social importance of beer and the use of the dance or *gaka* as a social institution, though neither is confined to these tribes. Beer, apart from its religious value, plays a part in social and economic life. It is continually being carried from one group to another, acting as a bond between people and establishing friendly relations. In the Lowveld, in contrast to the Highveld, it is still of greater importance than money; while people may refuse to attend working parties for money, they will flock to one where beer is served. The *gaka* is a dance in which women do the drumming while men playing reed pipes dance in a circle round the drums. It is, however, much more than a dance. It is an institution for maintaining friendship and reciprocity between groups, a way of showing sympathy on the death of a relative and the means by which subjects approach their chief for rain in time of drought. A *gaka* is often sent by one chief to another in the Northern Transvaal.

171 SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN LOBEDU CULTURE AND THAT OF OTHER AREAS. The Lobedu culture complex represents a close blending of two cultures, that of the Lobedu who came south from somewhere in Rhodesia when the empire of Monomotapa was breaking up, bringing

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with them the Sacred Kingship and other culture elements, and that of certain Sotho peoples, from whom, it would seem, came the cult of the sacred drums associated with *Ramana* ceremonies and the typical Lowveld form of *bwamu* and *lyale* schools. Since these latter traits are absent, as far as our knowledge goes, from the Sotho other than those of the Northern Transvaal, the question of their origin is difficult to solve. The tribes in the south of the Lobedu culture area include the Khaba or Koni who appear to be related in some way to the Pulana and Pai south of the Olifants River who, van Warmelo thinks, belong to a very old sub-stratum of Sotho that occupied the Eastern Transvaal and Swaziland before the advent of the Swazi proper. It may be that the drum cult and other culture elements belong to these people, but the problem awaits more intensive research into the culture of Pulana and Pai.

The relationship of the Lobedu culture to that of the Venda who also came from the north is a close one, both in language and culture. In material culture, religion, the part played by women in social and religious life, Venda and Lobedu are very close indeed. There are, however, a number of well-marked differences which preclude identification of Venda and Lobedu. Though the Venda chief was hedged in with ceremonial in the old days, ritual suicide of the chief, the outstanding feature of the Lobedu, is quite unknown to them; no women chiefs are allowed among the Venda though there are women heads of districts; the custom whereby district heads send daughters to be wives of the chief is not found among them nor are disputed successions settled by the ordeal of opening the door. Venda initiation schools such as Domba and Thondo differ widely from those of the Lobedu; they have no *Ramana* drum cult, no *dajaw* or impersonation of ancestral spirits associated with their religion. On the other hand, the divining bowl so typical of Venda magic and the weaving of *matile* cloth are quite unknown to the Lobedu.

The similarities between the Lowveld tribes forming the Lobedu complex and the Sotho tribes of the Northern Transvaal Highveld are not as great as those between Venda and Lowveld tribes. Among the culture elements held in common are the general system of agriculture and division of labour, including bird-scaring by magical means; the same initiation schools with minor modifications are

3: Krige E-S (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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common to both; the *goba* as a social institution and the *komana* sacred drum cult with accompanying *dipaw*. The position of women is relatively high, though not as high as among Lowveld and Venda tribes; women may own cattle, are not as strictly excluded from contact with the cattle as among Nguni, while father's and mother's sides of the family are of almost equal importance.

Cultural differences between Highveld and Lowveld are evident in the general aspect of villages, which cluster together in the Highveld with high-walled and well-smeared courtyards, as well as in everyday pursuits. The Highveld woman stamps, generally in a sitting position in a hole in the hut floor,[1] threshes her corn by means of sticks instead of stampers and grinds her tobacco on a potsherd instead of with a stick in a serrated earthen pot, as do Venda and Lowveld tribes. The chief, whose chief wife is obtained with cattle contributed by every district headman in the tribe, is surrounded by no great ceremonial or secrecy; ritual suicide of the chief is unknown; the autocracy of the royal family is less pronounced than in the Lowveld; the custom of submitting in cases of disputed succession to the ordeal of the door is foreign to Highveld tribes, while women can never rule as chiefs or headmen except as regents for minor sons. In local government we find a tendency towards fewer and larger districts with correspondingly more powerful district heads. In law the ordeal is unknown; the elaborate Lowveld system of 'mothers' at court poorly developed; the interesting modern development of dealing with witchcraft by a system of wagers and use of the Shangana *nukwa* absent. Possession, ubiquitous in the Lowveld, is hardly present on the Highveld, while the cult of the ancestors has in most parts either disappeared or lost much of its meaning. One gets the impression that, owing perhaps to a difference in attitude towards and method of dealing with wizards in the old days, witchcraft has not the same hold on the minds of the people as in the Lowveld. Longer and closer contact with Europeans and the strong hold of Christianity have led on the Highveld to greater breakdown of tribal custom than is found in the Lowveld.

The nature of the culture we have been describing will perhaps be

[1] This difference is a modern one, due to adoption by Lowveld Sotho of the Shangana-Tonga wooden stamping-block.

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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thrown into clearer relief if we compare it with the more salient features of that of the South-eastern tribes, especially the Zulu-Xhosa, for, though differing from one another, Venda and Highveld and Lowveld tribes fall into line as opposed to the culture of South-eastern tribes. The virtual equality in social life and religion of father's and mother's side of the family and the relatively high position of women stand in contrast to the strongly patrilineal Zulu-Xhosa where wife-beating is said to be more common than among Sotho, where women are regarded as strangers in their husband's village, have all their lives to observe strict rules of *hlonipha* towards their husband's people, and are excluded to a greater extent than Sotho women from political and religious rites. For a woman to marry a woman, as among Lowveld Sotho, is unknown to the South-eastern Bantu; nor have they anything corresponding to the great influence and power wielded by women in the households of their brothers, in dividing out the inheritance on the death of the head of the household and in all religious matters affecting the family.

All forms of preferential marriage other than sororate and levirate are absent from Zulu-Xhosa society where the *ukuhlola* custom, whereby a girl can present herself for marriage at the kraal of a man she loves, gives girls somewhat greater freedom of choice than is enjoyed by Sotho girls. Courting in parties dressed up in their best, which takes up so much of the time of every young man among Nguni and Shangana-Tonga has no counterpart in Sotho society where, for the most part, husband and wife are 'born for' one another, while the use of love magic with its associated hysteria known as *ukukayisa* in girls of the South-eastern tribes is completely absent among the Sotho of the Northern Transvaal. Indeed, love magic is looked upon as a form of witchcraft and punished as such.

The private nature of the First-fruit ceremonies among Sotho of the Northern Transvaal in which strengthening and seclusion of the chief play no part whatever stands in strong contrast to the elaborate public eating of the first-fruits among Zulu-Xhosa which has a military character associated with the strengthening of the army unknown among Sotho. Initiation into adult life among the Zulu-Xhosa includes generally a puberty ceremony for boys which is not found in the Northern Transvaal, while the *komana* and *kwaxwa* for boys and

3: Krige E-S (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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the *lyale* for girls are entirely absent in the South-eastern tribes. Even the circumcision school, where it is present among Nguni, differs very greatly from that held among Sotho. In political organization, female succession and ritual suicide found in the Lowveld, though not among other tribes of the Northern Transvaal, are absent also from Zulu-Xhosa culture.

Ancestor worship among Zulu-Xhosa and Sotho, though fundamentally similar in meaning and function, differs considerably in its practice, the shrines of the Northern Transvaal, the importance of the beer offering as opposed to the blood sacrifice of the Zulu-Xhosa, the prominent part played by the father's sister as priestess, the importance attached to ancestors on the mother's side and the whole ritual of the sacred drums being foreign to Zulu-Xhosa. Nor is there any counterpart of the Zulu-Xhosa sky-god among the Sotho. Similarly the doctor, having essentially the same functions in the two societies, differs in Sotho society in his initiation, in methods employed for divining, in his relation to the ancestors.

In Nguni society there is a recognized pattern of expression for the mentally unbalanced and for certain forms of neurosis and hysteria. It is common for women to believe that they have been visited by and had intercourse with *tikolashe*, the water dwarf; hysteria in girls is of frequent occurrence and is thought to be caused by love-magic; many people other than those who complete their training as doctors are thought to be *thwasa*-ing, run amok at night, wander for days in the veld or enter pools in search of a snake. In this manner many mentally unbalanced people have their recognized place in Nguni society. Among the Sotho, on the other hand, hysteria in girls is infrequent and not associated with love-magic and the whole system of *thwasa* prior to becoming a doctor unknown. In the Lowveld, the new and foreign cult of possession can be said to be similar but much too stereotyped to fulfil quite the same function. Might it be that there is definite maladjustment associated with these South-eastern practices not found among the Sotho, or is their existence merely a variant pattern of culture reflecting no basic difference?

The military character and warlike proclivities of the South-eastern Bantu who bred Chaka, the Black Napoleon, and for a hundred years held the white man in check on the Eastern province frontier

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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are conspicuously absent from the tribes of the Northern Transvaal. Military organization is interwoven with many aspects of Nguni life and has left its stamp upon the people. Their age organization, much stronger and stricter than that of the Sotho, has by its association with the regimental system a military character; enrolment into a regiment is an important step in the life of each individual; strengthening of the army forms an important part of the yearly first-fruit ceremonies, while the Zulu even had military villages in which the men spent much of their time. All this is absent from the Lowveld where war never involved more than one or two regiments in what was little more than skirmishes for cattle, and the chief weapons, the bow and arrow, supplemented by spear and battle-axe, made fighting at close quarters unusual.

The South-eastern tribes, as also the Shangana-Tonga, have a much greater sense of display than is found among Sotho generally. To the young Zulu who spends his days courting the girls, dress and general appearance have an absorbing interest that is not found among northern Sotho; the beautiful regimental dress of Zulu and Swazi has no Sotho counterpart; doctors do not dress up to distinguish themselves from others; the Sotho bride who goes to her husband's kraal fully covered in a blanket has little wedding finery; while Sotho dancing lacks the dramatic and spectacular qualities of Nguni dances. In Sotho culture there is no place for the *gya-ing*, jumping, and shouting one's own praises in public, that plays so prominent a part in Zulu society. Nor does song among the Sotho, who like all Bantu are musical, occupy quite the same important position as among Nguni, where every child has its lullaby, every wedding new songs specially composed for the occasion, and every sib its praise song.

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The Shangana-Tonga of the Lowveld fall midway between the culture of Zulu-Xhosa and that of the Northern Transvaal Sotho. Cattle in their society play no greater part than among Sotho; they have no milk taboos; in their agriculture they hardly differ from the Sotho except in having had one or two different crops which they are said to have introduced among Sotho. They are not strongly patrilineal like Zulu-Xhosa, the mother's side of the family plays as important a part as among Sotho in social life and religion, but they have no female

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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priestesses and their joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother is not found in Sotho society.

Like the Zulu–Xhosa, the Shangana–Tonga have no marriage with relatives, while they differ from both Zulu and Sotho in allowing inheritance of the mother's brother's wife. Women do not marry women in Shangana–Tonga society; their sexual rites associated with the moving of a village have no parallel elsewhere. The religious system of Shangana–Tonga resembles that of the Sotho more than it does the Zulu–Xhosa in the use of shrines and beer offerings, but the sacred drum cult is absent and the use of fowls in sacrifice has its parallel among southern Lowveld tribes only. Their smelling-out doctor, whose methods resemble those of the doctor in Zulu–Xhosa society, is not found among Sotho, but the ordinary bone-thrower hardly differs from the Sotho doctor either in methods or initiation. Of the northern Sotho initiation schools, only the *khoba* and circumcision school are found among Shangana–Tonga, while Shangana–Tonga love of display, manner of dancing and singing resembles that of the Zulu–Xhosa. The similarities between Shangana–Tonga and the Sotho of the Lowveld are to be accounted for more by common influences in the past than by recent borrowings, though there is a considerable amount of diffusion to-day. The Shangana–Tonga of the Northern Transvaal Lowveld are very mixed: one tribe, that of Muhlava, came originally from Zululand, settling in its present habitat after a sojourn in Portuguese East Africa; others, like that of Nwamitwa who belongs to the great Valoyi family, trace their origin to the Nyai country beyond the Limpopo whence they came southwards towards the Tonga.

Peaceful conditions, closer contacts between members of different tribes in the service of the white man, subjection to a uniform system of European law and administration which calls forth similar responses among different tribes, all are tending towards gradual elimination of marked tribal differences and greater uniformity in tribal custom and conditions. To-day the old Venda initiation schools have all but died out while Sotho schools are rapidly spreading into Vendaland; Christian missions are exerting similar influences among different tribes; young men returning from work in towns bring home everywhere a changed attitude towards tribal customs and morality and a more

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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individualistic outlook on life. With the inevitable disappearance in the near future of such distinctive elements as ritual suicide of the chief, marriage of women by women, and other characteristics typical of the culture of the Lowveld to-day, the Lobedu of the Lowveld tribes will tend to lose their individuality and become more and more like their neighbours.

ELLEN JENSEN KRIGE.

Résumé

LA PLACE DES SOTHO DU TRANSVAAL NORD-ORIENTAL DANS LE COMPLEXE DES BANTOUS DU SUD

Les tribus sotho habitant le Lowveld du Transvaal nord-oriental, bien que faisant partie d'un grand ensemble culturel, englobant tous les peuples de l'Afrique du Sud qui parlent le sotho, accusent cependant un certain nombre de caractères distinctifs parmi lesquels on peut citer le suicide rituel du chef, la reconnaissance des femmes comme souverain, un culte des tambours sacrés. Ces phénomènes n'existent pas dans les tribus voisines. Les principaux aspects de cette civilisation sont brièvement indiqués sous les titres de: économie tribale; organisation politique et situation du chef; rèves juridiques et tribunaux; familles et clans; éducation cérémonielle; mariage; religion et sorcellerie. L'étude se termine par des comparaisons; les différences constatées parmi les autres tribus bantoues du sud, en particulier le groupe Nguni, sont indiquées.

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4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
FX14 Lovedu FX14

But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasizes in very general terms the importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials. 773

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formulations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going its ordained way is implicit[illegible]ejected in their conceptions. The assumption is that cosmic forces are co[illegible]ollable and, in fact, controlled at every turn by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *vuŋaga* (the evil aspect of which is *vulsi*), i.e. by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digoma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail. 821 772 643 [171] [769]

Vuŋaga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these attributes or powers (*maada*) reside are mainly *melimo* (medicines) or *mere* (plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct 789 755

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
FX14 Lovedu FX14

171 The *gɔmana* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend 778 *gɔmana* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an 881 outsider. The *gɔmana* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *zwidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and 772 magic (*vuŋaga*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of 821 the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digɔma*. The seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digɔma*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain 811 concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu. 821 To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: man and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of 772 the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from con- 811 ditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desic- cation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon 821 the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

little colony, sheltered in the fastnesses of its seclusion, is busy working 173
out its salvation. The Lovedu have ample living space, for the lowveld 643
is still almost devoid of inhabitants. Beyond it there are great nations, kept at a distance by geographical obstacles. The Lovedu are not only secure in their mountain fastnesses, but also protected by those far-off barriers—the massive mountains towering over the Olifants River in the south, stretching forth a gigantic limb to the north, and the deep, tsetse-fly infested Limpopo Valley circling the west as a moat defensive of their home.

Men are discussing to whom Malaji has entrusted the rain charms, to Pheduli, 'the Drainer of the Rivers,' or to his eldest son, Maḍaji, whose nickname, 'the Filler of the Rivers,' is much more auspicious. Maḍaji settles their doubts by driving off Pheduli and seizing the throne. But in the sequel we see drought and famine in Ṱulovedu, while at Khivela, where Pheduli rules, copious rains bring plenteous crops. Year after year Maḍaji's magic sweeps up gales that scatter the clouds hanging over Ḍaja, whereas Pheduli constrains them to drop their gentle rain at Khivela.

The contrast is especially evident to the headmen living near Tzaneen. They secretly ally themselves with Pheduli; they spread rumours of a mighty army marching upon the capital. At length their strategy succeeds. Maḍaji flees to the forest, unsuspectingly entrusting his defence to the traitors; and when they report defeat and persuade him to rally his forces in the north, he is trapped into crossing the Maḍazwi River. It is a river which, even to-day, kings cross at the price of their crown; it drains the source of their power to rule. Maḍaji thus forfeits his right to the throne, and Pheduli, safely installed, becomes the mighty Transformer of the Clouds.

Faith in the sanctity of a system which may exclude the elder in favour of the younger son is restored; man-made rules, which usurp the function of the spirit presiding over the choice of a successor, are discredited. There is no room in this pageant (nor is there in tradition) for the defection, probably at this time, of a considerable section of the tribe, who later become the people of Mamaila.

The Fourth Pageant (*c.* 1750–1800). Pheduli's grave stands beside those of his forefathers. The scene discloses Khiali, the fair-faced king, reclining in a seat hewn out of the rock on the summit of a mountain amid immense walls of stone. In the spirit in which the scene is portrayed, with its mounds of masonry and its structures of stone, the impression conveyed is one of Zimbabwic splendour. (The ruins are still there, phallic stones projecting from rough stone walls some 8 ft. high, [172] and the sculptured seat is merely two rocks in their natural position. But it is with the spirit, not the reality of the scene that we are concerned.)

Khiali does not notice those faint figures of foreigners crowding into the background. They are the Sotho invaders of the lowveld, pressing over the mountains in the south, clambering down the escarpment in the west, and in far-off Phalavorwa settling in an unfavourable environment, whence some would soon leave to encroach upon Ṱulovedu. On

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

1. The Lovedu-tribe took its origin in Mashonaland. Therefore, when a Lovedu salutes, they say :" In truth, Lovedu, in truth Khalaga,[1] person of Ledaža,[2] person who comes from Mashonaland ! " Furthermore they are " the Pigs of Mohale. "[3]—They say there is the home of the Lovedu.[4] 173 576

2. They say the king there had two sons. Now one of them[5] was given the rain.[6] Afterwards the elder brother desired the thing of the younger one. He went to ask his younger brother for the rain. But the younger brother refused to give him the rain. The elder brother rose against him with spears.[7] The younger brother escaped southward,[8] he crossed the Limpopo-river of Mashonaland. On the way they separated into two groups. One tended towards the South and settled at Vyaḑadi[9] namely the Mamabolo-tribe. They are also " Pigs[10] of Maḑaži. "[11] 173

3. Now the Lovedu were looking for a nice country with fertile soil and with ant-hills.[12] They sent the young men in advance to look out for such a country. And indeed—when these passed Vendaland they found the right country having merula-trees and ant-hills in the east of the mountain where there is established " Medingen "[13] to-day—namely at Khumelo.[14] [797]

4. They found that there was living another tribe called that of Kheoga.[15] Those people did not know the fire. They ate all their food unboiled. They ate it just like the wild animals.

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[1] Name for the inhabitants of Mashonaland.

[2] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[3] Name of chief.

[4] I was given the following explanation of the word " Lovedu ": *Volovedu hhe hho khe fhedolwa ge khore : mo hho lovahho zwilô, e lêhho vathu le likhomu le riągu.*—Lovedu means : there where things namely persons, cattle, goats and sheep are being brought as offerings. [101]

[5] The younger one.

[6] The instruments and formulae to prepare the rain-medicine.

[7] Chief weapon.

[8] Literally : upwards.

[9] Mountains near Haenertsburg.

[10] Lovedu and Mamabolo praise the same animal : the wild pig.

[11] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[12] Ants = a delicacy. [262]

[13] Mission Station.

[14] Name of mountain.

[15] Another Bantu-tribe.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

5. The Lovedu asked them how they managed to live without fire. The Kheoga said : " What is fire ? what does it do ? " The Lovedu said : " We warm ourselves by the fire and cook the food with it." Then they gave them cooked food. When they had eaten they found that it tasted sweet. So they asked the Lovedu for fire. They wanted to cook with it and to warm themselves. When it went out they returned again to ask for fire. Then they began to work with it. 173

6. Now the Lovedu desired the country and its wealth. They wanted to take possession of it. But they were unable (to do so), as they found that it had its possessors. So they planned to fight and to drive the Kheoga out of the country. 173 726

7. Now they thought that their weapons could be the fire. So they ordered the young men to seize fire-brands. They surrounded the villages of the Kheoga to set fire to the country that the fire might burn the villages together with the people. The young men did so. The fire burnt everywhere and laid the villages in ashes. The Kheoga were in great distress. They left their villages and fled. But there was no spot for them to get away, for the fire surrounded the whole country.

8. Some ascended the hills, they were protected by the large rocks, where the fire could not come. Others climbed upon trees. These burnt altogether, for the grass was very tall, for it had not been burned since the beginning. Many people died a terrible death. Only very few escaped. Even to-day these people have not yet become a tribe again. Their kin has not yet increased similar to others.[16]

9. So the country became property of the Lovedu until to-day. The Lovedu gained their country by fighting for it with fire. 173 773

10. Furthermore they say that on their journey from Mashonaland the Lovedu were in great troubles, when they found a dried-up country —a country without water. The large rivers were far from them. They were looking for much water and did not find it. It is said that their chief chose young men to look for water for the tribe. He himself went with them. They were searching but they missed it.

11. They say that the chief had taken with him the calabash which his father had given him to produce rain. So he tried to make the rain fall where they were. After a little while there fell a heavy rain and filled all the rivers and watercourses. When they returned to their shelters, they arrived wet to the skin. The people got water for drinking and cook-

[16] They have inter-married with the Lovedu and other tribes.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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ing. It is said that this was the first miracle of that chief, for in Mashonaland his brother had produced the rainfall. 173

12. The name of the first chief who left Mashonaland is Magaphele. It was he who took possession of the country of Kheoga by fighting with fire. The second chief is Mohale. There is not much known about him. 173

13. The third chief is "Kheale kha Mmamohhale a Leḍaža."[17] This is his praise-name. He produced rainfall just like his fore-fathers.

14. The fourth chief is "Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a—ḍaža."[18] This is his praise-name. They praise them on account of the clouds, they say: "They transform the clouds so that the rain must fall." [551]

15. He—Phedola—had a son who was the first-born[19] When the king was about to die, he gave the younger son the rain-horn. But the people did not know that the chief had given him the horn of chieftainship. They thought that they would find that he who had the great name of chieftainship[20] would be he who had received the rain-horn. The name of the eldest son was "Maḍaže" (the Filler) that of the younger one was Makhoba (the Finisher). Therefore they said: "Chief is Maḍaže! He will fill the rivers with rain-water. As to Makhoba that means he will empty the rivers, so that we shall have no water." Therefore they proclaimed Maḍaže their chief. 173 643

16. They drove the younger brother away so that he had to leave the Lovedu-country. He left together with the troop which trusted in him. He went upwards and came to "Nareni"[21] and settled on the mountain of Khevela.[22] 173

17. Now in Loveduland Maḍaže was not able to produce rainfall. That country was a country of sunshine and hunger without intermission. There at Khevela rain was falling continuously every year; it was a country of corn, for the rain was falling.

18. Then the head-men of Loveduland began to cry and to complain that they did not know that it was Makhoba who had been given the rain-

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[17] Unknown names

[18] "Transformer—clouds are filled."

[19] —and therefore heir to the Crown according to the law.

[20] See [19]

[21] "At the Buffalo" name of the country in the South of Loveduland from the name of the tribes living there. They praise the buffalo.

[22] Near the confluence of the Selati-and Olifant-river.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

horn. And they planned to call him to return home and to become chief. 173 ●
So they sent some of them to ask him to return to Loveduland, to come and to be chief.

19. He refused and said : " You have driven me away, I can never return." Then they urged him. But he said : " How can I go ? My elder brother will kill me." They said : " We shall make plans to drive him away." Then he agreed and left with them. When they came to " Nareni ha Lezwalô "[23] they left him there.

20. They however—for they wanted to hide the facts to chief Maḍaže—when they arrived in the village of Loveduland, went to the chief and said : " Know ! your brother Makhoba left with warriors, he wants to kill you, he is on the road, he is coming ! Flee ! Go away that he may not find you." Chief Maḍaže said : " How can I go away ? The young men will fight for me, I shall defeat them." They however pressed him. They said : " He comes with many spears, we shall fail. Go away, Chief, hide yourself, that, when we are fighting with them, even if they beat us, they cannot kill you." But the chief refused.

21. Then some of the head-men went back, they called chief Makhoba that he might approach. When he was near, they returned again to chief Maḍaže and informed him that he was coming to-day, that he was near : " Go away, hide yourself that, when we are fighting with them, they may not kill you." Then chief Maḍaže agreed. He left his village and abode in a thicket. During the night chief Makhoba entered the village. The head-men went to tell their chief : " Your younger brother entered the village with an army. He will seek you with rage, rise ! we shall lead you away thither to the mountain of Levaga.[24]

22. Then the chief moved off and went to that mountain. On the 173
road to go to Levaga there was a river called Moḍazwi.[25] It was not
allowed for the chiefs to cross that river. Whenever a chief crossed it, 643
he was no longer able to rule over the tribe. He will be ruined by crossing that river. Now it happened when he just had crossed, that they said : " Know ! as you have crossed the river which may not be crossed by the chief, you cannot be our chief anymore.

23. They left him there and went home ; they were governed by 173
chief Makhoba. They gave him the name of his ancestor " Phedola-

[23] A " buffalo "-tribe living near the Letaba-river.
[24] In the North of Loveduland.
[25] In the North of Loveduland.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɖaža." He ruled the country, he made the rain fall like his father. The people loved him much on account of the rain. 173

24. Towards the end of his rule he had a son. This son—he made him live just as an orphan, he hated him and treated him as a thief. He did so especially for the reason that the people should not perceive that the chief wanted to give him his chieftainship. That child had a house erected far from the village, he dwelt there. When he wanted to go home, he did not enter by the main-entrance. His father had made a small path for him unknown to every body; furthermore when the child happened to come amidst other people on that road, the chief prevented him from entering. The name of that child was "Mogôdô, the cast-out, Mogôdô the neck with fat-wrinkles, or the resting-place for property and men,[26] or Mogôdô-Mme-a Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɖaža."

25. These praises were widely spread during his chieftainship. He was a powerful chief of severe government, for he used to kill people. He killed sorcerers and adulterers and people who were found telling lies, When judging he liked to pass sentences of death. Some were strangled. others were ordered to be burdened with stones and drowned in a deep place in the river.

26. Furthermore Mogôdô was a clever man in his undertakings. That what still to-day is to be seen of his clever undertakings is the stone-work which he erected with great skill. In the country there are no buildings which are similar to his. Among these buildings there is to be found a stone-seat which is beautifully carved. It was the seat of chief Mogôdô, when he was basking in the sun. It surprises really, it was hewn out with great skill. On that place there was the chief-kraal, its name is Levyeni.[27] (Others say that those buildings have been erected by Kheale, the ancestor of Mogôdô). 173 643 324

27. In the days of chief Mogôdô two of his head-men quarrelled about their territories. Therefore the chief sent his young men to stop the quarrel; they however found that war had broken out. So they returned home to inform the chief. Now the chief set out himself. When he arrived at the mountain of Mmanopi[28] he divided his army into two divisions to surround the villages of those head-men. When they saw that the chief had come to fight with them they were afraid that they would be killed. So they submitted to their lord. They offered two 173 643

[26] Property and men have space in the wrinkles of his neck.

[27] "At the rock."

[28] In the East.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

girls and asked that the chief might pardon them this trespass. Then the chief sounded the horn to assemble his troups. When the troups had assembled on one place, they were told that it was finished. Now the chief seized his war-horn, blew it and jumped about. Ali the troups intonated praise-songs to praise the chief; they said: "Mogôdô, the neck with fat-wrinkles, Mogôdô, he rules with the rain-horn." It is 'Mogôdô-Mme-a—Phedola," he says: 'I kill a person'—he kills; he says; 'I make live'—he makes live." 173 643

28. Then the chief took his spear, danced, pushed it into the ground and pointed to the East. He said to his warriors: "From the East there are coming black ants. You will fight with them, and you will defeat them." Then he pushed down again, pointed to the West and said: "From the West there will come red ants, these will defeat you over and over again."[29] 173

29. Chief Mogôdô fought also with Khašane, the son of his father. But Khašane fled into the country called Tshale.[30] Then the people called him to come and stay in another country called Moduveni,[31] where a certain man namely Mamadêba, a son of Khašane grew up, who found the Word of God at Port Elizabeth, who was found fighting against the darkness in the days of Rev. Knothe and Reuter.[32] He was killed by the second female chief Masalanavô for the sake of the Gospel. [797]

30. Mogôdô had two sons. When they quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father, the chieftainship was given his daughter who became the first female chief Možaži. The brothers were driven out of the country by the magic power of the little calabash[33] and the fire-stick[34] which had been strengthened with medicines of driving people out of the country. 173 643 [789]

31. So Možaži became chief, she was a good ruler over the country Lovedu like her father. She also killed the wrong-doers namely the socerers and thieves and liars. She produced rainfall like her father, she received homages of chiefs who came from far with treasures of different kinds and elephant-tusks—coming from Zululand, Sekhukhuni, Ramabulana[35] and *N̓guṅgunyane*.[36]

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[29] A prophecy attributed also to the chief Sekhukhuni.
[30] In the West.
[31] In the West.
[32] Missionaries among the *Golovê*.
[33] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[34] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[35] In Vendaland.
[36] In Thongaland.

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32. Therefore the praise-song of chief Možaži says: "Možaži—when the sun sets—trader in the hut;[37] I sleep on the road,[38] I am a widow,[39] I have no one who watches me. I am the elephant-knife on the hip in the sheath;[40] she eats meat,[41] the trader in the house." 173 643

33. The second chief was Masala-Navô. She was given this name by the dead (queen), when she was raised to the throne. She governed also like the other chiefs. Her praise-song says: "Mmasala-Navô,[42] speak good (words). When you are speaking bad (words), the tribe will split. It was the chief Khethubudi of Mashonaland who said: "I do not like the people.—Finally I got an ulcer on my back and said: 'People, scratch me."[43]—The hawk, at which they look with fear, they look at me with hearts full of hatred."[44]

34. This queen had milk-cows. They were called "the selected" of the chief-kraal. They were milked by a head-man who had been chosen to milk them. When they were milked, and the carrier of the milk was carrying it to bring it home—when it happened that he met people, they had to kneel down until he had passed. This was a custom to honour the food of the chief. When a person was standing when the milk passed near him, it was a great crime. These cows were not kept in one kraal together with the cattle of the village, but they remained separated. 173 234 643

35. Furthermore chief Mmasala-Navô hated the believers (in Christ). A Christian was not allowed to enter the chief's kraal. When a Christian had a case to be settled in the chief's Court, he had to sit outside the village under a tree; he sent his words through the messenger of the chief. 173 797

36. Chief Khesêthwane who governs to-day, and who is also called Možaži, is the third female chief. She produces rainfall. She allows the Christians to enter the official meeting-place and her village. She is fond of education. A church has been built near the meeting-place of 175 797

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[37] It is not necessary that she goes round to "sell" the rain. People are coming to her to buy in her hut.

[38] Like a prostitute (?)—she was not married but is said to have had many lovers.

[39] Because she had no husband.

[40] Praise of her blood-thirstiness.

[41] She killed her chief counsellor always after a short service.

[42] "She who remains with them."

[43] That chief thought that he was able to live without needing other people, until he became ill and was unable to help himself. Then he was obliged to call for assistance.

[44] Praise of the cruelty of the Queen.

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the royal kraal. The children of the chief's kraal are attending school at her command.

37. Chief Khesêthwane does not allow that a person enters her kraal with shoes on his feet. When somebody approaches the main entrance, he must take off the shoes and leave them outside the main-entrance that he may be allowed to enter the meeting-place.

The beginning of the government of female chiefs in Loveduland

1. The last male chief is Mogôdô. He had two sons: Malegudu and Kheêbe. These young men quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father when he was still alive. Now they had a sister who was called Možaži. So the chieftainship was given her that she might be the ruler of the tribe. The brothers were driven away.

2. When a person is made chief in Loveduland, he must be given the fire-stick and the water-calabash. Now they gave the sister the fire-stick and the calabash that she might bring it to Malegudu, the elder brother. But it is said that they had been strengthened by magic charms which make a person mad who looks at them with his eyes. He will behave like a mad person, he will leave his home, go away and move to another country and dwell there.

3. They say when Malegudu had looked at the fire-stick and the calabash, he left the land of his father, went to Vendaland and died there. Kheêbe the younger son who had quarrelled with him about the chieftainship was treated in the same way as the elder one. He left the country went to Thôvôlô[45] and died there.

4. So the chieftainship was given the daughter of Mogôdô namely Možaži I. She had a daughter called Masala-Navô. She followed her mother in the chieftainship.

5. Masala-Navô had no child until her old age. But she had a younger sister. She had two children. The first child was a boy, the second one a girl. The girl-child called Khesêthwane was chosen to be chief. She is Možaži who governs still to-day.

[45] In Portuguese-East-Africa.

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even the royal constellation of institutions, curious and incongruous with modern conditions though they might be.

And it is to a brief history of the royal institutions, as providing the key to an understanding of the Lovedu, that we shall now proceed. But let us say this: truth is ever stranger than fiction, yet it is also more complex and elusive. The truth that obtains in a strange world, made up of beliefs and values very different from our own, is not easy to recapture; there is no basis, no framework, in our lives for it. We are continuously confounded by inconsistencies and paradoxes, try as we would to turn our conceptions and theories this way and that and even upside down to fit the facts into them. What we shall try to do is to give a visual representation of a few historical events, by way of a series of pageants passing in review. A complete account of the background of the past is far beyond our purpose. It will be sufficient to represent the spirit of these events, leaving for another occasion the question of how far they have a true basis in fact.

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The pageants are not arranged into groups by the tribal historian, but we may present them as if they were colossal cycles, the cycle of the kings and the cycle of the queens. Each cycle opens in mystery, the mystery of an incestuous conception that, instead of corrupting the world, crowns the sinner; it is the ritual vindication of revolutionary change. In the first cycle, which starts just before 1600 and ends two centuries later, the change signalizes the birth of the tribe; then follow wanderings and the settlement of an infant community, which slowly develops to the splendid stature of manhood; and, finally, corruption and dissensions lead to a downfall. But in the midst of the ruins of the catastrophic civil war, which ends the first cycle, a new conception is born and we are at the beginning of the second cycle. The first cycle is handled with simple power; but no single doctrine in it runs its full course. Yet it cannot be mere coincidence that the mystery which marks the birth of the tribe should also be invoked to account for the momentous change from kings to queens.

The cycle of the queens has not yet been completed; it began about 1800 and rapidly ran to the height of its splendour; and its crisis, prematurely brought to a head, has also been indefinitely lengthened by the intervention of a new order of things, ushered in by the advent of the European. We cannot predict when the crisis will end or what the outcome of so prolonged a suspense will be, for the response to the challenge of this new order is now only taking shape and direction. But of this we can be certain, that in a world ordained by the white man there is less room for the vast sweep of the legendary mysteries. The tribal historian is unequal to the task of harmonizing the play of new, intractable forces with the theme of his exalted design.

The history of Lovedu kings and queens is not unlike the legends of the saints. The tribal historian is, of course, not troubled by a sacred theme, by the eternal struggle between Good and Evil; but he must justify historical events, he must bring them into relation with the grand purposes of the tribe. He never consciously tampers with essential facts; he uncritically accepts tradition that has been handed down to him.

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There is no direct falsification, but the way in which all distinctions of place and time are ignored leads to strange distortions. The tribal historian pictures man and events, not in the shape of their setting in the past, but in the colours of the values of the present. This involves inevitable selection and rearrangement. Again, legend without dramatic appeal is liable to be lost in oblivion; and so the historian, telling his story by the fireside, must be a dramatist. He groups his material, centres them upon important events and colours them to harmonize with the total picture of the society he has in mind. It is not always easy to reproduce either the whole picture or that touch here and those lines there, which give it its distinctive character and meaning. There are delineations of what in the society are regarded as we regard original sin, but they effect the salvation, not the damnation of man. A treacherous deed assumes the form of a glorious achievement. A usurper is turned into a hero. Royal incest, instead of threatening the security of the society, strengthens the divine right to rule. These are some of the critical moments in the history of Lovedu kings and queens that we wish to present by a series of pageants.

THE CYCLE OF THE KINGS

The First Pageant (*c.* 1500). The sons of Monomotapa, mighty monarch of the Ɓakaranga, quarrel and each sets himself up as an independent *mambo*, or chief, dividing Ɓukhalaga, the empire of their father, among themselves. One of these chiefs has his capital at the mountain of Maulwi, somewhere in Rhodesia. His people, prostrating themselves in his presence, call him *mulozwi* or *murozwi*, but he has merely taken that name as a praise title to mark the link between him and the king of the Rozwi. Perhaps it is only a political link, not implying kinship of any kind. We do not know. Mambo rules his people, not by force, but through his supernatural prerogatives, for he is a sacred king. Tradition dictates that he should end his reign by ritual suicide. He is appointed, not in accordance with man-made rules, but by the spirit of his predecessor, who holds the door of the hut in which he died against all but the true heir; and it is only through that doorway that his successor can ascend the throne.

This *mambo* has a daughter, Dzugudini, and, though she is unmarried, she has an infant son, Makaphimo. Mambo wishes to punish the seducer of his daughter, but Dzugudini and her mother refuse to disclose the identity of the culprit, saying, 'The father of the child of a king's daughter is not to be known.' Mambo becomes more and more suspicious. Dzugudini's mother steals the rain charms and the sacred beads, and feverishly teaches her daughter their virtues and their use; and before Mambo can take action, Dzugudini and her infant son flee to the south.

After a long and eventful journey, the fugitives, accompanied by a handful of followers, arrive in Ɓulovedu, where they settle and found the tribe of the Lovedu. We do not know whether Mambo ever discovered who had seduced his daughter; but Lovedu tradition records that Makaphimo was the issue of the incestuous union of uterine brother

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173 and sister. The brother remains as *mambo*, successor to his father; the 643 sister, Dzugudini, by virtue of her incest, justifies the creation of a new people.

The Second Pageant (*c.* 1650). Both Dzugudini and Makaphimo have died, the first in Nareni, the second at Khumeloni. One of the nobles, remaining on the highveld, is moving southwards from near Munnik, later to establish the chiefdom of Mamavolo; two brothers of Makaphimo tarry on the way down the escarpment, and we see the one, Mahasha, sowing his seeds (*hu hasha*) to test the agricultural possibilities, the other, Mudiga, struggling to drive off the lions which surround (*hu diga*) his settlement. Muhale, son of Makaphimo, is ruling at Khumeloni. He is the acknowledged founder of the greatness of the Lovedu during the cycle. He successfully appeals to Mahasha and Mudiga to rejoin him; they give him their daughters as wives and he makes them his great headmen.

But Muhale's reign stands out boldly because of his subjugation of the Khiɔga, primitive denizens of the forest of Ḍaja. They have no fire, and live like wild animals, eating raw meat; their huts are badly constructed and dirty; they till the soil with sharpened sticks instead of hoes; and they have neither chief nor any visible form of government. The fair-skinned, cultured Lovedu set about educating these Calibans of savage humanity, teaching them the uses of fire. The Khiɔga find a new contentment in the sweetness of cooked food and in warming themselves by the hearth fires. Savage pupil and cultured tutor become close friends, so close that the savage unsuspectingly shows his benefactor the qualities of 'the place of the gods' (*vadimoni*) in the forest at Ḍaja. They envisage a brave new world, but they do not know that they are being deceived For in reality the Lovedu, coveting 'the place of the gods', are planning their destruction, They do not disclose the knowledge that fire can burn the veld; for they intend that 'their spears shall be fire'. And presently they set the grass alight and the fire scatters some Khiɔga, but burns most of them to death.

A moment later we see the Lovedu praying at the shrines at Ḍaja. When Muhale dies they bury him there; the Lovedu no longer fear the ancestral spirits of the Khiɔga. (For the fire, we may suppose, is here, as in the great transition ceremonies, a sacred rite. It effects the transition from danger to safety, from defilement to sanctity; the power for evil of foreign spirits it converts to a power for good in the service of the usurper; it cleanses the alien past and welds it firmly into the present.) As the pageant passes we see the ruins of another strange people, the Dɔna. The Lovedu dread these ruins; they build far from them; avenging spirits, who have never been assimilated, contaminate the soil; the fire which purified and aggregated the sacred places of the Khiɔga was not used against them.

The Third Pageant (*c.* 1700). At Ḍaja, beside the grave of Muhale, we see another, that of Malaji. 'He who makes the country sleep', for that is what his name means, has left behind him peace and plenty. The

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little colony, sheltered in the fastnesses of its seclusion, is busy working out its salvation. The Lovedu have ample living space, for the lowveld is still almost devoid of inhabitants. Beyond it there are great nations, kept at a distance by geographical obstacles. The Lovedu are not only secure in their mountain fastnesses, but also protected by those far-off barriers—the massive mountains towering over the Olifants River in the south, stretching forth a gigantic limb to the north, and the deep, tsetse-fly infested Limpopo Valley circling the west as a moat defensive of their home. [173] [643]

Men are discussing to whom Malaji has entrusted the rain charms, to Pheduli, 'the Drainer of the Rivers,' or to his eldest son, Maḍaji, whose nickname, 'the Filler of the Rivers,' is much more auspicious. Maḍaji settles their doubts by driving off Pheduli and seizing the throne. But in the sequel we see drought and famine in Ḓulovedu, while at Khivela, where Pheduli rules, copious rains bring plenteous crops. Year after year Maḍaji's magic sweeps up gales that scatter the clouds hanging over Ḓaja, whereas Pheduli constrains them to drop their gentle rain at Khivela.

The contrast is especially evident to the headmen living near Tzaneen. They secretly ally themselves with Pheduli; they spread rumours of a mighty army marching upon the capital. At length their strategy succeeds. Maḍaji flees to the forest, unsuspectingly entrusting his defence to the traitors; and when they report defeat and persuade him to rally his forces in the north, he is trapped into crossing the Maḍazwi River. It is a river which, even to-day, kings cross at the price of their crown; it drains the source of their power to rule. Maḍaji thus forfeits his right to the throne, and Pheduli, safely installed, becomes the mighty Transformer of the Clouds.

Faith in the sanctity of a system which may exclude the elder in favour of the younger son is restored; man-made rules, which usurp the function of the spirit presiding over the choice of a successor, are discredited. There is no room in this pageant (nor is there in tradition) for the defection, probably at this time, of a considerable section of the tribe, who later become the people of Mamaila.

The Fourth Pageant (*c.* 1750–1800). Pheduli's grave stands beside those of his forefathers. The scene discloses Khiali, the fair-faced king, reclining in a seat hewn out of the rock on the summit of a mountain amid immense walls of stone. In the spirit in which the scene is portrayed, with its mounds of masonry and its structures of stone, the impression conveyed is one of Zimbabwic splendour. (The ruins are still there, phallic stones projecting from rough stone walls some 8 ft. high, and the sculptured seat is merely two rocks in their natural position. But it is with the spirit, not the reality of the scene that we are concerned.) [172]

Khiali does not notice those faint figures of foreigners crowding into the background. They are the Sotho invaders of the lowveld, pressing over the mountains in the south, clambering down the escarpment in the west, and in far-off Phalaborwa settling in an unfavourable environment, whence some would soon leave to encroach upon Ḓulovedu. On

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his magnificent material foundations Khiali is concerned to build a strong spiritual edifice. His predecessors were content to entrust the welfare of the divine prince, he who should ascend the throne, to the care of the gods. But he, Khiali, by strengthening the hands of the gods, would secure for ever the succession of the sacred heir.

As Khiali sits there, a youth, obviously concerned to avoid detection, appears in the shadows of an opening in the fence. He slinks away when he sees others beside Khiali in the courtyard. A moment later he reappears, only to be driven back by Khiali, showering curses upon his head. But later we see Khiali and the youth whispering together in the king's private hut; the king is secretly teaching him the use of the rain charms. The youth is Mugɔdɔ the Outcast, youngest son of Khiali His father stints him of everything, makes him dwell far from the capital, treats him like a thief, and refuses him entry into his village except when he comes alone and unobserved by a secret pathway through the undergrowth. These things he does to deceive the people and safeguard Mugɔdɔ's title to the throne. But they also develop a supersensitiveness in the Outcast.

Thwarted in his youth, Mugɔdɔ suffers irreparable damage to his self-respect; he is obsessed by suspicions; he imagines that every man's hand is against him. His councillors are adulterers and sorcerers, corrupting his wives, plotting to usurp his position. Scandal and dissension sap the strength of the kingdom. His elder brother, Khashani, rises against him; he is driven off, but the tribe splits into two; and more than a century later, in the second cycle, a descendant of Khashani challenges Mujaji with a foreign creed. Mugɔdɔ answers his detractors with wholesale executions, but he is concerned to vindicate himself rather than to regain order in the land. In a civil strife between two of his headmen, he makes no move until he feels himself insulted by 'the rusty arrows fit for the rubbish heap' that cause the blood of a kinsman to flow. The crowning catastrophe that embitters his soul is the conduct of his wayward sons. They enter the huts of his younger wives; they slaughter his cattle to gain popularity at their father's expense; they send him the dregs after draining the tributary beer.

And Mugɔdɔ's reign ends in chaos and confusion. Royal kinsmen massacre one another; internecine strife is followed by unparalleled famine; ravenous wild beasts terrorize the villages; Malegudu, one of Mugɔdɔ's sons, gains control for a time, but he has eventually to flee before Mujaji, his sister, and is assassinated in Vendaland; Khiebe, another son, seeks refuge in Thɔvɔbland, where he dies an unnatural death; Sephumulo, a powerful noble, unable to stomach subjection to Mujaji, who is gaining the ascendancy, severs his allegiance and establishes the twin tribes of Rakwadu and Sekhɔpɔ. And as these disasters befall the tribe, the first cycle completes its course.

THE CYCLE OF THE QUEENS

The Fifth Pageant (*c.* 1800). As the second cycle opens, the disasters which appear to be the Nemesis upon the vice of an uncertain succession

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(for it was Khiali's attempt to readjust the machinery of succession which maladjusted Mugɔdɔ for the task of a king) are reconstructed to form a chain of triumph for Mujaji. The most dramatic moments are not the disasters, but two interconnected events: Mugɔdɔ's prophecy and Mugɔdɔ's sin.

At the end of the civil strife, into which the insult of the rusty arrows goads Mugɔdɔ to throw his decisive weight, he orders the war horns to be sounded; and as he begins a solitary, spectacular dance (*hu pɛbɛla*), his people, prostrating themselves, solemnly intone his praises: 'Mugɔdɔ of the neck-with-great-folds-of-fat, wherein do rest both goods and men, who hurls his challenge with the rain-horn; Mugɔdɔ of Pheduli, Transformer of the Clouds, he kills as he lists and spares whom he likes.' Pointing in the four directions, he raises his voice in prophecy: 'I am going away to creep into the horn of a cow (i.e. to die). I do not like to sleep in the open, vainly counting the stars. I go to unloose the black ants in the east. They will bite you and kill you, but in the end you will overcome them. Thereafter I shall unleash the red ants in the west; you will fight them, but you will fight them in vain. Further, I say this country will be ruled by a frontal skirt.'

It is Mugɔdɔ's farewell message just before he dies. But the prophecy epitomizes the three great moments in the cycle of queens: the accession of a woman, the raids of Dguni hordes (black ants), and the conquest by the European (red ants).

The Sixth Pageant (*c.* 1800). Mugɔdɔ is the instrument of an inexorable fate. His faith in his fellow men, in his councillors, even in his sons, has been shattered. He muses that women also are faithless. But their faith, however unfaithful, keeps them falsely true; they intrigue against him as their husband, but they are loyal to him as their king. Above all, their mystery is allied to a power, not to blast the tribe to fragments, but to subdue men and turn their passions to the service of the state. That is the vision given to Mugɔdɔ, and the guarantee of its divine origin is the far-off past in which Dzugudini originated the tribe. That past also suggests how the vision can be realized. And in the scene before us these mighty issues are handled with a simplicity and a directness which it is impossible to reproduce.

Mugɔdɔ betakes himself to his favourite daughter at Maulwi, sacred reminder of the mountain in Rhodesia. Simply he tells her of his purpose, but she doubts its divine source: 'It cannot be, my father,' she says; 'these things are too difficult.' Mugɔdɔ goes again to her, but she remains mystified that a sin that defiles can be a rite that sanctifies.

Then Mugɔdɔ goes to Lekhwareni, the despised place of stones and of slothful people (for, according to their praise song, they burn their nails roasting the maize that they should have stamped). There lives Mujaji, daughter of his wife, Mamujaji. To her also he confides his vision; he tells her she will be queen if, though celibate, she will bear the heir to the throne. He is not speaking of a virgin birth, for she understands that he, her father, will be the father of her issue. 'You are all-wise, O father,' she replies. 'I am the servant of your will.' A secret hut

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is built; an inquisitive intruder, the favourite wife of Mugɔdɔ, suffers the extreme penalty; and in due course a son, not a daughter, is born.

But Fate tricks Mugɔdɔ in vain. The son is strangled and a little later there is a daughter. She is to become Mujaji II.

The Seventh Pageant (*c.* 1850). Mujaji I has already been on her resplendent throne for half a century; she has turned the chaos of her predecessor's reign to peace and prosperity; and, surrounded by restrictions which forced her into seclusion and fostered the idea of her sagacity and immortality, she has won the fame and attraction which drew so many foreigners to her capital. She is 'the white-faced Mankhadeni, radiant as the setting sun'. 'Huckster in her hut', perched like an eagle's eyrie on the fringe of a forest, she dispenses as she wishes the life-giving rain. 'She casts away some; others she shares with the vultures.'

Hosts of foreign ambassadors and potentates gather at her court. Some bring cattle, others their daughters or sisters; these are the gifts with which they show their homage or supplicate for rain. In the company we see messengers from Manukuza, dread monarch of Gasaland, supplicating with mighty gifts from their master; ambassadors of Zwide, challenger of Chaka himself, seeking to ward off the chastisement of locusts and drought, but smitten to death for his presumption in coming so near Ɓulovedu; and also an envoy from Moshesh in far-off Basutoland. Less pretentious are the men from Malevoxɔ, whose Lovedu wife had taught him the elements of the magic of rain-making; from Vendaland, where they call Mujaji 'the wife who brings them water to wash their face'; from Phalavorwa, upon whose internal struggles Mujaji arbitrates. From Chopiland and Ɓunyai, from the Ɓirwa and Tswana, from the very ends of the world, there are suppliants. Sekwati, the great Pedi king, is seeking a matrimonial alliance, hence that herd of cattle in the courtyard; Mali of the Khaha and Magaepia of the Letswalo, queens crowned in their own countries in imitation of the immortal Mujaji, come to be strengthened and fitted for their task. But the mightiest tribute of all is the gift from the Zulu king, who, disappointed by the failure of his mission to the great Swazi rain-maker, supplicates the rain-maker of rain-makers.[1]

The pageant is incomplete without its background, the armed hordes of Chaka and Moselekatse, of Soshangane and Mantatisi, of Thulare and Mafefe, laying waste and massacring, and in the wake of the trail of desolation, the smaller tribes and those miserable remnants, the guerrilla bands of cannibals, completing the destruction. They all are mightier than Mujaji, who is unarmed yet invincible. And, as the pageant passes by, we see innumerable refugees flocking from all points of the compass to seek sanctuary in the inviolable land.

The Eighth Pageant (1894). The sceptre, secretly entrusted to Mujaji II on her accession forty years and more before this pageant passes, is

[1] A Zulu author, M. J. Mpanza, in his *UGuqabadele* (1930), p. 53, confirms this. He says that if there was excessive drought, the Zulu king would send black cattle to the Swazi king with a request for rain; and, if there was still no rain, he would send to Mujaji.

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the symbol of forces that swayed a bygone world. People are uncertain of their bearings in the new world, their sense of security has been shaken. The black ants from Swaziland have left a scar, though they were chastened when the legions of Ludongo were defeated. Now the red ants are brought upon the scene as the aftermath of the exploits of Albasini, self-appointed chief of the Magwamba (Shangana-Tonga) and Native Commissioner of the Boer Republic. The sceptre only weakly shows the force of spiritual power. The tribute Mujaji sends to Albasini, it is true, smites him with drought; upon General Joubert, curious to behold the royal majesty, a far-off sister of the queen, who was also her 'wife', is palmed off as the mysterious 'She-who-must-be-obeyed'; the Transformer of the Clouds still is the 'huckster in her hut'.

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But to the workers and warriors of the 'red ants', the sceptre is like a broken reed rather than a magic wand. Some of them with impunity appropriate the country, enlisting in their service the denizens of the soil; others are collecting taxes, exacting tribute and redrawing age-old boundary lines; still others invade the sacred places, even desecrating the drums at Maulwi. The princes still come, but they supplicate surreptitiously.

The temporary triumphs cannot offset the disastrous defeats, and Mujaji, bewildered by the turn of events, does not know how to adjust her weapons and her diplomacy to the needs of the new situation. She circumvents the curiosity of Joubert, but she fails to save her subjects from serfdom. When the grave of Khashani, the Christian kinsman whom she martyred, becomes the rallying point of a disloyal creed, when the conspiracy to expel the European intruder ends in the disaster of the deportation of her neighbours, she loses her faith in the gods of her ancestors and adjures her followers to trust the apostle of a creed that was uprooting these gods. Pathetically she presses the poison cup to her lips, conforming to the letter, not to the spirit, of the ritual end ordained by her ancestors. In a world indifferent to the eternal verities, that cup is like an empty sham and that end like a vain sacrifice.

The pageant passes on. A cheerless panorama unfolds before us as Mujaji III ascends the throne. To submission is added humiliation. When the white man, coming to arrange for the recognition of the new queen, sees old Mathogani, who had impersonated Mujaji II, the proceedings are stopped. The Lovedu are made to pay for their presumption by being denied a ruler until the old woman dies. They retaliate by dubbing her the 'Chief of the white men' and by accelerating her end.

But it is a fruitless revenge. They are faced with the problem of reconciling the claims of two incongruous worlds: is the authority of the queen to be derived from the alien conqueror and his ceremonies or from the spirit of the deceased and the rite of the door? The reality of the old rite is the sham of the new order; it is a mere coincidence upon which no title can be based. But also in all spheres of culture and of life these dualistic forces clash with one another; they are in a death grapple which lasts throughout the reign of Mujaji III.

The conflict is epitomized in the conflict between Shalala and the royal house. The commoner, using the weapons of the European lawyer,

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173 ranges himself against royalty, who invoke the powers of their ancestors
613 When Magoma, daughter of the queen, illicitly allies herself to the commoner and anarchy threatens disruption of the tribe, the royal house reluctantly invites intervention of the white man, submitting, however, only the superficial issues. Ostensibly Shalala suffers defeat, but in reality the struggle continues; and in this conflict, as in the wider conflict of the warring worlds, we are left in doubt where the victory lies.

FROM THE PAGEANTS TO THE PEOPLE

173 Only a few of the great figures of the royal family paraded before us in these pageants. We must regard them as expressions of some of the themes which the outlook of the society has emphasized. The twice-invoked incest theme is brought into relation with revolutionary national changes, like a transition rite in the life of an individual. Incest precedes and validates first the birth of the tribe, then the accession of a woman and her elevation to a mystical pedestal. Is it a case of the greater the sin the greater the saint, of the polluted and the sacred converging at infinity? We cannot say for certain. We saw the Lovedu pictured as a Prospero teaching the Calibans of Khioga. But primitive and unorganized though these Khioga were, they undoubtedly knew fire, and the use of fire against a fireless foe who has become a friend is unnecessarily treacherous, though it is, for the end in view, dramatically and, we may suppose, ritually effective. When internal dissension arises, the conflict is posed as one between the chief son and the 'chosen' son. The victory of the 'chosen' son vindicates the divine right of the rain-priest against mere legal precedence. This theme is once more dramatically thrown into relief by the device of naming the chief son 'the Filler' and the 'chosen' son 'the Drainer of the Rivers'. The contrasts are handled with consummate skill. Notice also the psychological insight that marks the manner in which we are led up to the climax of the change from kings to queens. The Outcast thwarted in his youth is over-sensitive and suspicious; he seeks compensation in revenge; and he is the paranoic who utters the fatal prophecy. The prophecy is not merely a vain delusion; it has a purpose and was put into the mouth of the Outcast after the event; and as such it is a magnificent piece of stagecraft. Yet it is not considered to be equal to the task of sufficiently magnifying the mysticism of Mujaji I; that task is finally achieved by a repetition of the incest theme. Those were dangerous times; drastic handling of their dramatic moments was called for. The culminating point of Mujaji's power stands out prominently amid the surrounding turmoil. It also challenges it. The drama suddenly ends; it has run its course. In the sequel, the problem of the death-grapple of dualistic worlds has developed too suddenly, too disturbingly, for the powers of the tribal historian.

These are some of the conceptions handled in the pageants. They reflect ultimate values, the philosophy of the society. They are on a different plane from the ordinary lives and interests of the people. To re-orientate ourselves, we must bear in mind three things: firstly, the royal pageants are but one of a large series, for besides the nuclear ruling

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group there are many other groups, each with its own historical background, subtly linked up though it be with the royal background; secondly, great as the glory of the queens is, we must not fail to see their people in their true perspective against the masses of foreign tribes and against the stature of the European Colossus; and, thirdly, however greatly men rely for their sense of security upon ultimate values, their lives are immediately and predominantly concerned with very simple matters, with tilling the soil and caring for their cattle, with getting and preparing food, with securing shelter and warmth, with gossip at beer drinks and with petty domestic squabbles. 173

The Lovedu to-day are predominant in an area of some 5,000 square miles, the area of the Lovedu lowveld which is bounded by the Game Reserve, the escarpment, the Klein Letaba and the Olifants Rivers. On all sides of this area there are mightier peoples. Shangana-Tonga to the east. Pedi to the south, Venda to the north and several highveld tribes to the west—all these overshadow the people of Mujaji in numbers, in organization, and in power. But within the Lovedu lowveld, if we count all branches of the Lovedu, the subjects under them (about 50,000) outnumber the rest of the Sotho-speaking tribes put together (some 40,000). There are in addition many people (perhaps 25,000) under Shangana-Tonga chiefs, and in the eyes of the European one of them has far greater stature than Mujaji. 131 161

The Lovedu live in a location marked out in the early 1890's, immediately after the advent of European settlers and the conflicts that resulted. The original location, just short of seventy square miles, was enlarged during the 1930's by the purchase of tribal farms, and now the whole reserve is about 150 square miles in extent. This falls far short of the 600 square miles within which Mujaji used to exercise effective jurisdiction. She held the area between the Moketsi, the Great Letaba and the Mulodozi Rivers, from where the latter joins the Great Letaba at its northernmost bend, and from there westwards to the Moketsi; beyond it for another 400 square miles, but rather indefinitely towards the north, north-east, and east, where the population was sparse, Mujaji's writ ran, through uncertainly and spasmodically. 131

The population of the reserve we estimate at 33,000, which is considerably in excess of the official census figure for 1936.[1] The average 161

[1] Official census figures for 1936 are available, not for the Lovedu reserve, but only for two separate units of areas: (*a*) the Lovedu location and (*b*) an area to the north of it, about half of which falls within the Lovedu reserve. For (*a*) the figures are 11,636 and for (*b*) 7,205. If we assume that half of the population of (*b*) falls within the Lovedu reserve, its total population would be 15,238, or only about 46 per cent of our estimate of 33,000. We arrive at our figure from three sources: (1) Kraal-to-kraal countings in three sample districts with a total area of 14·5 square miles and a total population of 3,500. These districts represent different localities, some valley, some hill, and constitute a fair sample. On the basis of the average density of population in them, the total figure for the Lovedu reserve of 150 square miles should be $150 \div 14{\cdot}5 \times 3{,}500$, or 36,207. (2) The proportion of people who, according to Native accounts, our own impressions, and independent European eye-witnesses, escaped official enumeration. Despite instructions that the people of each district should collect in their respective districts, the enumerators, finding the districts inaccessible by road

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entering from the first quarter of the eighteenth century until to-day, 563
and are all segments of other tribes, themselves composed of very diverse elements. To-day the task of unravelling the confusion and complexity is beyond the wit of man. It is a complexity which everywhere antedates the nineteenth-century disturbances, probably even the movements and unrest recorded by the Portuguese for the sixteenth century. Not all the groups are equally closely linked with the royal nucleus. The most alien are the Shangana-Tonga. This is because intermarriage with them is frowned upon and because, in the incorporation of a foreign group into the tribe, the most effective instrument is the alignments effected by the bride-price of the marriage system. The process of incorporation is dealt with elsewhere. It depends upon the obligation of the immigrant group to send one of its daughters as a wife to the queen. These are handed out to nobles of the nuclear group and thereby the whole complicated machinery of intermarrying lineages is set into motion. Thus, through the links created by giving brides and in return receiving cattle, loyalties are built up in the foreign groups and they become closely knit into the texture of the tribe and of its social structure, the centre of which from this point of view is the nuclear ruling group.

We have to remember, in considering the pageants of the past, that 173
each of the constituent groups also has a background of history. There 563
are scores of subsidiary pageants, some almost as impressive as the royal pageant. Neither the historical background nor all that it implies as to the meaning of the present culture can be properly interpreted without taking into account the subsidiary pageants. Some of them are almost self-contained side-shows, some have become submerged in the main pageant; but all have contributed something to the total culture of the Lovedu. It is always instructive to observe what the contribution has been and how it has been reshaped to harmonize with the predominant conceptions in the society. The selection of traits that are congenial, the rejection of elements that do not fit, the manner in which the assimilation has altered the details as well as the meaning of borrowed institutions, all throw light upon the values and working of the society. But in this book we are concerned only with the final result; and for that reason also we have omitted the histories and pageants of the constituent groups.

So far we have referred to the background of the royal group and to
the great diversity of peoples that make up the Lovedu. It is time that, instead of viewing the tribe in broad perspective, we should turn to the ordinary mundane activities of the people. They do not live by the spirit of the past alone, and we cannot remain on the hilltops looking at them from afar. We must descend into their villages, attend their beer drinks, take a hand in the stamping and cooking, listen to the scandal at beer drinks and join them in their recreation. The contrast between the rarefied atmosphere of their philosophical contemplation, as it emerges in the pageants, and their everyday avocations, as we shall see them when we move in their midst, is very great. But so is the contrast between our philosophy and our everyday life.

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643 Sofala had formerly to take poison when disaster or a natural defect fell
171 upon them. Among the Lovedu, tradition decrees that the queen shall have no physical defect and must poison herself, not when she is old, but at the end of the fourth initiation (*vudiga*) of her reign. The emergence of physical imperfections and the holding of the fourth *vudiga* cannot both determine the date of suicide. In fact, no reign has been cut short because of bodily defects, though the conception of the relation survives. The queen is believed to be immune from disease and it is thought that her first will be her last illness; it is even said that Mujaji III's elder uterine brother was excluded from the throne because of his weak ankles. At the same time, not kings, but queens are wanted, there are no tests of physical fitness as are recorded for tribes in the north, and in the legends
[173] of the Lovedu and of tribes which, following the Lovedu, have ritual suicide, physical defects do not figure as a theme. In this complex, heirs to the throne have been disqualified or chiefs have been deposed because of inability to make rain, disobedience to their sovereign, or adultery with his wives. Among the Mamaila, a branch of the Lovedu, one chief is said to have become a cripple because he forced open the door which magically yields to the touch of the true heir, and the Nemesis that overtook him is attributed to his sin, not to his defect. Impotence disqualifies in the north, but Mujaji II was barren and, in the pattern as adopted in some tribes, such as the Khaha of Maake, barrenness of the queen is expected; for, as the queen may have no official husband, it is a virtue to have no children. That conception is not accepted by the Lovedu, for Mujaji II's barrenness was a source of sadness and strife and every effort was made to cure her. Physical fitness is an aspect of the perfection and divinity of the queen, but it has no practical relation to the right of succession.

643 The relation between the length of a reign and the initiations is far
778 more obscure. In many tribes where ritual suicide is enjoined (Thavina,
171 Khaha, Ŭirwa), the number of 'schools' is said to be seven. The 'schools' are there held more frequently, and possibly there is some connexion
177 with the number of sacred drums (*digɔma*), for the Khaha have seven and the Lovedu four. The chief's life, as we have seen, is intimately bound up with the drums; both drums and 'schools' are great *dogɔma*, objects or activities in which power is concentrated. Power is also concentrated in *dithugula*, a category of objects chiefly associated with the gods. The distinction is not that between magic and religion; the *digɔma* and *dithugula* appear to belong to different cultural complexes. The one was characterized, we may suppose, by 'schools', drums, and cults linked up with national calendric observances, dramatization of the crises in life, and the sanctity and power of the chief; the other, by sacred beads, shrines, reincarnation of ancestors in dedicated animals, and ritual suicide of the chief. In the process of merging, the great *digɔma* were, we suggest, grafted on to the royal institutions and brought into relation with the life as well as the death of the chief. This is little more than speculation, for it is difficult to isolate the oldest cultural substrata and their distinctive patterns.

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly,

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643 578 After the fire rite there follows the rite of opening the door, which will determine the identity of the heir. No one knows for certain who will succeed. Some nobles, availing themselves of the interregnum, mobilize their supporters, and all come fully armed, for there is sure to be some display of hostility. Even in 1896, at the accession of Mujaji III, a son of a wife of Mujaji II and great councillor marched upon the capital supported by the Mahasha, but there was no strife, as Mujaji III's followers were prepared. The rival claimants, in the presence of the [342] assembled people, go one by one to the hut in which the queen died and which (like one of the queen's huts even to-day) has two doors. They approach the door one by one, address the spirit of the deceased, saying who they are, and lightly touch the door. It is arranged that the most ambitious claimants go first, and those who are indifferent as regards their prospects last, the true heir to whom the door will open taking his place between them.

The spirit of the deceased, by opening the door, chooses the successor. The new queen, taking the axe, spear, and shield of her royal predecessors, escapes by the other door. She may have to flee, if the party of a rival is too strong, but in time she will be formally presented by a great councillor to the people. There is doubt as to the fate of the person who held the door from within: some say he must die, others that he is given a wife and sent out of the country. There is much uncertainty and secrecy about what happened in 1896; it is even doubted whether the door was opened. The reason lay in the fear of European intervention, for just previously the Boer General had been deceived and the lowveld tribes conquered, as described in Chapter I. Cowed by disaster, the Lovedu wisely decided to emphasize, not their own ritual, but the formal confirmation of the accession by the European.

643 578 173 The opening of the door, as known among neighbouring tribes, serves chiefly to resolve conflicts between rivals to the throne. It sometimes co-exists with institutional predetermination of the heir—for instance, where he must be the chief son of a wife married with special ceremonies and with cattle contributed by the whole tribe, the issue of a house in which the tribesmen all have a stake. In such circumstances conflicts arise, and European authority throws its weight on the side of 'constitutional arrangements' rather than 'coincidence'. In some tribes the opening of the door serves to strengthen the claim of the institutional heir; that is the case where there is no great massing of institutions behind the chief heir and conflicts are liable to break out if there are several claimants of standing. Among the Lovedu, succession was quite uncertain, the personal choice of the chief, not primogeniture, being stressed. The great son seldom succeeded, it is said, because the second child was favoured; and that is one explanation of the origin of the Mamaila, Sekhɔpɔ, and Rakhwadu tribes, for the great son was driven out of the country. In traditional history the 'Filler of the Rivers', who was chief son and seized the throne, had to make way for the 'Drainer of the Rivers', who proved to be the choice of his father and to whom the rain secrets had been imparted. Khashani, the great son, was expelled by Mugɔdɔ, his younger brother (we do not know whether he was the second son), of whom it is

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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the 643
people. Khashani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as 578
well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugɔdɔ, 173
which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugɔdɔ was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwareni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by 643
them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by 644
an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong [847]
social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much 643
stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in 578
doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and 687
her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely 644
expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled

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CHAPTER XVII

CULTURE CONTACT AND CULTURE CHANGE

The relativistic approach: value of comparative and historical study—*interpenetration of the tribes*: ethnogenesis of the Lovedu and evolution of some of their cultural patterns—*the iconoclasm of Christianity*: breaking down and building up among converts, repercussions among pagans—*the challenge of Western conquest*: the indirect responses of the culture and its undisturbed foundations.

THE RELATIVISTIC APPROACH

For the past half-century Western conquest and civilization have been 178
challenging Lovedu culture. For centuries before that various Bantu cultures had percolated into the Lovedu lowveld. As a result, there has been cultural change, not only in the past few years, but throughout all the ages. Change is inescapable, continuous, ever-present, and there is no evidence that in the European period it has been revolutionary, while in the pre-European period it was merely evolutionary. There is a distinction, but to present the contrast as that between disruptive change and gradual development is unwarranted. The greatest disturbances brought about by contact with Western culture cannot, in their effect upon institutions and cultural patterns, be compared with the major cultural evolution, not only of the Lovedu, but of many other tribes, within measurable periods of time.

The evidence of great changes afforded by an historical and comparative 174
study of the tribes of the Northern Transvaal is overwhelming. Thus, for instance, the cultures of the Lovedu and of their kinsmen, the Mamavolo, have widely diverged since their separation from one another 250 years ago. The Mamavolo are like their immediate neighbours, the highveld Sotho, and unlike the Lovedu, not only in their handling of the major cultural complexes, such as the royal institutions, the 'schools', marriages, agricultural ritual, and village structure, but also in countless details of culture. They tolerate no female rulers, have given up ritual suicide of the chief, no longer appeal to the rite of the door to determine succession to the throne, and neither accept wives as tribute nor redistribute them in order to link up the political system. In minor details, such as their material culture and methods of threshing, and the absence among the Mamavolo of *thugula* (dedicated) cattle and of the practice of elongating the *labia minora*, their differences from the Lovedu are equally striking. The total impression of their culture and of their methods of expressing hostility to the European differs so greatly from that of the Lovedu that it is difficult to credit the common ancestry of these two tribes. Yet the evidence of history and of remembered, but no longer practised, custom is decisive.

Moreover, misgivings soon disappear in the light of further historical and comparative investigation. The Shai, immigrants since *c.* 1790 into the lowveld from amid Pedi and Transvaal Ndebele in the south, resemble the Lovedu far more closely than do their kinsmen, the Mamavolo. The

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174 Sekhɔpɔ, splitting off from the Lovedu royal group (*c.* 1800) and subjected to Pedi-highveld-Sotho influences, though only twenty miles from Ʊulovedu, are less like their present-day Lovedu royal relatives than are the Tswale. But the Tswale are foreigners, tracing descent from the Venda royal house of Thɔhɔ-ya-Nḍɔu; they entered the Lovedu sphere of influence (*c.* 1730), and they lost close touch with the main body of the Venda (*c.* 1840). In language and almost all major aspects of culture the Tswale have been Loveduized. They have not adopted the specialized Lovedu royal complex of institutions, but equally they have lost their characteristically Venda elements. Thus, of Venda elements, they have given up the *dɔmbɔ* and *thɔndɔ* 'schools' and the attribution of extensive powers to a high god; even the peculiar Venda disposition of forces and persons in the political organization is little more than a memory; and differences in detail from the Lovedu, such as peeling the skin off a goat's tail before killing it ritually, which is a royal Venda feature, are no greater than the differences found between one district and another in Ʊulovedu itself. These are not isolated instances of divergent cultural evolution in response to divergent environments and contacts. Dozens of examples emerge from an historical and comparative investigation of the Northern Transvaal alone.

121 In the whole of our field investigation, nothing has been more fruitful and stimulating than our visits to twenty-six Northern Transvaal tribes. There can be no doubt that, had there been time to study ten times that number of tribes over a much wider area, the value and suggestiveness of the comparative and historical background would have been correspondingly enhanced, against which the direction, nature, and magnitude of cultural changes might be evaluated. There arise problems of method, even of the legitimacy of making inferences from one tribe to another. We shall not deal with them here except to say that breadth and depth of observation and fertility of interpretation largely depend upon the range of one's knowledge and experience. If inferences from variations within the tribe are legitimate—nay, absolutely necessary—for the most elementary presentation or generalization, by the same reasoning they must be legitimate across the boundaries of tribes. Culture elements, culture patterns, and the major cultural configurations do not stop short upon the borders of districts, nor of tribes, nor even of culture areas.

Comparative study has enabled us to see in actual being the diffusion of culture elements across the boundaries of districts, tribes, and culture areas. The different handling by different cultures of the same cultural material, according to the needs of their environment or the genius or emphases of their patterns, can be observed and its results established without any doubt by comparative investigation. Once it can be determined that the raw cultural material is the same, deductions from variations in forms and functions or in purposes and goals are far from being illegitimate, but illuminate the distinctive trends of the cultures in which they occur. Inferences from incommensurable variations are illegitimate; but the wider the range of comparison and the more intensive the functional investigation, the easier it is to eliminate this error

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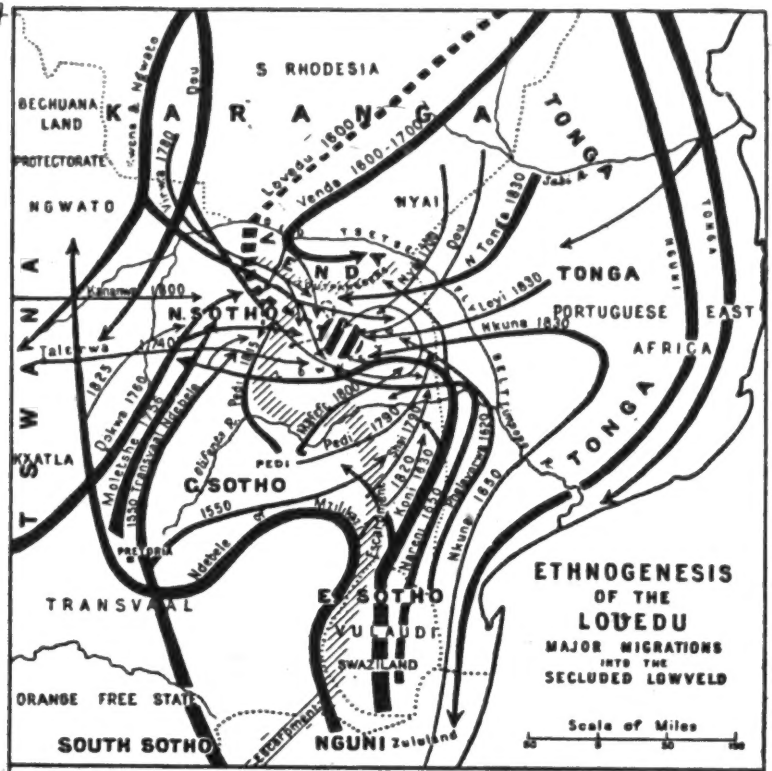
S RHODESIA
BECHUANA LAND
PROTECTORATE
NGWATO
KARANGA
TONGA
NYAI
Venda 1800-1700
Lovedu 1800
Dau
Kwena & Ngwato
Virwa 1780
Tsetsebe
Kwena
N. Tonga 1830
Jabi & Ngwato
Kanyemba 1800
N. SOTHO
TONGA
Leyi 1830
Nkuna 1830
PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA
Talerwa 1740
1825
Dokwa 1760
Molepshe 1835
1850 (removal Kgapane)
Olifants R.
Pedi
Lydenburg
Pedi 1780
Pedi 1800
Pedi 1790
Sekhukhune 1820
Kwena 1820
Kwena 1830
Nkuna 1850
Nkuna Sekhukhune 1850
Lydenburg
Lydenburg
Nkuna
Nkuna
Nkuna

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Oral traditions of the past, it is said, are unreliable and unverifiable. 121
Accounts by informants about the present are also unreliable and often, unless one lives a lifetime in the society, unverifiable. Even the most elementary facts observed do not speak for themselves and have to be interpreted, and the verification of objective facts becomes a complicated process not unlike verification of historical material from such circumstantial evidence as is provided by comparative study. Certainly, in our experience, what was impressive was the substantial agreement among all the tribes upon the main events and migrations, which also provided useful clues to diffusions of culture in the past. The lack of discrimination as regards place and time and the dramatizations and justifications were difficulties which gradually disappeared as the background of comparison was enlarged. Even the discrepancies, seen against the total background, illuminated the local trends and motivations, and proved to be more apparent than real.

Most men of the Lovedu royal group to-day deny their Karanga ancestry, 121
although ten years ago they admitted it. You will tap their memories in 177
vain to discover either the truth or the reason for the change of attitude. But in the light of comparative investigation—for this phenomenon is not unique among the tribes—and of a study of reactions between 1926 and 1936, the change is intelligible. The suspicion that the releasing of land to the Native under the Land Act, in pursuance of a segregation policy, might be a device to dispossess the tribe engendered a profound disturbance to men's sense of security, which could be re-established only by affirming the title of immemorial occupation of Vulovedu. The method of relativistic functionalism ensures, not merely perspective, but also balanced and comprehensive interpretations.

INTERPENETRATION OF THE TRIBES

Lovedu culture as it is to-day is the result of a complicated historical 174
process. For some indication of the genesis of the tribe and of its culture, the reader is referred to the accompanying map; we cannot discuss the evidence in this book.

More than 300 years ago there were tribes sparsely scattered over the whole of the Northern Transvaal. This area lay outside the main migratory currents: Nguni and Tonga coming down on the east, Sotho-Tswana circling the curve of the Limpopo on the west, and Karanga halting between these two to the north of the tsetse-fly belt along the Limpopo. The date of these migrations and their relation to one another is lost in oblivion, but trickles from these currents and backwater eddying from them, particularly from the Sotho-Tswana current, penetrated into the Lovedu lowveld. There were, however, Kwena and Ngwato who descended the escarpment in force only after arrival on the highveld of invaders from the east (Koni, *c.* 1700), the south or south-west (Dokwa, *c.* 1760, and Moletshe, *c.* 1750), and the north (Virwa, *c.* 1780). Some of these Kwena and Ngwato form a chain of peoples, no longer independent, from the north, round the west and to the south of Vulovedu, into the political and cultural structure of which many have been incorporated.

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●174 In pre-Lovedu times there were also the famous *ɖou*, Elephants who are everywhere a dependent substratum, except for a small group, the Masoma, living among the Mahlo or Nareni of Segɔrɔrɔ. This cluster is very old, was interpenetrated with a culture evolved at the junction of Karanga and Sotho streams in the north-west near the home of the Ɓirwa, and scattered sparsely over the whole of the lowveld. Lovedu tradition asserts that the Lovedu, migrating southwards, found them on their way and incorporated them as messengers; and there is no doubt that at various periods many of them, owing to pressure elsewhere, settled in Ɓulovedu. There were other pre-Lovedu peoples in the lowveld, such as the Khiɔga, Dgɔna, Sɔja-Phala, mostly offshoots of mixed Sotho and Karanga, and a few so-called Transvaal Ndebele emanating from the far south.

Despite slight intrusions of Ṭonga, the ethnic and cultural composition of the pre-Lovedu lowveld was predominantly Sotho, considerably influenced, however, by the culture and peoples that had evolved on the borders of the Karanga. This pre-Lovedu culture, or people of Sotho-Tswana-Karanga we shall call the 'Sotho substratum'.

Into this geographically isolated area, penetrated only by small groups of people migrating under pressure, there came (*c.* 1600) the Lovedu royal group, descendants of Mambo, one of the sons of Monomotapa and chief of one of the provinces into which the empire of the Karanga had split up. Lovedu tradition as to the disruption of Monomotapa's kingdom is confirmed by Portuguese writers; it was the disintegration that enabled the Portuguese to extend their settlement inland as far as Sena (1609). There is much other evidence, but the relationship between the Karanga, Lozwi (two names used by the Lovedu in their praise songs), and Monomotapa (which some authorities say is a myth) is lamentably obscure. 'Judging from the customs, history and language', writes E. G. Howman,[1] 'these people [Vakaranga] were the tribe mentioned in all the Portuguese records of three hundred years ago as being the people of Monomotapa, though unfortunately no trace of this name can be found as surviving nowadays.' It is significant that in Lovedu tradition this name is known.

After the advent of the Lovedu, the history of the lowveld becomes more decipherable, for the tribes that rule to-day have more or less detailed traditions of their past which may be interrelated, while the peoples of the Sotho substratum either have no history or it is vague or starts somewhere in Lovedu times. Some of the histories are nothing short of amazing in their comprehensiveness. Muhlava, chief of the Nkuna, for instance, gave us a history covering a century during which the Nkuna were subjects of five different Sotho tribes, and every detail in it, whether of time-sequences or events or movements of people, was corroborated by the accounts given us in these tribes.

It is clear that in their early period the Lovedu for long remained undisturbed in their secluded environment. There were minor infiltrations, for there were movements of peoples on the far-off boundaries of the lowveld; but the first considerable body of people that came within

[1] *South African Journal of Science*, vol. xv, 384.

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striking distance was the Venda. They crossed the Limpopo from the north in many successive waves, culminating in the arrival of the royal Kwindɛ group (*c.* 1700). The histories of Lovedu and Venda do not converge in Rhodesia, but both peoples had early contacts with Karanga, Lozwi, and Nyai and both have traditions of the Mambo. There is also the legend among the Venda of having conquered fireless aborigines with fire. But it is in the post-migratory period, and especially between *c.* 1750 and 1820, that contacts multiplied through trade, migrations, royal marriages, and the Venda practice of seeking their rain, not only from their high god Mwari at Mbvumela in the Rhodesian Matopo Hills, but also from Mujaji, whom they sometimes call 'the wife who brings us water to wash our face'. When the *kwevo* of Tswale and Moila, two Venda tribes, came to settle on the borders of Vulovedu (*c.* 1730) a complex interpenetration started; they were Loveduized, while the Mamaila section of the Lovedu, moving northwards, first became Vendaized, so that thirty or forty years ago the court language was still Venda, and subsequently, owing to historical factors, fell under influences from the south and south-west, and reverted to Khilovedu and Lovedu-like cultural patterns.

The channel of inter-communication between Venda and Lovedu was so wide in *c.* 1780 that Mashau, a Venda chief, came personally to aid Mugɔdɔ to suppress the rebels in Vulovedu; but it gradually narrowed from *c.* 1790 onwards, owing to the intrusion from the south-west and north-west of Ḍɔkwa and Virwa respectively; and it was all but blocked since *c.* 1840 by the Shangana-Ṭonga invasion from the east. This invasion also drove southwards into Vulovedu many Venda refugees, some of whom still speak Venda. Swelling the Venda or Venda-Karanga influences were the Nyai, whose northern manners and dress are still remembered, Virwa, whose history appears to link them with the southern Zimbabwe at Mapungubwe, and the Thɔvɔlɔ. These Thɔvɔlɔ say they are from Vukhalaga, but it is clear that they had migrated southwards long ago and later became Sothoized to the east of Vulovedu, mixing there with the Sotho substratum, especially the ubiquitous *ḍou*. About 1800 they fled before the Mafɛfɛ invasion from the south and, settling in Vulovedu, brought with them the cult of spirit possession

Great as has been the influx and influence of the Venda, it is eclipsed by that of the Laudi, a name under which we include the Phalavorwa, Nareni (both Mahlo and Letswalo), and Koni. All of them, including large sections of the Venda, such as Mphaphuli, Lwamɔndɔ, and Masia, came either from Vulaudi or Phalavorwa, in the south-east, near Swaziland. It is there that large bodies of the two original migrations of Sotho and Nguni from the far north converged upon and merged with one another. All Laudi tradition, even that of the Koni of Maḍala on the highveld, speaks of a settlement in Phalavorwa (*c.* 1620–1720). The Phalavorwa remained in the unfavourable environment between the Olifants and Letaba Rivers, some of them periodically breaking away from it and settling in Vulovedu. The Nareni, having left Phalavorwa, split into the Mahlo and the Letswalo, and the latter, scattering along the foothills of the Drakensberg, penetrated into Vulovedu (*c.* 1750). At one

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time, when Bodile ruled (1825–50), there was close contact between the Letswalo and the Lovedu, the chiefs of the two tribes exchanging rain medicines. The Koni also left Phalaborwa and eventually gave rise in the area we are considering to a great chain of tribes: the Khaha of Maake (*c.* 1730) and of Maupa (*c.* 1800), and the Koni of Maḍala (*c.* 1720) and Dikxale (*c.* 1830). By 1750 the Laudi had completely invested the Lovedu on the east, south, and south-west. Their influx into Vulovedu, the inviolable country of the Rain-Queen, greatly increased as the result of disturbances in the south and south-east, from 1820 to 1870. The turmoil was caused by Moselekatse's spoliation, ravages by fugitive cannibals, Pedi and Mafefe raids, Shangana-Ṭonga invasions, and Swazi depredations. The accretions to the Lovedu enhanced the great influence of the Laudi, predominantly an old Sotho people.

Between 1800 and 1870 many Central Sotho or Pedi scaled the Drakensberg and spread their culture first among the Laudi and through them into Vulovedu. The Mafefe, carriers of this culture, for long ruled several lowveld tribes; and the Shai, from amid a Pedi and Transvaal Ndebele environment, crossed the Olifants River and many settled in Vulovedu (*c.* 1840). But the main Central Sotho infiltrations, coming from the west, were greatly modified in passing through the sieve of highveld Sotho. Among them were the Kwena, already mentioned, and the Ṭalerwa (*c.* 1740), but the Ṭalerwa as well as other scattered bands from the high veld at first represented rather Northern Sotho influences; and only later, after considerable admixture from the west and south Tswana and Central Sotho elements began to predominate. The upper layer of highveld tribes, such as the Ḍokwa and Moletshe, originated from the west and south-west (Tswana). They have been very receptive to Pedi influences, since the Pedi themselves were overlorded by the Kxatla, who were, if not Tswana, close relatives of the Tswana. Thus during the ascendancy of the Pedi under Thulare (1800–24) and the Tevele raids, when many highveld tribes fled to Pediland, Central Sotho culture penetrated deeply into the highveld. It was the Ḍokwa who carried this mixed Sotho culture farthest into the lowveld, but among the Lovedu the intrusion was regarded as a challenge to be resisted, and it has left a heritage of hatred and antagonism, which, though no justification continues to exist for it, is still alive to-day.

Numerically the greatest single invasion of the lowveld was that of the Shangana-Ṭonga. Some few Ṭonga, who came long before the nineteenth century, were assimilated without leaving any perceptible marks on Lovedu culture. During the nineteenth century successive waves of Shangana-Ṭonga fell upon the lowveld: refugees fleeing before Manukuza, leader of the Nguni from Zululand (*c.* 1836–40); groups escaping from the clash between Mawewe and Mzila, rival claimants to the throne after the death of Manukuza (Soshangane) (1856–70); and fugitives seeking safety after Ngungunyane's defeat by the Portuguese (1894). These are the unassimilable Shangana-Ṭonga, originating from all parts of Ṭongaland, and in the country of Mujaji segregating themselves in the valleys, while the Lovedu cling to the hills. They have an exceedingly complicated history, but it is sufficient to note that, though many of them

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have broken away from Lovedu overlordship since the beginning of the twentieth century, Vulovedu has been crowded and its borders surrounded by Shangana-Tonga. 174

It is manifestly impossible to examine in detail the nature and magnitude of the changes in Lovedu culture that may be attributed to the Sotho substratum, Venda, Laudi, Shangana-Tonga, and other tribes. We may, however, as an illustration, cursorily trace the evolution, under these influences, of the Lovedu royal complex of institutions. The germs of this complex come from the ancestors of the royal group. The Portuguese record that only a man without physical imperfections could become chief and that the Mambo handed his daughters to his bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but faithful service. According to Dos Santos,[1] writing in 1601, it was formerly the custom of the kings of Sofala to commit suicide by poisoning when any disaster fell upon them or they were disfigured by a physical defect, and, further, though it was incest outside the royal circle, kings married their own sisters or daughters. Even to-day there is evidence among some Shona of the rite of the door, of women rulers, and of celibate female rain-makers. 174 643 177

This is the nucleus around which the Lovedu have elaborated their royal institutions. Its primary elements did not come in the post-migratory period, for they are, except for the vaguest indications, absent among the Venda, who have always constituted the buffer between Lovedu and Karanga; and their presence among Nareni and Khaha to the south is not a feature of the Laudi or Eastern Sotho, but can be historically traced to the Lovedu. Among the Virwa an attenuated form of this complex may be attributed to Karanga influences. The accretions to and fallings away from the old nucleus were inevitable in the new setting of the Lovedu. The powers of the Karanga high god, who made rain and supported the sacred king, became projected upon the Lovedu queen; a mere vestige is left of the saturnalian licence accompanying the accession of a Karanga chief; and unsuccessful Lovedu claimants to the throne, who generally flee the country after the interregnum, are still referred to as *mambo* (sing. *lembo*). But there is among the Lovedu no sign of the resuscitation of the spirit of the deceased Karanga king in the maggots emerging from the decaying body as it lies sealed in a special hut before burial.

It is curious that among the Mamavolo, after 250 years of subjection to influences of the Sotho substratum and the Western and Central Sotho, this complex has been obliterated, while among the Lovedu it has been elaborated. The varying response is, however, intelligible in the light of their different histories. The Mamavolo, hiving off from the main body, were overwhelmed by the Sotho; even a cursory study shows how they lost their bearings and abandoned their faith in their heritage and, for security, remodelled their institutions upon those of their powerful neighbours. But the Lovedu maintained their dominance in their lowveld environment; they dealt with the challenges of invaders by elaborating the royal pattern so as to absorb them; and they responded to the prevailing belief that, not a priesthood, but the chief himself must

[1] Quoted in Theal, *Records of S.E. Africa*, vii. 191, 194.

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174 mediate for rain by a new conception both of the high god and of the
643 divinity of the queen.
177 The forces refashioning the old nucleus are the result of composite internal reactions to external influences. In Chapter I ('Pageants of the Past') we saw how, in the face of a feeling of insecurity, Khiali tried to safeguard the succession by casting out the heir, and how the innovation set into motion forces that precipitated the change from kings to queens. Simultaneously came the elevation of the queens to veritable rain-gods. The Lovedu rain-making technique is Sotho and constrains the forces of nature by magic; it is a fundamental departure from the Karanga technique, which uses an appeal to the high god through his priests on the mountain, where he manifests himself in clamour and flame. But there is still a faint connexion, for foreigners allege that Mujaji herself originally obtained her power from Levibi, where Mwari appeared in thunder and lightning to a chief of the Ṭavatsinde, a group among the Venda. *Ʊuuga ya uuga bula e a na*, thundering [on the mountain of] Ʊuuga [is followed by] pattering rain, is still the praise-title of the Levibi of Ʊulovedu. The Lovedu, we surmise, have replaced Mwari by Kuzwane, creator-god, divested of his rain-making and celestial powers, and the word 'Mwari' (or 'Mwali') suggests, even to the Lovedu mind, Muhale, the Lovedu chief who is founder of the tribe, the only semi-hero of legend, and is associated with ritual, as, for instance, the Bird of Muhale in the *vyali* initiation, which is also associated with rain.

But if this is conjecture, it is significant that power to effect the great change from kings to queens was sought in father-daughter incest, a pattern enjoined by the Karanga and considered as the source of fertility among the Shona. Not only did the traditional model sanctify the change, but the success of the experiment was guaranteed by the elaboration of values already existing in the society. Indeed, the change is represented merely as a reassertion of an ancient but fictitious cycle of kings and queens. The accession of a woman, in spite of the high position of women, was obviously a difficulty; but the rationalization provided by a supposed cycle satisfied misgivings, and the change lent itself to transforming the danger of foreign encirclement into an instrument for extending the network of political institutions. The complicated exchanges of the queen's wives constitute only an extension of the old pattern of the house of Mambo, who received daughters from his sub-chiefs in return for protection or food or as a result of conquest, and who handed out his daughters to his personal bodyguard.

In the elaboration of the Lovedu royal complex, the model and justification came from their Karanga ancestors, but the vital addition of a new association of the chief with rain, which is neither Karanga nor Venda, was inspired by Sotho culture. But, in the Sotho substratum, rain, agricultural rites, and the drum cult were inextricably merged and, in the context of the Lovedu pattern, they did not all find an equally firm place. We shall touch lightly upon this complex, noting here merely the extraordinary fact that, despite the long-continued pressure of Venda influences, the Venda contribution to the Lovedu royal pattern is to-day hardly perceptible. The reason lies partly in its incongruity with the

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conception of a female ruler who is also a divine rain-maker, but partly also in the obscuring of the borrowed elements by readjustments since the accession of a queen.

For a time the Lovedu kings followed the custom of the solitary dance (*u pondela*) of the Venda. It was under the inspiration of such a dance just before his death that Mugondo (*c.* 1790) made his famous prophecy. Venda chiefs perform this dance either shortly after accession, when it firmly establishes against all claims their divine title to the throne, or towards the end of their reign, when it symbolizes abjuration of earthly things and elevation to godhead. These conceptions are inconsistent with the Lovedu pattern, which prescribes the rite of the door as the title to succession, and safeguards the queen's inscrutability by making her the inaccessible 'huckster in her hut'.

The special Venda disposition of forces and persons in the organization of the royal court has left numerous marks in Lovedu culture and its reception facilitated the transition from kings to queens. The *khadi* (father's sister or the sister), as priestess, is in a favourable position to assume control during the minority of the heir, as is the case to-day among the Sekhopo and in many districts in Ulovedu. There is also the critical instance of the Mamaila, where between 1825 and 1895 sometimes men and sometimes women ascended the throne, and where the interaction of the two patterns may be closely observed. The Venda emphasis on the virginity, for a time, of the chief's wives has had widespread repercussions even as far as the Nareni; and among the Lovedu it has become interlocked with the cogs of the political machinery, so that, while the permanently chaste are rewarded, the unchaste go out as wives of great men to strengthen their loyalty to the royal house. Nowhere else has such an ingenious solution or reinterpretation been evolved, though the differing readjustments among the various tribes show amazing inventiveness and resourcefulness.

The patterns and culture elements of the royal complex among the surrounding tribes, which have found no place in the Lovedu complex, are too numerous to mention; but what is rejected is just as important as what is adopted in the evaluation and interpretation of the forces determining change. Least has been taken from the modern Shangana-Tonga, but there are similarities in detail, though not in pattern, which may be ascribed to a common heritage of the distant past. It is, for instance, only the Tonga in these parts who have to any extent elaborated the idea of placing chiefs' wives as rulers in the provinces, a practice known among the Lovedu kings long before the arrival of the Shangana-Tonga. Among the Shangana-Tonga the accession of a brother to the throne admits of the progressive realization of aspirations fostered by a culture in which at one and the same time the hierarchy of age and the coincidence of maturity with the peak of life as well as display and competition are more emphasized than among the Lovedu. This pattern is quite unacceptable among the Lovedu.

There are many other suggestive contrasts, but what must surprise the observer is the small contribution (apart from the rain-making technique) of the Sotho from the south and west. The distribution of medicated

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174 seeds by the chief, as among the highveld Sotho, is thought to savour
643 of witchcraft, as only witches use medicine to make the crops grow. The
177 Pedi pattern of the 'tribal candle', the chief wife whose first son succeeds and whose bride-price is contributed by the tribe (who thereby obtain a stake in the succession) has penetrated far. It has been partially accepted by the Laudi as well as the Sekhɔpɔ; but the Lovedu have not been influenced. Of absorbing interest and immense interpretative value has been the conflict of Lovedu and Pedi patterns where their incongruity precipitated a crisis among the Nareni and Khaha.

Everywhere in the lowveld the transition from kings to queens caused disturbantes, and the form of justification invariably reflects values in the cultures concerned. Among the Mamaila the change is justified by the sin of the male heir. When the change first occurred, the male heir was ousted because he had cohabited with his father's wives, which is a disqualification by Venda standards. Thereafter males again ruled. When the change occurred a second time, the male heir was driven off because he had broken open the door, which is a sin by Lovedu standards.

Among the Khaha of Maake and the Nareni, both Mahlo and Letswalo, the position is different and may be considered less cursorily, though unfortunately only in very broad outline. The Khaha, greatly disturbed by invasions from the south, sought stability by trying to imitate Mujaji I, the security of whose tribe they attributed to her feminine powers and longevity. In those days (1827) the Mafefe, following the Pedi pattern of royal marriage, politically dominated the Khaha as well as many other tribes. Nevertheless, among the Khaha, Mali, a woman, succeeded as chief against her brother and was 'placed' by Mujaji. She was the first Khaha female ruler, modelled her court upon the Lovedu pattern, and even adopted ritual suicide as a means to power. The whole Lovedu pattern was not incorporated, for the traditional basis was lacking, especially as regards the ascendancy of women, the unquestioned acceptance of the caprices of the door, and the conception of receiving tributary wives and redistributing them. Thus men were not excluded from the throne. Mali herself, having failed to prevent the flight into exile of her people, was succeeded by a male chief; but in 1928 a woman, Mali II (or Maake, as she is sometimes called), was called upon to rule. Mali II was married, was asked to renounce her husband, as queens could have no official husbands, and when she refused she had to abdicate and now reigns merely as regent during the minority of her brother. The task of integrating the Lovedu with the Khaha pattern was never completed: the door is invoked to decide only between rivals with plausible claims, and no adequate solution has been found to harmonize the Pedi and Lovedu patterns of royal marriage. The chief wife even of the queen among the Khaha is the mother's brother's daughter, and it is for her marriage that in theory each district head must contribute cattle 'to seek their mother' (*hu nyagela mma vɔna*).

Among the Mahlo Nareni, sporadically dominated by the Mafefe until as late as 1901, the change came under conditions of European control (1923). The door entrusted the rain charms and chieftainship to Manjana, wife of the deceased chief, Segɔrɔrɔ. But when strife occurred, the

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European intervened, construed the opening of the door as coincidence, and recognized a son of Segɔrɔrɔ's first wife. (Incidentally, the Pedi conception of the 'tribal candle', though accepted for a time, by 1923 was again receding before the old Laudi insistence that the mother's brother's daughter required no additional support to be chief wife.) To-day the tribe is split: Manjana's magic has power to call up the clouds, but the quackery of the recognized chief sweeps up gales which scatter the rain.

Among the Letswalo the change, motivated by a desire for security, aggravated a crisis which continued into the European period and was ended by the drastic intervention of the European. Ramɔdau, son of chief Bodile, defied his father by refusing to espouse his one-eyed cross-cousin, whom Bodile himself then married. But this wife turned out to be a witch who expiated her offence of stealing the rain charms by being mauled to death by a lion. Angered by his son's disobedience and his wife's treachery, Bodile then (*c.* 1850) prophesied the coming of the ants and the accession of a woman; but in the total setting of the drama the son's disobedience is condoned by representing his cross-cousin as a deformed witch and the treachery that threatens the welfare of the tribe is made the occasion for the accession of Magaepia, daughter of Bodile The whole theme is handled less skilfully than among the Lovedu and indicates the existence of many conflicting motives. Before Magaepia succeeded there were wholesale assassinations of successive heirs; Magaepia, having replaced the lost rain charms, became, first, rain-maker to Ramadau and, after his death at the hands of the Swazi invaders, queen, but only of a portion of the tribe. The strife continued, the European intervened, and, when the tribes of the lowveld rose against the encroaching settlers (1894), the Letswalo joined them, but suffered a devastating defeat.

Changes can be traced in all aspects of Lovedu culture, some greater, some smaller than those in their royal institutions. It will take us too far afield to deal with these changes, but a few remarks may be of interest. Almost nothing of the *gomana-ʋyali-ʋuhwera-ʋudiga* complex came with the royal group. Some of it can be attributed to the Sotho substratum: it is the *ɖou* of Ravothata who make the *gomana* drums and close the *ʋyali* with their weirdly costumed dancers, the *magɔgɔbya*; the Kwena likewise claim always to have had the *gomana*; and Lovedu boys are allowed to become initiated at the *gomana* lodges of the *ɖou* of Khaɖa and of the Kwena of Maunadala, who also may accept royal boys to 'cross rapidly' (*hu ɖubunya*), or become initiated in a few days, at his *ʋuhwera*. The *magɔgɔbya* are unique, but are found also among the *ɖou* of Masoma and it is from Tsubye (the country of present-day Shai) that these costumes came over a century ago, having been brought by two men named Maschiss and Dinawe. The evidence may be indefinitely multiplied, but it is more interesting to examine for a moment the different manifestations of the complex over the Northern Transvaal, because what has been emphasized in it or muted or rejected illuminates the character of the incorporating culture.

We have no evidence of the occurrence beyond the Northern Transvaal of the sacred drums, considered as shrines consecrated by human sacrifice

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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174 643 177 and as the focus of a 'school' for revealing the secrets of the whistling ancestors (*zwiḍajani*). Some Venda north of the Limpopo have drums of the *mɔndɔrɔ* (spirits of the chiefs) and *zwiḍajani* (familiars of Mnisi, the rain-god), and there is some evidence of drum ritual among Pedi, Venda, and even Ṭonga; but the elaborated drum cult belongs to the Northern Sotho. It has three characteristic elements: the supreme moments of the agricultural year are signalized by the sounding of the drums and the cult is intimately linked with rain or fertility; these calendric observances, as well as other great national occasions, are, by the interposition of the drums, brought under the surveillance of the tribal gods, represented by men masquerading as spirits who have come to earth; and in a special initiation novices are inducted into the secrets of the cult.

This constellation is most emphasized in three tribal groups: Laudi (especially Phalaborwa), Maḍala, and Xananwa-Ḍɔkwa-Moletshe. Among the Phalaborwa the striking emphasis is upon the link with rain-making, upon the *lesugu* or women's counterpart, and upon the exulting display before the drums which is permitted to those who have military and hunting exploits to their credit. These features become progressively attenuated westwards towards Ṭulovedu. The stress upon display reappears among the Maḍala, though in a different form, for there we find the esoteric *khidinkhi*, which is at once a dramatic dance inspired by the sacred drums glorifying the prowess of the chief and of warriors, and a rain and fertility rite, blessing cattle and crops and safeguarding the people against disease. In drawing into the complex the welfare of the cattle and in the absence of the *lesugu*, the Maḍala pattern differs from that of the Laudi, but approximates that of the Xananwa-Ḍɔkwa-Moletshe. These differences coincide with the emphases of the different cultures. The Laudi have an attenuated cattle-cult, though it is better developed than among the Lovedu; whereas the highveld Sotho, influenced from the west and south-west, have a fuller cattle-cult, though by no means as elaborate as that of the west (Tswana) with its seasonal migratory life, conditioned partly by pastoralism and partly by a desire for security in a difficult environment. Among the Laudi men's and women's initiations are often combined, but on the highveld they are markedly separated, for the *vyali* and *vuhwera* exist as distinct institutions and the Bird, guiding spirit of the *vyali*, is usually absent. In the third area, that of the Xananwa-Ḍɔkwa-Moletshe, the dispositions are in many respects quite distinctive. The drums become the focus of an elaborate fertility cult, rain-making stands outside the complex, and the chief *motif* is not display, but dramatization of obedience to the gods and loyalty to the chief. The supreme moment is when the manhood of the tribe, collected in the cattle kraal, receive the command of the gods communicated, under inspiration of the drums, by the *zwiḍajani*.

There is every possible variation in the patterns among the intervening tribes. In some, such as Tswale, Moila, Dikxale, Mamavolo, and Ṭirwa of Makhatho, the cult is often structurally unintegrated, standing outside the province of the chief and consisting merely of 'schools' managed by outsiders who have their own drums. The cult in these cases is practised merely for revenue purposes; it is a 'business' as the

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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Natives say; the alien drums are pierced and rendered useless at the 174
death, not of the chief, but of their owners; and the *zwidajani* are often 43
visitors from tribes where the cult is better developed. Among the 177
Lovedu the cult has been only partially accepted; the pattern is the pattern of the focal area in the east. The features that have been attenuated or elaborated can be explained in the light of the emphasis of Lovedu culture: there is no display, no stress upon fertility, no linking with the welfare of the cattle, no elaboration in connexion with agricultural ritual, but the *zwidajani* command peace and agreement among men.

Elsewhere in this book we have given slight indications that the Lovedu 177
interlocking *mumyvalo* exchanges and social structure can be traced to Karanga models; that the Lovedu have rejected the pattern of the wedding feast and wedding gifts which comes from the west; that Lovedu legal arrangements are the resultant of composite forces; that the smeller-out and the cult of spirit possession come from the Shangana-Tonga and Thovela. These and many other borrowed culture elements may be followed up with advantage, and indicate the magnitude of culture change. But for our purposes, before proceeding to discuss the nature and effect of the impact of Western culture, a brief reference to Shangana-Tonga influences will suffice. Despite similarities in detail—an attenuated boys' puberty rite, the conception of *makhuma* (ritual defilement), the indirect warning to the witch by *hu cbela*, to mention a few features—and despite the extensive reception by the Lovedu of Shangana-Tonga elements of material culture—fowls, various crops, and methods of storing and threshing and stamping—the striking feature remains the great gulf between the two cultural configurations. They have, for instance, different views as regards sex morality, different marriage patterns, different conceptions of the hierarchy of age and the position of women; they deal differently with the situation of death, with rain-making, display, and regimentation, and, whereas the social groupings are totemic among the Lovedu, they are non-totemic among the Shangana-Tonga.

There are many other divergences, but one difference that calls for comment is the attitude to and reception of European culture. More adaptable, if brazen, than the Lovedu, at least in their new environment, the Shangana-Tonga have, as fugitives under Sotho domination, more complacently submitted themselves to European conquest. Disciplined by the military heritage of the Zulu, they made efficient police and soldiers, especially against their Sotho overlords. Their training in competition, trade, and display enabled them to respond better than the Lovedu to the stimuli of Western culture. Above all, European penetration benefited them, while it dispossessed the Sotho. The history of the contacts and reactions is the history of a century, which is far too complicated for treatment here. But this can be said: the Shangana-Tonga gained land and the right to be ruled by their own chiefs; the Lovedu lost land which was given to their erstwhile subjects; the prestige of Mujaji in the eyes of the white man waned while that of Shangana-Tonga chiefs waxed; and the Shangana-Tonga subservience

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

32. Therefore the praise-song of chief Možaži says: "Možaži—when the sun sets—trader in the hut;[37] I sleep on the road,[38] I am a widow,[39] I have no one who watches me. I am the elephant-knife on the hip in the sheath;[40] she eats meat,[41] the trader in the house." 173 643

33. The second chief was Masala-Navô. She was given this name by the dead (queen), when she was raised to the throne. She governed also like the other chiefs. Her praise-song says: "Mmasala-Navô,[42] speak good (words). When you are speaking bad (words), the tribe will split. It was the chief Khethubudi of Mashonaland who said: "I do not like the people.—Finally I got an ulcer on my back and said: 'People, scratch me."[43]—The hawk, at which they look with fear, they look at me with hearts full of hatred."[44]

34. This queen had milk-cows. They were called "the selected" of the chief-kraal. They were milked by a head-man who had been chosen to milk them. When they were milked, and the carrier of the milk was carrying it to bring it home—when it happened that he met people, they had to kneel down until he had passed. This was a custom to honour the food of the chief. When a person was standing when the milk passed near him, it was a great crime. These cows were not kept in one kraal together with the cattle of the village, but they remained separated. 173 234 643

35. Furthermore chief Mmasala-Navô hated the believers (in Christ). A Christian was not allowed to enter the chief's kraal. When a Christian had a case to be settled in the chief's Court, he had to sit outside the village under a tree; he sent his words through the messenger of the chief. 173 797

36. Chief Khesêthwane who governs to-day, and who is also called Možaži, is the third female chief. She produces rainfall. She allows the Christians to enter the official meeting-place and her village. She is fond of education. A church has been built near the meeting-place of 175 797

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[37] It is not necessary that she goes round to "sell" the rain. People are coming to her to buy in her hut.

[38] Like a prostitute (?)—she was not married but is said to have had many lovers.

[39] Because she had no husband.

[40] Praise of her blood-thirstiness.

[41] She killed her chief counsellor always after a short service.

[42] "She who remains with them."

[43] That chief thought that he was able to live without needing other people, until he became ill and was unable to help himself. Then he was obliged to call for assistance.

[44] Praise of the cruelty of the Queen.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

the royal kraal. The children of the chief's kraal are attending school at her command. 175 791

37. Chief Khesêthwane does not allow that a person enters her kraal with shoes on his feet. When somebody approaches the main entrance, he must take off the shoes and leave them outside the main-entrance that he may be allowed to enter the meeting-place. 643 576

The beginning of the government of female chiefs in Loveduland

1. The last male chief is Mogôdô. He had two sons : Malegudu and Kheêbe. These young men quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father when he was still alive. Now they had a sister who was called Možaži. So the chieftainship was given her that she might be the ruler of the tribe. The brothers were driven away. 173 643

2. When a person is made chief in Loveduland, he must be given the fire-stick and the water-calabash. Now they gave the sister the fire-stick and the calabash that she might bring it to Malegudu, the elder brother. But it is said that they had been strengthened by magic charms which make a person mad who looks at them with his eyes. He will behave like a mad person, he will leave his home, go away and move to another country and dwell there. 643 789

3. They say when Malegudu had looked at the fire-stick and the calabash, he left the land of his father, went to Vendaland and died there. Kheêbe the younger son who had quarrelled with him about the chieftainship was treated in the same way as the elder one. He left the country went to Thôvôlô[45] and died there. 173 643

4. So the chieftainship was given the daughter of Mogôdô namely Možaži I. She had a daughter called Masala-Navô. She followed her mother in the chieftainship.

5. Masala-Navô had no child until her old age. But she had a younger sister. She had two children. The first child was a boy, the second one a girl. The girl-child called Khesêthwane was chosen to be chief. She is Možaži who governs still to-day.

[45] In Portuguese-East-Africa.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

CHAPTER I

PAGEANTS OF THE PAST

Fame of Mujaji transformer of the clouds—the cycle of the kings—the cycle of the queens—from the pageants to the people.

FAME OF MUJAJI, TRANSFORMER OF THE CLOUDS

THE Lovedu are not numerous and, from a military point of view, they are insignificant. Yet among their neighbours and among tribes as far away as the Zulu they have a great reputation. The fame of their queen, Mujaji, is spoken of even by white men as if it were the fame of the monarch of a mighty empire. That is doubly curious. For, on the one hand, the nineteenth century in the southern sub-continent of Africa opens with the Napoleonic career of Chaka, king of the Zulu, whose exploits, followed by great displacements of peoples and spectacular reconstructions of tribes, overshadow everything else. On the other hand, the Lovedu, at the end of the century, ignominously surrendered to the European without a shot being fired.

Upon what basis has Mujaji, queen of an obscure tribe in the far north-eastern corner of the Transvaal, built her fame? By 1800 the kingdom of the Lovedu had already existed for two centuries in the seclusion of the sheltering foothills of the Drakensberg. It was undistinguished among its far mightier neighbours, the Venda, the Pedi, and even the Ḍokwa. A mere glance at the map shows their insignificance beside the overwhelming masses of Shangana-Ṭonga, now almost completely encircling them. They were too microscopic even to be seen on the stage of the sub-continent, when mighty empires succumbed and new nations were born. Nevertheless, it was amid these convulsions, even as a challenge to them, that the kingdom of the Mujajis arose to prominence. The Lovedu kings had always been sacred kings; they had a reputation for rain-making, but it was no unique reputation, shared as it was by several of their neighbours. Among the Lilliputian tribes who had penetrated the geographical barriers isolating the Lovedu lowveld—the tsetse-fly belt east and north along the enveloping curve of the Limpopo, the Drakensberg on the south and the escarpment on the west—the Lovedu could claim precedence and ascendancy. But if the Zulu legions or any one of the pillaging hordes which their ravages had set into motion had violated the sanctuary of Ḋulovedu, little would have survived of the Mujajis.

To the Zulu, so we are told by Bryant, their historian, Mujaji was the greatest magician of the north. Queen of locusts and of drought, a four-breasted marvel, her name struck terror in the hearts of would-be enemies, and her fame surpassed that even of Mantatisi, the ferocious female tyrant who was leading the Kololo (Tlokwa) and laid the foundations of the Rotse empire. Mujaji also it was who magically smote to death dread Zwide, fleeing from Chaka, when he came too near Ḋulovedu, even though it was appeasement, not conquest, that he sought. According to

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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Bryant, Mujaji was conceived to be immortal, inaccessible, mysterious. That is a fair reflection of the opinion held both by her neighbours and by peoples living far from her domain. Even to her own people she was practically inaccessible, appearing but seldom before them; but she was not immortal, and her mystery, if what is natural and inevitable be mysterious, was the mystic power of transforming the clouds into rain. To this central conception the name Ʊulovedu (or Lovedu) bears witness. It is interpreted to mean the country where the cattle and the wealth, even the sisters and the daughters, of foreign chiefs are utterly lost (*hu lova*); they are the offerings for rain which, by accruing to Mujaji, 'waste' the substance of the suppliants. That is the simple secret, out of which the colourful phantasy of the mystery of Mujaji has been elaborated. But it is more than a simple matter. The ancestors of Mujaji also were rain-makers; but they were kings, not queens. If it was the feminine attributes of the ruler which made Mujaji famous among her neighbours, it was, however, the fairness of her skin which captured the imagination of the early European pioneers.

There was enough in the environment itself to lend colour to the picture. The mist-covered mountains are an appropriate setting for the mysterious Mujaji, 'Transformer of the Clouds' (*Khifidula-maru-a-Ḍaja*), for such is her great praise. You can watch from afar how those vapour-laden clouds roll over the hills, constrained, as it were, to pour out their life-giving rain. You can easily imagine the 'huckster in her hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) where it nestles, secreted in the bush, on the edge of a precipice, and from which she sells her rain-making magic. It is well known that there are others who claim the power to constrain the heavens, and it is curious that the greatest among them are or have been women; but by comparison with Mujaji they are mere amateurs, even dabblers and quacks, trespassing upon her prerogative. They can raise storms and send hurricanes, but they do not have the power to withhold rain from the undeserving or to drop it gently upon the deserving with mathematical precision.

If these things appealed to the Native mind, the European was not unimpressed by the babbling of the streams mingling with the sounding of the drums, by the forest-clad ravines that are sanctuaries of ancestral spirits, and by the grotesque kopjes standing out as sentinels guarding the seclusion of savage men. The gateway to Ʊulovedu is the Valley of the Devils (Duivelskloof), a name which reflects the reaction of the pioneers to what was regarded as uncanny. But it was particularly the observances and ceremonial requiring the seclusion of the queen, thereby shielding her from the public eye, restraining her movements and preserving unsullied the secrets of her power, which fired the imagination. No European had seen the predecessor of the present queen; and the fairness of her complexion easily became the subject of rumour and phantasy.

That Mujaji II, who died in 1894, was fair cannot be disputed. Fairness is a feature of many Lovedu; it is a highly prized quality. There are tales among Europeans of the adventures of a Portuguese Don Juan in the bad old days; and undoubtedly, by Lovedu legend, a Portuguese trader visited the royal court. But if he had designs upon the queen, as

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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is alleged, they were frustrated by the beer which was pressed upon him and rendered him powerless. We cannot attribute the sagacity of the queens, as did Rider Haggard, in his story of *She-who-must-be-obeyed*, to her pure Arabian ancestry. There may be Arab blood in her veins, as there probably is in the veins of all her people; certainly it was not by virtue of any foreign blood that 'She' ruled the tribe, and there is nothing that suggests that the Lovedu owe their organization of culture to an alien conqueror. They are among the politically weakly organized rather than highly centralized Bantu. Haggard's book, which appeared in 1886, correctly emphasizes the high status of women, the pride in female ancestry, the inaccessibility of the queen; and it is upon her immortality that the plot turns. There are also mysterious caves, but people never lived in them.

A more recent picture of the Rain-Queen, based upon local rumour, has been given by Dicke in his *The Bush Speaks* (1936). There she is represented as a crafty woman of mixed white extraction who came with her people from West Africa, and with diabolic cunning induced among her people the belief that she was endowed with the supernatural power that created the clouds so often resting upon her mountains. The rain-priestess soon acquired fame, which she used to found a great kingdom, without, however, relying upon force of arms. To account more adequately for her Machiavellian intrigues, he supposes that her female ancestors were white women, sold to the Arabs on the slave markets of West Africa, who enchanted their masters with their sexual attractions; hence the device of ruling her councillors by remaining unmarried; hence also the many girls, wives of the queen, whose duty was to captivate foreign chiefs, to spy, 'to induce their new masters to attend the festivities, dances, beer drinks, orgies, licentious debaucheries continuously held at the rain-priestess' capital'. Thus we get from Dicke's book a picture of intrigue and debauchery at the capital, supported by assassinations and poisonings, of a kingdom 'built up on immorality, deceit and crime, with no effective striking force to support it'. Her councillors preferred to be ruled by a woman, so that sons of the queen always died before reaching maturity.

There is much else that may be gleaned from local gossip. People are incredulous if one says that one has seen the queen. They remember how Mujaji II deceived Joubert, the Boer general, who, after subjugating the tribe in 1894, was shown, not the true Mujaji, but some one who impersonated her. Forgetting the signal service of the missionary, the Rev. F. Reuter, who intervened on her behalf, they attribute to the cunning of the queen her acquittal of complicity in the rebellion which brought Joubert upon the scene and which led to the defeat and wholesale transportation of several tribes in the lowveld. The diplomacy of the queen had overcome the white man. These are the beliefs that have contributed to the fame of the Lovedu. Whatever basis in reality there may be for them, there is one thing we must note. Mujaji lives no more than twenty-one miles from Duivelskloof. There are flourishing European farms, particularly all along the west and south of her country. Yet the Lovedu have maintained intact their culture and their institutions,

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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175 643 even the royal constellation of institutions, curious and incongruous with modern conditions though they might be.

000 And it is to a brief history of the royal institutions, as providing the key to an understanding of the Lovedu, that we shall now proceed. But let us say this: truth is ever stranger than fiction, yet it is also more complex and elusive. The truth that obtains in a strange world, made up of beliefs and values very different from our own, is not easy to recapture; there is no basis, no framework, in our lives for it. We are continuously confounded by inconsistencies and paradoxes, try as we would to turn our conceptions and theories this way and that and even upside down to fit the facts into them. What we shall try to do is to give a visual representation of a few historical events, by way of a series of pageants passing in review. A complete account of the background of the past is far beyond our purpose. It will be sufficient to represent the spirit of these events, leaving for another occasion the question of how far they have a true basis in fact.

173 The pageants are not arranged into groups by the tribal historian, but we may present them as if they were colossal cycles, the cycle of the kings and the cycle of the queens. Each cycle opens in mystery, the mystery of an incestuous conception that, instead of corrupting the world, crowns the sinner; it is the ritual vindication of revolutionary change. In the first cycle, which starts just before 1600 and ends two centuries later, the change signalizes the birth of the tribe; then follow wanderings and the settlement of an infant community, which slowly develops to the splendid stature of manhood; and, finally, corruption and dissensions lead to a downfall. But in the midst of the ruins of the catastrophic civil war, which ends the first cycle, a new conception is born and we are at the beginning of the second cycle. The first cycle is handled with simple power; but no single doctrine in it runs its full course. Yet it cannot be mere coincidence that the mystery which marks the birth of the tribe should also be invoked to account for the momentous change from kings to queens.

The cycle of the queens has not yet been completed; it began about 1800 and rapidly ran to the height of its splendour; and its crisis, prematurely brought to a head, has also been indefinitely lengthened by the intervention of a new order of things, ushered in by the advent of the European. We cannot predict when the crisis will end or what the outcome of so prolonged a suspense will be, for the response to the challenge of this new order is now only taking shape and direction. But of this we can be certain, that in a world ordained by the white man there is less room for the vast sweep of the legendary mysteries. The tribal historian is unequal to the task of harmonizing the play of new, intractable forces with the theme of his exalted design.

The history of Lovedu kings and queens is not unlike the legends of the saints. The tribal historian is, of course, not troubled by a sacred theme, by the eternal struggle between Good and Evil; but he must justify historical events, he must bring them into relation with the grand purposes of the tribe. He never consciously tampers with essential facts; he uncritically accepts tradition that has been handed down to him.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and *mahoru* ants, for even blackjacks are scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when European vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, specially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. Those, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes.

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of three different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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241 (*Phaseolus aureus*). Several varieties of sugar-cane (sweet sorghums) are planted on the boundaries of fields or between the other crops.

Njugo beans are ancient groundnuts which require a good deal of attention by way of mounding, restrictive taboos and careful pulling up, although they are very welcome as a change of diet. In this respect they [177] resemble peanuts, which were popularized by the Shangana-Ṭonga not so long ago. These nuts sometimes answer well where other crops have failed; in certain years they may flourish while the cereals wither in the sun. Then you may hear people say, but it is only by way of joking among the Lovedu, that the Shangana-Ṭonga witches have called the cereals to undergo circumcision (*hu cba*). Some people in the valleys are half-inclined to believe the claims that the Shangana-Ṭonga make for their witches, because it is undoubtedly uncanny that, when the nuts succeed the cereals fail, and vice versa. But usually the claim is ascribed to the desire of these outcast people to assert their importance—the Lovedu know nothing of inferiority complexes, but they are shrewd judges of human nature.

Sesamum used to be popular in the valleys and is said to be an old crop of the Roka. But peanuts have ousted this wholesome, albeit very troublesome, crop. You will be told that the reason lies in the growing laziness of people; this is a reason given for the neglect of many other old crops, but in truth we have here merely a shift in the application of the available resources. A delightful commentary on some of the values of the society, though we must warn the reader not to judge them from our standpoint, is the name *lenɔnya-ɓadimo*, 'sesamum of the gods'. It is [182] a wild variety, unsuitable for human consumption, but good enough for the gods. It is not given to the gods, yet it reminds one of the sprouted eleusine merely mixed with water that is offered to the gods with the words, 'This is not water. Truly it is beer.'

261 There are other crops and the variety furnishes a well-balanced diet. But that is not considered to be the virtue of variety. A food is good if it fills. That is why they prefer their hard cakes of porridge to our watery oatmeal. They are inured to that feeling of fullness since the day of their birth, when Grandmother rammed porridge down their throats. But there is comfortable fullness and uncomfortable fullness—that after a good porridge meal and that after eating too much *njugo* bean. The stomach is not insensible to certain distinctions, though they are not our distinctions. Filling is not the only virtue of a food. Some foods relieve the monotony of the round of porridge and blackjacks, and some are [146] tasty dishes or rare delicacies. But no one thinks of the virtues of a balanced diet, for nutritive and protective qualities of foods are not recognized. The old diet, simple though it might be from our point of view, was sufficiently varied to maintain people in good health; but it is not realized that, precisely because it was so simple, even a small change might eliminate essential ingredients. That change has not yet come among the Lovedu, but it is near at hand. Subsidiary crops are becoming less popular. You still see cowpeas, *mung* beans, water melons, even *laroe*, sweet potatoes, and native beans. Yet, on the whole, what is most impressive is the growing reliance upon cereals and pumpkins, and the

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legitimate, for men rely upon their labours and place their faith in the rain, the making of which is the prerogative of the queen. 241 178

Failure of one's crops is attributed, not to witchcraft, but in a bad year to the heat of the sun and in normal seasons to indolence or bad soil. In the last resort, however, when every one suffers equally, or when there is a major drought, the calamity is regarded as a punishment by the gods, who 'hold the arms of the queen', or by the queen herself, who is displeased in her heart. Diseases and pests are not magical visitations. Though called 'the witch of the mealies' because it saps their strength, witchweed (*Wormskioldia longipedunculata*) is neither sent by witches nor combated by supernatural means. Destructive insects and parasites, such as stalkborers, weevils, and caterpillars, are regarded, not as being 'sent', but as perfectly natural results of untimely planting or unseasonal rain. Birds, monkeys, rats, and mice are, generally speaking, combated by the practical means at the disposal of man, such as trapping or scaring. Numerous other precautions are taken: one does not plant millet unless one's neighbours do likewise, because when there are many fields, all, not merely one, will be at the mercy of predatory birds; people favour bird-proof corns, though they are harder to thresh; late-maturing crops, whatever their productivity, are discarded in favour of those ripening early, because they cannot be reaped before the cattle start their unrestricted grazing; and a much-favoured peanut, which is also easy to reap, is liable to sprout unless special precautions are taken. In short, the problems of agriculture are tackled in a practical manner. 241 [731]

This does not mean that a practical demonstration of the superiority of new methods will always have the desired effect. Agricultural demonstrators have made very little impression. It is often thought that this is due to the improvidence, lack of ambition, and innate conservatism of the 'savage'. A farmer will tell you that, after years of experience on his farm, his Native labourers go home to practise their primitive, wasteful methods. The trouble is not savage incapacity, but the incongruity of our ways, our technology, and our ideals with theirs. The demonstrator is like a teacher speaking a foreign language and working with material and concepts which do not exist in the society. He often is wholly ignorant of the background of belief. His education makes him unduly scornful of savage superstitions, instead of using them to advantage. In agriculture, among the Lovedu, there is one practice we might call superstition. It is *hu upa*, a method of safeguarding crops with medicine against the depredations of birds and monkeys. It is quite harmless, absorbs little of the time or energy of the few children who scatter the medicine, and does not preclude the use of other, more empirical methods. There is no need to waste eloquence upon eradicating a practice which strengthens the interest of the children in agriculture, causes no slackening in their scaring activities from the platforms erected in the fields, and, in the last resort, is an effective psychological device; for it equalizes the struggle of man against nature and maintains at the requisite intensity the confidence which enables him to strive hopefully against his difficulties. 241 177 [789]

Practical knowledge is undoubtedly the weapon with which demonstrators should combat progressive degeneration in agriculture; but it is

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241 not practical knowledge applied from our point of view; it must be from
● 177 their point of view. Instruction must be articulated with their practices and techniques; it must take into account their arrangements and their rhythm of life. The knowledge imparted must be applicable to their conditions and be linked with the instruments at their disposal. For the dietician to extol the virtues of a new crop, for the doctor to show that bacteria more readily enter where resistance is lowered by deficiencies in food, even for the agricultural demonstrator using his superior implements to demonstrate the practicability of the crop—all this is very nearly fruitless. These things will have their value when they can be fitted into the Native's world of thought and technology. In the meanwhile, the execution of our plans, sound though they be in theory, is merely causing irritation and resistance.

241 All the old Lovedu cultivation was on the hills or along their slopes and,
476 generally speaking, close relatives, not necessarily relatives through
178 males, had all or some of their fields in large blocks (*demo*). Unlike the Tswana custom, these blocks stood in no relation to the social organization; the land was not pointed out by the chief and its size was not predetermined, but depended upon the energy of the individual cultivators. The *demo* was a matter of convenience and utility: the concentration facilitated co-operation in clearing the fields, economized the labour necessary for protecting the gardens, and made mutual assistance in hoeing and weeding much easier. No doubt the arrangements also mobilized incentives and added to the joys of life. There is to-day nothing left of these blocks. The old ones have inevitably fallen into the hands of more and more scattered people and no new ones can be created because large blocks of land are no longer available. The tendency towards dispersal and fragmentation was still further emphasized when Shangana-Ṭonga cultivation proved the fertility of the valleys. To-day a man must take land where he can find it, and though the Lovedu still live on the hills, they have their lands scattered all over the country. Indeed, since it is easier to plough on level ground, the hills are liable to be neglected, though wisdom dictates that it is best to have fields in two different environments. The result is that a man's fields are widely separated, sometimes being as far as ten miles apart.

241 The old division of labour in agriculture between the sexes was not
462 uneven; both men and women hoed, weeded, and reaped. Only men cleared the forest, but against that only women cultivated certain crops, such as groundnuts. The old pattern is still more or less maintained, at least in principle. But cultivation by the plough has changed matters. Men look upon hoeing as the work of women, although the old ideal so much survives that they despise the Shangana-Ṭonga because their menfolk neither hoed nor weeded in the past. To-day hoeing and weeding among the Lovedu fall largely upon the women, and ploughing almost exclusively upon the men. This is not a fair division of labour; it might be fairer if the other activities of men, such as hunting and public life, had not become greatly attenuated. For the women are always busy, and their work is more monotonous than that of the men, who, despite the labour migration to the towns, have much more leisure than women.

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with an emotion which, though wholly unlike our humanitarian attitude, finds expression in exaggerated praises. These can be understood only in relation to their immense importance in the social organization.

Lovedu cattle are a blend, it is said, of four different strains: the large, humped Lovedu with backward-curving horns, the small, sturdy long-horned Rhodesian, the small Swazi with incurving horns, and the recent rather nondescript European breeds. In the present environment the mixture has led to inferior scrub cattle, resistent to tick-borne diseases and hardened by the stony hills. There are more cattle to-day than formerly and the distribution is far more equal, but no one believes that dipping has contributed to this result; on the contrary, dipping is regarded as a device to keep down their numbers, to subject the Native to irritating interference, behind which there are sinister motives. Recent attempts by the Administration to improve the breed by introducing thoroughbred Afrikander bulls failed because of these suspicions; the bulls were neglected and no camp was provided for them, and eventually they had to be removed. Cattle of individual owners are listed on so-called cattle lists, which primarily serve as a check upon the efficiency of the dipping; but the lists do not reflect real ownership, for they contain the cattle in a man's kraal, most of which may be merely in his care (*hu fisa*). These lists have considerably altered the incidents of the *hu fisa* contract and other aspects of Native life: they are often illegitimately used as evidence of ownership; orders of Native courts involving payments of cattle are sometimes nullified by the refusal of the owner of the list to authorize the transfer of cattle from his list to that of another; dipping and grazing fees imposed in some parts induce men, on the one hand, to distribute their cattle among different owners so as to keep down the number on any single list and, on the other, to make a charge, unauthorized by custom, for caring for the cattle of others. In short, European intervention has produced as serious changes in pastoral as in agricultural activities. Yet fundamentally the changes have left untouched the real significance and role of cattle in the society.

Cattle are not subject to as many taboos as elsewhere in Southern Africa. Women do not usually herd cattle, but the reason given is that not long ago the dangers from raids and wild animals necessitated herding by armed men; it was regarded as a purely practical measure. Girls or women may herd when the boys are in the circumcision school, and sometimes to-day young girls who have no brothers are seen looking after the cattle. What women may do or may not do varies almost from one kraal to another. Sometimes women of any age may go into the kraals; sometimes the doctor has protected the kraal in such a way that certain classes of women (not necessarily young women) are excluded. There is a fairly uniform fear that the blood of women or a woman who has had an abortion might cause the cattle harm. But the measures to combat these dangers vary very considerably. Kraals are doctored rather than cattle; and they are protected against various dangers, one of them being the danger of women. But elaborate magical practices, elsewhere associated with increasing the fertility of the cattle or safeguarding them

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231 against misfortune and disease, are not necessary when a new kraal is
784 built or when the medicated pegs are hammered around the fence as a
789 protection against witches. Some confine their doctoring to the kraals; others, in addition, give the cattle medicine. Bulls are never magically rendered more virile, nor are cows made more attractive by such means. There are to-day hardly any special cattle doctors, and very few cattle diseases are known or subjected to treatment. This is not the result of the breakdown of the cattle cult; it is evidence of the weakness of the cult among the Lovedu. If one were to detail all the magical practices that are to be found, the volume of which would be doubly formidable owing to their diversity, an overwhelming impression might be given; but in true perspective, regarding them against the total background they are almost too insignificant to be noticed.

231 Far more important from every point of view is the adjustment that
232 Natives are making to modern conditions. On this point we can offer
● 177 merely a few very general suggestions. Foremost is the problem of better co-operation between the Natives and the Administration. The objections to dipping are a symptom of misunderstanding one another's point of view. The Natives regard the restrictions as a punitive and arbitrary imposition. It is useless merely to urge that, by destroying the ticks that cause cattle diseases, dipping promotes both the increase and the welfare of the cattle. No one believes what is regarded as demonstrably false. Any one can see that cattle often die when they come back from the dip; that the rate of calving has decreased, that there are now no milch cows, that stock have degenerated, and so on. These evils are attributed to dipping, not to the hard driving to the dip, poor grazing, and inadequate care. What is more, it is believed that Europeans do not dip and that tribes that are sufficiently cunning escape the dipping regulations. Not a few advance the theory that dipping is a punishment for attachment to and preservation of old customs—surely an ironical comment upon the execution of a policy that aims at segregation and development on the lines of racial genius. The psychological aspects of these problems are no less important than their other aspects; and they are far more difficult and require delicate handling. It is easy to envisage the immediate effects, for instance, of limitation of stock, such as the starvation that will result from insufficient cultivation and the overburdening of the women with agricultural work; but when it is realized that the cattle are barely sufficient to maintain the *munywalo* exchanges upon which the social organization rests, one cannot venture to predict what the ultimate effect of limitation will be.

231 Goats are the animals *par excellence* of ritual and religious importance.
431 They also feature prominently in exchanges which promote social interrelations, such as marriage exchanges and the goodwill gifts between relatives-in-law. Second only to beer in re-establishing relations that have become strained, they are used very largely in the procedure of reconciliation, of righting wrongs by begging pardon, and in the payment of judgement debts. When a distinguished guest visits you, you honour him by killing a goat for him; when you bring beer to your *nafuhulu*, the people to whom the daughters of your lineage are married, or even to a

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are not at all anxious that their children should be taught craftsmanship in the mission schools.

In contrast to our customs, education never ends. As the physiological capacities vary, so new activities are undertaken. The culture always provides a place for the aptitudes of every stage of life, and neither men nor women become redundant in their old age, unless, indeed, they are utterly decrepit. With their physical decline, the culture provides new avenues and interests, to which they are continuously adjusting themselves. They suffer no sense of frustration, because their adjustments are dynamic. With us old age may be tragic: among women, the menopause may precipitate a crisis; among men, retiring from work often causes loss of interest in life and mental decay. But old Lovedu men and women always have something more to learn and to do. Women are not perturbed about external signs of age and complacently accept the end of their childbearing years, for these years bring increased influence, a fuller life, and greater rewards. If physical disability excludes old men from active political life, they receive ample compensation in reduced responsibilities and added prestige. There is no sense of impotence that upsets their balance. Instead, the changing sphere of their roles and their interests both keeps them stable and makes them precious to the society. The distress of old age among us is seldom seen, for rewards always stimulate the new adjustments that have to be made. Utter decrepitude is, however, a tragedy, fortunately ended by the neglect that we may regard as pitiless, but which realistically eliminates those who cannot attain even the mediocre level of achievement that the society calls for. He who cannot attain this level cannot make simple adjustments. But he who can still use his faculties in his old age may become a doctor of note, or a recognized authority on tribal legends or history. Finally, the psychological effect of beliefs attaching to the very old is to provide them with new incentives and renewed opportunities. The widespread suspicion that they have personal contacts with the world of darkness enhances their power, while their elevation, in anticipation, to godhead, for they are already so near death that they may be referred to as gods (*nodimo*), invests their dignity and their wishes with a supernatural halo.

Beside this all-pervasive system of tribal education, the modern school, with its three R's, is as yet of small importance. It reaches, and only in an attenuated form, no more than 3 to 5 per cent. of the children. Its methods are foreign, divorced from life; its teachers are immature, handicapped by inadequate equipment and by being uprooted from the soil of tribal culture. Yet the modern school is the force of the future. Education is passionately desired by the young, and the old would welcome it if they did not feel that it was subversive. There is no compulsion upon a scholar to become a Christian; but the belief persists that education and Christianity are inseparable. It is a belief that raises an awkward dilemma: must the school, which at the same time is the gateway to Christianity, give up its task of breaking down, or can it compromise with superstition? Can it work from within, integrated into the culture, without defeating its purpose? The answer cannot be given here. The task of the school and the Church is no less prodigious and delicate than

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the difficulties of the young boy or girl are great and the conflicts within him irreconcilable. He is ragged by other scholars unless he also attends church; he is discouraged from playing with his friends, the pagans who do not attend school; he is deprived of the joys of dancing and drumming. The *khobo* and play-housekeeping are taboo to him. Tensions and maladjustments arise: Christian girls disgrace themselves and outrage Christian sentiment by having more illegitimate children than pagans; people laugh when they see Christian men attending beer-drinks and scornfully remark upon the bad manners of pretentious school-children. 881 797 177

The school, nevertheless, has made a notable contribution. Its teachings have some immediate life-adjustment value. Reading and writing, a training for a profession, a knowledge of English or Afrikaans are valuable aids in the economic struggle. But more important in the modern world is the long-run adjustment value of the outlook engendered in the schools. In the culture-contact situation, with the scales weighted in favour of a capacity to accommodate oneself to European thought and methods, the training of the school prepares the way to some measure of co-operation with agricultural demonstrators, European health officers, and those who are concerned with the reclamation of the reserves. The idea of progress takes root and, though it is a perverted idea, it provides new incentives and counteracts the sense of frustration before the march of an overwhelming force, the force of Western culture. 871 177

Unfortunately, the gains are counterbalanced by the losses. It may be that the losses are temporary, because, on the one hand, they are losses from the point of view of the old culture and, on the other, in a period of transition there must inevitably be tensions and conflicts. Men are guided by vast systems of values and sentiments, built up laboriously by centuries of tradition; these cannot be replaced by a new set of standards inculcated by a single institution, such as the modern school, especially when that institution uses ineffective techniques and is external to the main trends of the culture. Some of the losses are not inevitable: it is not the school as such which disables educated young men from accepting manual labour and housework. It might even be possible to avoid the loss of that valuable body of veldlore which the herdboys learn during the years of herding. Boys and girls need the three R's; they need to understand and trust the ways of the white man; but they also need the knowledge and the standards that make life worth while in the society of which they are part. It is the task of the school to take account, not of one, but of all these needs.

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643 Sofala had formerly to take poison when disaster or a natural defect fell
171 upon them. Among the Lovedu, tradition decrees that the queen shall have no physical defect and must poison herself, not when she is old, but at the end of the fourth initiation (*vudiga*) of her reign. The emergence of physical imperfections and the holding of the fourth *vudiga* cannot both determine the date of suicide. In fact, no reign has been cut short because of bodily defects, though the conception of the relation survives. The queen is believed to be immune from disease and it is thought that her first will be her last illness; it is even said that Mujaji III's elder uterine brother was excluded from the throne because of his weak ankles. At the same time, not kings, but queens are wanted, there are no tests of physical fitness as are recorded for tribes in the north, and in the legends
[173] of the Lovedu and of tribes which, following the Lovedu, have ritual suicide, physical defects do not figure as a theme. In this complex, heirs to the throne have been disqualified or chiefs have been deposed because of inability to make rain, disobedience to their sovereign, or adultery with his wives. Among the Mamaila, a branch of the Lovedu, one chief is said to have become a cripple because he forced open the door which magically yields to the touch of the true heir, and the Nemesis that overtook him is attributed to his sin, not to his defect. Impotence disqualifies in the north, but Mujaji II was barren and, in the pattern as adopted in some tribes, such as the Khaha of Maake, barrenness of the queen is expected; for, as the queen may have no official husband, it is a virtue to have no children. That conception is not accepted by the Lovedu, for Mujaji II's barrenness was a source of sadness and strife and every effort was made to cure her. Physical fitness is an aspect of the perfection and divinity of the queen, but it has no practical relation to the right of succession.

643 The relation between the length of a reign and the initiations is far
778 more obscure. In many tribes where ritual suicide is enjoined (Thavina,
171 Khaha, Ubirwa), the number of 'schools' is said to be seven. The 'schools' are there held more frequently, and possibly there is some connexion
177 with the number of sacred drums (*digoma*), for the Khaha have seven and the Lovedu four. The chief's life, as we have seen, is intimately bound up with the drums; both drums and 'schools' are great *dogoma*, objects or activities in which power is concentrated. Power is also concentrated in *dithugula*, a category of objects chiefly associated with the gods. The distinction is not that between magic and religion; the *digoma* and *dithugula* appear to belong to different cultural complexes. The one was characterized, we may suppose, by 'schools', drums, and cults linked up with national calendric observances, dramatization of the crises in life, and the sanctity and power of the chief; the other, by sacred beads, shrines, reincarnation of ancestors in dedicated animals, and ritual suicide of the chief. In the process of merging, the great *digoma* were, we suggest, grafted on to the royal institutions and brought into relation with the life as well as the death of the chief. This is little more than speculation, for it is difficult to isolate the oldest cultural substrata and their distinctive patterns.

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly,

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and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mufugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mufugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khorz* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mufugo* (*hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite.

Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khɔba*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*vudiga*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*washe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *vyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu swa*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mufugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mufugo* is used before the accession of a new queen.

Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, i.e. firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mufugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital.

Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *gɔma* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*diphoba*) in which the products of the sea are the most powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mufugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler.

Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly resserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be suspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite.

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695 because it involves too great publicity and danger of European interven-
683 tion, though they say, perhaps by way of rationalization, that the doctor
754 of the ordeal could manipulate the test. As this procedure is merely of theoretical interest, we need refer only to its salient features.

The victim or his relative privately consulted a bone-throwing doctor, whose verdict he had confirmed by perhaps two or more other doctors before he or an intermediary on his behalf made a public accusation. The ordeal or test took place at the capital and was public. Lineal relatives of accuser and accused or, according to some, two strong men chosen by them, were given an intoxicating drink by the official 'doctor of the ordeal', the spectators watching to ensure that equal quantities were administered. Those who had drunk were put in the sun and he who began moving about or became dizzy, drunken, or incoherent was in the wrong. The witch was usually executed at once, at the orders of the queen, being strangled at the river; but if she was a woman, one of the executioners first had sexual intercourse with her; and the body, tied to a weight, was sunk into the water to be eaten by animals. But the witch was sometimes delivered to the victim to undo his evil work (*hu mu ɔulla*), and if the illness left the victim the witch was released. Sometimes, also, suspected witches were beaten, tied up (nowadays, as we have seen, handcuffed and submitted to ridicule and abuse), and left without food or tortured with velvet stinging-beans until they confessed; this was sometimes done privately, and it was possible also to kill them without the public ordeal, the killing being reported to the queen; but usually they were merely banished.

683 The property of a witch who was killed was not all confiscated, but
754 *baza*, consisting chiefly of his cattle, was taken by the queen for division between herself and her nobles. No one else could appropriate *baza*; even the village head, if he did so, was regarded as a thief. The witch's gardens reverted to the district head, the crops were taken, not by the queen, because she could not eat the 'dirt of the witch', but by the messengers of the queen, for they were so busy in her service that they could hardly cultivate their fields. Residents in the district surreptitiously during the night took the witch's crops, but it was regarded as disgraceful to do so openly during the day. The wife of a witch was taken by a classificatory brother, and his children were adopted by the queen, who received *munyɔalo* when she married the girls to her nobles (in more recent times, to commoners, because the girls often deserted). In the days of the kings, all the relatives, or, as some say, only those on the mother's side—the mother's uterine brothers and sisters especially—were killed. The queens had only a uterine brother or sister killed if they failed to leave the country. The witch, unlike a murderer, could not find sanctuary in the forest of Ɗaja; and only a witch's, not a murderer's, property was *baza*—confiscable property.

787 Since the beginning of this century submission of issues to ordeal has
695 been replaced by their submission to the smelling-out diviner (*mugɔme*). The institution of the *mugɔme* has been borrowed from the Shangana-
[177] Tonga and its whole complicated legal procedure is still in a state of flux, adjustments being constantly made especially to avoid European intervention.

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

304 Scarification, except in the mutual inoculation and blood mixing of
757 husband and wife prior to their first sexual intercourse after marriage and after the death or miscarriage of a child, is a treatment that is directed less at the evils of blood than towards a strengthening of the body or part of the body by the insertion of medicine. It is used in curing headache, for
[752] sprains and broken limbs, and for all 'strengthenings', such as that prior to taking a child out of the hut for the first time or the 'fixing' of one's body against witches. For general strengthenings, incisions are made on all the joints and on other parts of the body, such as head and neck depression, which are considered important. Scarification is, with the drinking of medicine or eating of powders, quite the most common form of medical treatment; it is used in the home as much as by diviners and forms part of many other treatments, such as the vapour bath. By far the most
751 interesting form of scarification is, however, '*hu thœmela*' (vaccination) against smallpox in which matter from the pustules of affected persons, mixed with other medicines, is inoculated to introduce the disease in a mild form. It is done on the dorsal side of the wrist or on the forehead, a pattern which supports the claim that it was known prior to the advent of the European; moreover, the ingredients of the serum used by Euro-
[77] peans are not known. Possibly the treatment was borrowed from Arabs, who were the first to study smallpox and measles. The old method was
[164] still widely practised in the 1938 smallpox epidemic, for, though it was realized that it 'called' the disease instead of curing it, people noted that, despite European vaccination, there was still much illness.

757 Steaming and the vapour bath also form part of the practical elements in Lovedu medicine. There are various forms of steaming and smoking, all of which go by the same term. To 'loosen' a cough, chips of a certain
[783] root may be placed in a pipe with a live coal and smoked; to purify a person after a death, chips are charred on a potsherd and the smoke
[844] inhaled through a reed; before being taken out of the hut, a new-born child is held naked in the smoke of burning chips or root and bark; boils and other swellings are brought to a head by the application of the steam of boiling roots. To cure fever or general weakness of the body after an illness and for purification of husband and wife after the death of a child the procedure is more complicated. Red-hot stones are put into a large pot of medicated water and when it bubbles and boils the patient, naked except for a cloth passed between the legs, is covered with a blanket and steamed. After much spluttering and shouting, he is taken out, sprinkled or washed down with cold water and then either scarified on the joints or subjected to *hu hata*—that is, a river stone is pressed on the joints and is later taken back to the river. This treatment is considered too drastic

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immediate and usually not consciously phrased, yet in the total complex 771
of the culture all things are interconnected, albeit in ways that are not easy to see clearly. The gods help good and bad men alike, they send illness whether one is careful or neglectful of the observances due to them, and the after-life is the same for all. But we should be careful not to deduce too much from this. The position of a sister and her privileges are sanctioned by the gods, as is also the respect due to old people. In general the gods are not upholders of custom, yet on one occasion in 1937 two *zwidajani* cried all day in the bush at Maulwi because some women had broken the taboo against cutting wood there. The chief concern of the gods appears to be to look after their own interests. They complain when they dislike the manner of their burial, but they are undisturbed when twins are not buried in wet soil, even though this has a disastrous effect on the whole country. If they were disturbed about custom in general, instead of things directly affecting them, they would complain of many disturbing changes in these days of culture contact; instead, one only finds that possessing spirits dislike European things and that at offerings European utensils are generally not used.

Another outstanding characteristic is the almost entire absence of any speculative element. The Lovedu are not concerned with such things as the life hereafter and the mode of life of the gods; theirs is essentially a practical religion in which rites are of far greater importance than attitude of mind, action than belief. Its rites are directed to practical ends, such as recovery from illness and the procuring of rain. In vain does one inquire into the meaning or reason of a rite, for the reply always is, 'The bones tell us to do these things,' and the practical end is phrased as determined by the bones. There are considerable differences from one family to another in the conduct of religious rites and the nature of shrines and, since religion is primarily a family concern, few people know what their neighbours do. Not uncommonly one finds a practice said to be impossible by some people accepted as normal by their neighbours.

Lovedu religion is not distinct from magic. The very terminology of 771
the two is identical: *thugula* is a shrine, dedicated animal, or a sacred 789
object once in the possession of the ancestors, but it is also any charm of bone or herbs concocted by a doctor. *Diphaba* are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget, as well as to ward off witches from the village. *Hu rerelela* means both to pray and to utter a spell. *Hu phasa* is used both to approach the gods and with medicines when sending back disease to a witch; one may also *phasa* on the charms in the village gate on the arrival of beer in order that more may come to the village. In a sacrifice for rain, the magical rites are of as great importance as the purely religious; and *hu phasa* in case of illness is thought to have a compelling force. It cannot fail; if it does, there must be some other cause, for an ancestor can never refuse to be placated by the *phasa* rite.

The merging of religion with magic and medicine is everywhere 771
evident, but nowhere is it more prominent than in the cult of possession. 794
This cult is not indigenous; it came with the Thovolo and, since its first 177
reception some thirty years ago, has gained considerable popularity.

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771 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-
794 Tonga and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion.
177 Among Shangana-Tonga, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult
753 is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body' and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolatela was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthwasa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature.
[828] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwasha in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), or *munɛbɛbɛbɛ* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit
755 wishing to manifest itself, a *lelɔpɔ* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known in the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the
794 spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.

755 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to
535 enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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181 every step in a man's life. The infant is saturated with medicine:
753 he is made to grow by means of medicine, he is steamed and strengthened, and every upset of the stomach, every sign of disorder, every major change in his life is treated as if it were a grave danger. The child is often inoculated against the 'poisoned shaft', the 'last, fatal arrow' that a malicious enemy might 'hurl' at him. Medicines by anticipation protect those who after their initiation ceremony might be weakened (*hu khuma*) when they resume contact with the world. Even adults in perfect health periodically consult their doctors to discover whether, unknown to them, some one is not planning an attack upon them.

To a European nothing is more amazing than the number of medicines that are tried, rejected, and changed when a man is or supposes that he is ill, unless indeed it is the contradiction that is implied in their preoccupation with their ailments as contrasted with their care-free attitude to life. The Lovedu are always telling of their illnesses, yet they seem to worry as little about them as the Englishman about the weather, although he can hardly converse without complaining about it. It must, therefore, not be imagined that life is weighed down by this interest in ailments; the Lovedu are seldom really depressed. They do not feel at the mercy of a capricious power, for their safety is ultimately in strong hands. They can use medicine to combat witchcraft and, though death is inevitable, their faith in the superiority of the good forces that they can invoke to control evil remains unshaken; for death is only the occasional triumph of evil, which time and again throughout life is defeated by the power of medicine. The outlook which supports security presupposes an ordered universe in which witchcraft is not merely outlawed, but can be overcome by employing well-recognized techniques.

829 In the face of the danger of the European, the position is entirely
●177 different. The white man is conceived to be part of a world which is antagonistic and incomprehensible; its forces are both disruptive, striking at the very significance of life, and capricious, not amenable to control by any known magical techniques. The projection of the danger upon the supernatural is but one aspect of a far wider conflict between European and Native, conqueror and conquered, perpetuated by divergent outlooks and different cultural configurations.

The conflict is an exceedingly complicated one. There is, firstly, the threat to the security of the Lovedu tribe, a threat that strikes particularly at the position of the queen and at the effectiveness of social mechanisms, causing criminals to multiply, encouraging disrespect for parents and for elders, and weakening the force of the reciprocities. Secondly, in the wider contact of Europeans and Natives attitudes have become vitiated by the antipathies that develop between the group of fellow men and the aliens outside it. The loyalties and trust between those within the group become transformed into hatred and suspicion towards those outside it; in the one case the human capacity for self-sacrifice, in the other case the capacity for selfishness, comes into play. Where the whole value system of the one group clashes with that of the other, antipathies are intensified. Moreover, the differences between the groups coincide with pronounced biological distinctions, such as

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colour, and with intense economic competition leading to poor-whiteism, and, as a result, an all-comprehensive theory of innate racial differences becomes a necessary philosophy to the European, while, to the Native, treachery and cunning towards the European become the ethical ideal and anything that he can get away with is thought to be legitimate.

These extremes are not always found, but even where a situation, such as that between farmer and labourer, is not vitiated by a sense of insecurity or the traditional antipathies, it may still give rise to misunderstandings. This is so because the Native is not trained in or conditioned to the European standards of concentration, industry, devotion to a single end, precision, and attention to detail, nor to the European conception of responsiveness to conscience. Many forms of Lovedu self-expression ill fit the contact situation, and often their behaviour is resented as the insolence of an inferior. Europeans may escape the feeling that they are treating the Native inhumanly by devising a theory of racial inferiority; the Natives, often accepting the reality, ascribe their status and misfortunes to the evil motives and systematic persecution of the European. It will not be possible to elaborate this theme, but a few of its aspects may be touched upon.

The vulnerability of the powers of the queen to European interference is one of the reasons for the all-pervading attitude of secrecy towards white men. There is a certain amount of untruthfulness and evasion towards fellow tribesmen: children are warned never to divulge the happenings in their homes or the possessions of their parents. But, as regards the European, deliberate lying is a positive virtue, for the inscrutability of the queen's powers is the essence of their preservation and of men's faith in them and in the queen, and secrecy is the only effective weapon against the European. Since disclosures to Europeans, even of the most commonplace activities or customs, might have unforeseen consequences, threatening the society, secrecy and its concomitants, hypocrisy and duplicity, have become ends in themselves. In our experience, despite our efforts to help people (which they often shamelessly exploited) and to justify the value to the tribe of our work (which made us only more distrusted), threats were often made against those who were our close associates and suspicion rested even on those whom we casually visited, unless, indeed, they could give an assurance that they had deceived us. At last, after incorporating ourselves as *khadi* (father's sister), foster father, and co-wife in various families, we became accepted, made some close friends, and overcame some of the suspicion. But, generally speaking, the good man is he who can circumvent the European and, conversely sometimes, the comprehensible European is he who has cheated the Native. In this context, it is not surprising that the European has an unflattering opinion of the Lovedu. And it is also intelligible that, to an essentially generous and easy-going people and in informal situations, the burden of secrecy imposes too great a strain and from time to time breaks down under cover of privileged confidences and the relaxation of drunkenness, or upon a sudden compulsive frankness. But in formal situations, such as in European courts, the Lovedu rely upon falsehood, and they believe that any lie is good enough to deceive a European.

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Legal relations with Europeans have been tragically misrepresented, for the procedures and sanctions of the European legal drama are not very intelligible. The villains of the piece are the solicitors, who, in their eyes, plot to put an end to reciprocal obligations, and safeguard criminals. These villains appear to be the main actors on the stage, and their victims, baffled by the awesomeness and incomprehensibility of the situation, see the solicitors in the role of conspirators laying schemes behind the scenes, where corruption arbitrarily decides the fate of the victims, or of impostors displaying deceitfully purchased loquacity before the footlights. They see the victim at the mercy of forces that inspire a dread not unlike the dread of being assailed by witchcraft, with this difference—that against witchcraft the sense of security can be regained by invoking magic, while nothing will avail against the awful incomprehensibility of European justice.

The purpose of the whole drama is inscrutable. Should the dock prove to be a trap to the innocent victim, all he can do is to resign himself to the inevitable. Should the offender be acquitted or inadequately punished, he becomes the luckless victim of a new tragedy; his enemies in the society by *hu nidzela* magically render him subject to an obsessive compulsion to relapse into crime, so that he may once more re-enact his part as victim in the court and so eventually expiate his original offence. Not only recidivism, but also imbecility, may be the result, for the victim 'will remain laughing at the passing flies'. *Hu nidzela* is some kind of answer to the feeling of insecurity before European law, but it is a very inadequate answer: it is not much invoked, it cannot prevent the multiplication of criminals and the growing aggressiveness of witches who escape the clutches of European justice, and it tries to reinstate confidence by relying upon a recidivism which undermines security. To the European, the Native offender is a difficult problem. He will not confide his defence and he wastes time with rambling statements; policemen regard him as insolent and as having gangster proclivities; and the only way to deal with him, it is thought, is by repressive regulations, pick-up vans, and punitive raids.

In the wide expanse of the employment situation there are other difficulties. The sanctions of the reciprocities of Lovedu society are lacking, and the appeal to these sentiments that the European values has little effect, except when the mutualities, the give and take, of Native society can be simulated and the group antipathy or negative identification can be converted into a measure of sympathy or positive identification. Historical factors, proximity, and many other considerations cause the degree of vicarious identification of the hostility with situations and localities to vary, and likewise the difficulties of overcoming the hostility vary. In a locality where, with the best intentions, farmers have ejected Lovedu squatters from their ancestral lands in order to re-employ them as wage-earners, the hostility is fierce and cannot be overcome in the first generation, whatever means are adopted. Of the Government, which they think is always deceiving them, they say, 'Sire of I-come-I-come, the child is already born and has begun to walk', to denote how readily promises are made to come and help, but how dilatory the fulfilment

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is; and as the result there is a profound distrust which vitiates relations. In 829
the situation of a European-owned mission station, both because of the 177
threat attributed to an iconoclastic creed and of the supposed capitalistic exploitation, the services and sacrifices of a missionary are liable to be rewarded with ingratitude and suspicion.

But however favourable the conditions, the difficulties must not be underestimated. It is the sensitive ego that is easily controlled; if a man cannot ordinarily be moved by an appeal to a sense of honour, conscience, or cupidity, moral pressure cannot easily be brought to bear upon him. Not only is the Lovedu ego not vulnerable, but the resort to kindness and the appeal to high motives are liable to be construed as cunning and an attempt to overreach. 'An ingratiating person', such as a European who comes with pleasant words, the Lovedu say, 'lacks not ulterior motive; if he lacks it, he is doomed' (for in any case he will be suspected). No wonder that the European so often believes that firmness and coercion are the only means of controlling the Native.

The different views held by the Lovedu and the European with regard to 177
certainty and precision lead to many conflicts. The lack of Lovedu insistence upon these traits gives an appearance of irresponsibility and disregard of obligations against the background of European society; and the white man readily believes that Natives are innately like children and always need supervision. As employers, masters, and administrators, Europeans have, in the setting of a competitive, calculating society, no alternative but to stress punctuality and precise regulation; but they are wrong in supposing that the essence of every society must be its regulative aspect and that anarchy must follow if irregularities and disregard of rigid procedures are allowed. The meticulous fulfilment of obligations, upon which the Western commercial structure depends, is not necessary in the timeless Lovedu culture, with its reliance upon long-run reciprocities. The Lovedu would easily understand the parable in which the [181]
people who worked for an hour in the vineyard in the cool of the evening received as much reward as those who had toiled there all day long in the hot sun, for they have little patience with the dull, mechanical systems that measure merit, work, and time by a highly graduated yardstick. In the hierarchy of Lovedu interests and necessities, time and punctual fulfilment of promises are secondary; but this does not mean that in the setting of the culture people are irresponsible and unreliable.

The beer-drinking of Natives is the bugbear of the European em- 177
ployer; it is a real problem to the farmer. Even in the Reserve its social 273
function is gradually giving way to its pathological one. There are many reasons for the change: the greater abundance of grain, the increasing monotony of life, the sense of frustration, and the recognition in the society that relief and excess may be displayed in states of exhilaration. Farmers legitimately complain of the demoralizing effect of beer. Beer can never be used in its full cultural context on the farms, and its prior claims to time and interest can never be harmonized with the requirements of labour service. The problem that is raised is apparently insoluble, for total prohibition of beer leads to the surreptitious drinking of injurious, rapidly maturing concoctions, to a sense of grievance on the part

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177 of the Native, to his increased hostility to greater police activities,
273 to evasions of and disrespect towards the law, and to irritation and loss of time by the farmer in prosecuting offenders. In the contact situation, the food becomes a drug and the vehicle of social intercommunication becomes the means of dipsomaniacal escape.

177 Similarly, it would be possible to show the inevitability of other attitudes of European and Lovedu to one another; but here as elsewhere in this book we must frankly admit that volumes will have to be written before the situation has been fully described. The opinions of the Lovedu held by Europeans are, however, not based upon unrealities. It is true that the Lovedu in the contact situation are liable to be indolent, irresponsible, unreliable, ungrateful, untruthful and irrational. Traders have reason to be exasperated by conduct and by the operation of motives which run counter to all their reasonable expectations. The farmer does not, without reasons which are very real to him, call them 'creatures' or regard them as drunkards who, incapacitated week-end after week-end, justify their existence by work in the intervals between bacchanalian feasts. Those who labour to elevate the 'barbarian', to give him the blessings of a new culture or religion, or to promote his material advancement do in fact find their sacrifices rewarded with ingratitude and advantage taken of their labour of love. These Europeans, as well as the Native, are the victims, sometimes of their personal prejudices, but more often of the whole background of the contact situation. Yet the Lovedu proverb, 'A person is a person; it is a stump that has no ears', encourages the hope that with skilful handling and sympathy the situation may be made to yield to reason.

000 The anthropologist, who ascribes the practical man's views solely to prejudice and ignorance and, worse still, to inaccurate observation, not only uselessly antagonizes those in closest contact with the Native, thus rendering a disservice to better relations and co-operation, but also brings discredit upon his field methods and science and condemns them to ineptitude and distrust. Judgements upon motives and attitudes are always liable to grave error, for valuations are subjective and the personality of the observer is as important as the behaviour he observes: two men, one frustrated and the other successful, may come to very different conclusions, though they observe the same behaviour. We must beware lest practical men, familiar with the Native, ascribe our judgements to our preconceptions, especially to a facile toleration of traits to which not we, the observers from without, but they, the employers and administrators, have themselves to adjust realistically. 'Wisdom', say the Lovedu, 'comes from the scar' [of experience]; and it is the practical man, not the anthropologist, who has suffered the wound. There is great need for co-operation and for resolving differences by open discussion, for, to quote another Lovedu saying, 'Quarrels have no hiding place'—that is to say, if people desire amicably to compose their differences.

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Oral traditions of the past, it is said, are unreliable and unverifiable. 121
Accounts by informants about the present are also unreliable and often, unless one lives a lifetime in the society, unverifiable. Even the most elementary facts observed do not speak for themselves and have to be interpreted, and the verification of objective facts becomes a complicated process not unlike verification of historical material from such circumstantial evidence as is provided by comparative study. Certainly, in our experience, what was impressive was the substantial agreement among all the tribes upon the main events and migrations, which also provided useful clues to diffusions of culture in the past. The lack of discrimination as regards place and time and the dramatizations and justifications were difficulties which gradually disappeared as the background of comparison was enlarged. Even the discrepancies, seen against the total background, illuminated the local trends and motivations, and proved to be more apparent than real.

Most men of the Lovedu royal group to-day deny their Karanga ancestry, 121
although ten years ago they admitted it. You will tap their memories in 177
vain to discover either the truth or the reason for the change of attitude. But in the light of comparative investigation—for this phenomenon is not unique among the tribes—and of a study of reactions between 1926 and 1936, the change is intelligible. The suspicion that the releasing of land to the Native under the Land Act, in pursuance of a segregation policy, might be a device to dispossess the tribe engendered a profound disturbance to men's sense of security, which could be re-established only by affirming the title of immemorial occupation of Vulovedu. The method of relativistic functionalism ensures, not merely perspective, but also balanced and comprehensive interpretations.

INTERPENETRATION OF THE TRIBES

Lovedu culture as it is to-day is the result of a complicated historical 174
process. For some indication of the genesis of the tribe and of its culture, the reader is referred to the accompanying map; we cannot discuss the evidence in this book.

More than 300 years ago there were tribes sparsely scattered over the whole of the Northern Transvaal. This area lay outside the main migratory currents: Nguni and Tonga coming down on the east, Sotho-Tswana circling the curve of the Limpopo on the west, and Karanga halting between these two to the north of the tsetse-fly belt along the Limpopo. The date of these migrations and their relation to one another is lost in oblivion, but trickles from these currents and backwater eddying from them, particularly from the Sotho-Tswana current, penetrated into the Lovedu lowveld. There were, however, Kwena and Ngwato who descended the escarpment in force only after arrival on the highveld of invaders from the east (Koni, *c.* 1700), the south or south-west (Dokwa, *c.* 1760, and Moletshe, *c.* 1750), and the north (Virwa, *c.* 1780). Some of these Kwena and Ngwato form a chain of peoples, no longer independent, from the north, round the west and to the south of Vulovedu, into the political and cultural structure of which many have been incorporated.

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have broken away from Lovedu overlordship since the beginning of the twentieth century, Vulovedu has been crowded and its borders surrounded by Shangana-Tonga.

It is manifestly impossible to examine in detail the nature and magnitude of the changes in Lovedu culture that may be attributed to the Sotho substratum, Venda, Laudi, Shangana-Tonga, and other tribes. We may, however, as an illustration, cursorily trace the evolution, under these influences, of the Lovedu royal complex of institutions. The germs of this complex come from the ancestors of the royal group. The Portuguese record that only a man without physical imperfections could become chief and that the Mambo handed his daughters to his bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but *faithful service*. According to Dos Santos,[1] writing in 1601, it was formerly the custom of the kings of Sofala to commit suicide by poisoning when any disaster fell upon them or they were disfigured by a physical defect, and, further, though it was incest outside the royal circle, kings married their own sisters or daughters. Even to-day there is evidence among some Shona of the rite of the door, of women rulers, and of celibate female rain-makers.

This is the nucleus around which the Lovedu have elaborated their royal institutions. Its primary elements did not come in the post-migratory period, for they are, except for the vaguest indications, absent among the Venda, who have always constituted the buffer between Lovedu and Karanga; and their presence among Nareni and Khaha to the south is not a feature of the Laudi or Eastern Sotho, but can be historically traced to the Lovedu. Among the Virwa an attenuated form of this complex may be attributed to Karanga influences. The accretions to and fallings away from the old nucleus were inevitable in the new setting of the Lovedu. The powers of the Karanga high god, who made rain and supported the sacred king, became projected upon the Lovedu queen; a mere vestige is left of the saturnalian licence accompanying the accession of a Karanga chief; and unsuccessful Lovedu claimants to the throne, who generally flee the country after the interregnum, are still referred to as *mambo* (sing. *lembo*). But there is among the Lovedu no sign of the resuscitation of the spirit of the deceased Karanga king in the maggots emerging from the decaying body as it lies sealed in a special hut before burial.

It is curious that among the Mamavolo, after 250 years of subjection to influences of the Sotho substratum and the Western and Central Sotho, this complex has been obliterated, while among the Lovedu it has been elaborated. The varying response is, however, intelligible in the light of their different histories. The Mamavolo, hiving off from the main body, were overwhelmed by the Sotho; even a cursory study shows how they lost their bearings and abandoned their faith in their heritage and, for security, remodelled their institutions upon those of their powerful neighbours. But the Lovedu maintained their dominance in their lowveld environment; they dealt with the challenges of invaders by elaborating the royal pattern so as to absorb them; and they responded to the prevailing belief that, not a priesthood, but the chief himself must

[1] Quoted in Theal, *Records of S.E. Africa*, vii. 191, 194.

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mediate for rain by a new conception both of the high god and of the divinity of the queen.

The forces refashioning the old nucleus are the result of composite internal reactions to external influences. In Chapter I ('Pageants of the Past') we saw how, in the face of a feeling of insecurity, Khiali tried to safeguard the succession by casting out the heir, and how the innovation set into motion forces that precipitated the change from kings to queens. Simultaneously came the elevation of the queens to veritable rain-gods. The Lovedu rain-making technique is Sotho and constrains the forces of nature by magic; it is a fundamental departure from the Karanga technique, which uses an appeal to the high god through his priests on the mountain, where he manifests himself in clamour and flame. But there is still a faint connexion, for foreigners allege that Mujaji *herself* originally obtained her power from Levibi, where Mwari appeared in thunder and lightning to a chief of the Ṭavatsinde, a group among the Venda. *Vuuga ya uuga bula e a na*, thundering [on the mountain of] Vuuga [is followed by] pattering rain, is still the praise-title of the Levibi of Vulovedu. The Lovedu, we surmise, have replaced Mwari by Kuzwane, creator-god, divested of his rain-making and celestial powers, and the word 'Mwari' (or 'Mwali') suggests, even to the Lovedu mind, Muhale, the Lovedu chief who is founder of the tribe, the only semi-hero of legend, and is associated with ritual, as, for instance, the Bird of Muhale in the *vyali* initiation, which is also associated with rain.

But if this is conjecture, it is significant that power to effect the great change from kings to queens was sought in father-daughter incest, a pattern enjoined by the Karanga and considered as the source of fertility among the Shona. Not only did the traditional model sanctify the change, but the success of the experiment was guaranteed by the elaboration of values already existing in the society. Indeed, the change is represented merely as a reassertion of an ancient but fictitious cycle of kings and queens. The accession of a woman, in spite of the high position of women, was obviously a difficulty; but the rationalization provided by a supposed cycle satisfied misgivings, and the change lent itself to transforming the danger of foreign encirclement into an instrument for extending the network of political institutions. The complicated exchanges of the queen's wives constitute only an extension of the old pattern of the house of Mambo, who received daughters from his sub-chiefs in return for protection or food or as a result of conquest, and who handed out his daughters to his personal bodyguard.

In the elaboration of the Lovedu royal complex, the model and justification came from their Karanga ancestors, but the vital addition of a new association of the chief with rain, which is neither Karanga nor Venda, was inspired by Sotho culture. But, in the Sotho substratum, rain, agricultural rites, and the drum cult were inextricably merged and, in the context of the Lovedu pattern, they did not all find an equally firm place. We shall touch lightly upon this complex, noting here merely the extraordinary fact that, despite the long-continued pressure of Venda influences, the Venda contribution to the Lovedu royal pattern is to-day hardly perceptible. The reason lies partly in its incongruity with the

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conception of a female ruler who is also a divine rain-maker, but partly also in the obscuring of the borrowed elements by readjustments since the accession of a queen. 174 643 177

For a time the Lovedu kings followed the custom of the solitary dance (*u pombola*) of the Venda. It was under the inspiration of such a dance just before his death that Mugodo (*c.* 1790) made his famous prophecy. Venda chiefs perform this dance either shortly after accession, when it firmly establishes against all claims their divine title to the throne, or towards the end of their reign, when it symbolizes abjuration of earthly things and elevation to godhead. These conceptions are inconsistent with the Lovedu pattern, which prescribes the rite of the door as the title to succession, and safeguards the *queen's inscrutability by making* her the inaccessible 'huckster in her hut'.

The special Venda disposition of forces and persons in the organization of the royal court has left numerous marks in Lovedu culture and its reception facilitated the transition from kings to queens. The *khadi* (father's sister or the sister), as priestess, is in a favourable position to assume control during the minority of the heir, as is the case to-day among the Sekhopo and in many districts in Ŭulovedu. There is also the critical instance of the Mamaila, where between 1825 and 1895 sometimes men and sometimes women ascended the throne, and where the interaction of the two patterns may be closely observed. The Venda emphasis on the virginity, for a time, of the chief's wives has had widespread repercussions even as far as the Nareni; and among the Lovedu it has become interlocked with the cogs of the political machinery, so that, while the permanently chaste are rewarded, the unchaste go out as wives of great men to strengthen their loyalty to the royal house. Nowhere else has such an ingenious solution or reinterpretation been evolved, though the differing readjustments among the various tribes show amazing inventiveness and resourcefulness.

The patterns and culture elements of the royal complex among the surrounding tribes, which have found no place in the Lovedu complex, are too numerous to mention; but what is rejected is just as important as what is adopted in the evaluation and interpretation of the forces determining change. Least has been taken from the modern Shangana-Tonga, but there are similarities in detail, though not in pattern, which may be ascribed to a common heritage of the distant past. It is, for instance, only the Tonga in these parts who have to any extent elaborated the idea of placing chiefs' wives as rulers in the provinces, a practice known among the Lovedu kings long before the arrival of the Shangana-Tonga. Among the Shangana-Tonga the accession of a brother to the throne admits of the progressive realization of aspirations fostered by a culture in which at one and the same time the hierarchy of age and the coincidence of maturity with the peak of life as well as display and competition are more emphasized than among the Lovedu. This pattern is quite unacceptable among the Lovedu.

There are many other suggestive contrasts, but what must surprise the observer is the small contribution (apart from the rain-making technique) of the Sotho from the south and west. The distribution of medicated

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174 seeds by the chief, as among the highveld Sotho, is thought to savour
643 of witchcraft, as only witches use medicine to make the crops grow. The
177 Pedi pattern of the 'tribal candle', the chief wife whose first son succeeds and whose bride-price is contributed by the tribe (who thereby obtain a stake in the succession) has penetrated far. It has been partially accepted by the Laudi as well as the Sekhɔpɔ; but the Lovedu have not been influenced. Of absorbing interest and immense interpretative value has been the conflict of Lovedu and Pedi patterns where their incongruity precipitated a crisis among the Nareni and Khaha.

Everywhere in the lowveld the transition from kings to queens caused disturbances, and the form of justification invariably reflects values in the cultures concerned. Among the Mamaila the change is justified by the sin of the male heir. When the change first occurred, the male heir was ousted because he had cohabited with his father's wives, which is a disqualification by Venda standards. Thereafter males again ruled. When the change occurred a second time, the male heir was driven off because he had broken open the door, which is a sin by Lovedu standards.

Among the Khaha of Maake and the Nareni, both Mahlo and Letswalo, the position is different and may be considered less cursorily, though unfortunately only in very broad outline. The Khaha, greatly disturbed by invasions from the south, sought stability by trying to imitate Mujaji I, the security of whose tribe they attributed to her feminine powers and longevity. In those days (1827) the Mafefe, following the Pedi pattern of royal marriage, politically dominated the Khaha as well as many other tribes. Nevertheless, among the Khaha, Mali, a woman, succeeded as chief against her brothers and was 'placed' by Mujaji. She was the first Khaha female ruler, modelled her court upon the Lovedu pattern, and even adopted ritual suicide as a means to power. The whole Lovedu pattern was not incorporated, for the traditional basis was lacking, especially as regards the ascendancy of women, the unquestioned acceptance of the caprices of the door, and the conception of receiving tributary wives and redistributing them. Thus men were not excluded from the throne. Mali herself, having failed to prevent the flight into exile of her people, was succeeded by a male chief; but in 1928 a woman, Mali II (or Maake, as she is sometimes called), was called upon to rule. Mali II was married, was asked to renounce her husband, as queens could have no official husbands, and when she refused she had to abdicate and now reigns merely as regent during the minority of her brother. The task of integrating the Lovedu with the Khaha pattern was never completed: the door is invoked to decide only between rivals with plausible claims, and no adequate solution has been found to harmonize the Pedi and Lovedu patterns of royal marriage. The chief wife even of the queen among the Khaha is the mother's brother's daughter, and it is for her marriage that in theory each district head must contribute cattle 'to seek their mother' (*hu nyagela mma vɔna*).

Among the Mahlo Nareni, sporadically dominated by the Mafefe until as late as 1901, the change came under conditions of European control (1923). The door entrusted the rain charms and chieftainship to Manjana, wife of the deceased chief, Segɔrɔrɔ. But when strife occurred, the

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European intervened, construed the opening of the door as coincidence, and recognized a son of Segɔrɔrɔ's first wife. (Incidentally, the Pedi conception of the 'tribal candle', though accepted for a time, by 1923 was again receding before the old Laudi insistence that the mother's brother's daughter required no additional support to be chief wife.) To-day the tribe is split: Manjana's magic has power to call up the clouds, but the quackery of the recognized chief sweeps up gales which scatter the rain.

Among the Letswalo the change, motivated by a desire for security, aggravated a crisis which continued into the European period and was ended by the drastic intervention of the European. *Ramɔdau*, son of chief Bodile, defied his father by refusing to espouse his one-eyed cross-cousin, whom Bodile himself then married. But this wife turned out to be a witch who expiated her offence of stealing the rain charms by being mauled to death by a lion. Angered by his son's disobedience and his wife's treachery, Bodile then (*c.* 1850) prophesied the coming of the ants and the accession of a woman; but in the total setting of the drama the son's disobedience is condoned by representing his cross-cousin as a deformed witch and the treachery that threatens the welfare of the tribe is made the occasion for the accession of Magaepia, daughter of Bodile The whole theme is handled less skilfully than among the Lovedu and indicates the existence of many conflicting motives. Before Magaepia succeeded there were wholesale assassinations of successive heirs; Magaepia, having replaced the lost rain charms, became, first, rain-maker to Ramadau and, after his death at the hands of the Swazi invaders, queen, but only of a portion of the tribe. The strife continued, the European intervened, and, when the tribes of the lowveld rose against the encroaching settlers (1894), the Letswalo joined them, but suffered a devastating defeat.

Changes can be traced in all aspects of Lovedu culture, some greater, some smaller than those in their royal institutions. It will take us too far afield to deal with these changes, but a few remarks may be of interest. Almost nothing of the *gomana-vyali-vuhwera-vudiga* complex came with the royal group. Some of it can be attributed to the Sotho substratum: it is the *ɖou* of Ravothata who make the *gomana* drums and close the *vyali* with their weirdly costumed dancers, the *magɔgɔbya*; the Kwena likewise claim always to have had the *gomana*; and Lovedu boys are allowed to become initiated at the *gomana* lodges of the *ɖou* of Khaɖa and of the Kwena of Maunaɖala, who also may accept royal boys to 'cross rapidly' (*hu ɖubunya*), or become initiated in a few days, at his *vuhwera*. The *magɔgɔbya* are unique, but are found also among the *ɖou* of Masoma and it is from Tsubye (the country of present-day Shai) that these costumes came over a century ago, having been brought by two men named Maehisa and Dinawe. The evidence may be indefinitely multiplied, but it is more interesting to examine for a moment the different manifestations of the complex over the Northern Transvaal, because what has been emphasized in it or muted or rejected illuminates the character of the incorporating culture.

We have no evidence of the occurrence beyond the Northern Transvaal of the sacred drums, considered as shrines consecrated by human sacrifice

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174 643 177 and as the focus of a 'school' for revealing the secrets of the whistling ancestors (*zwiđajani*). Some Venda north of the Limpopo have drums of the *mondro* (spirits of the chiefs) and *zwiđajani* (familiars of Mnisi, the rain-god), and there is some evidence of drum ritual among Pedi, Venda, and even Tonga; but the elaborated drum cult belongs to the Northern Sotho. It has three characteristic elements: the supreme moments of the agricultural year are signalized by the sounding of the drums and the cult is intimately linked with rain or fertility; these calendric observances, as well as other great national occasions, are, by the interposition of the drums, brought under the surveillance of the tribal gods, represented by men masquerading as spirits who have come to earth; and in a special initiation novices are inducted into the secrets of the cult.

This constellation is most emphasized in three tribal groups: Laudi (especially Phalaborwa), Mađala, and Xananwa-Đokwa-Moletshe. Among the Phalaborwa the striking emphasis is upon the link with rain-making, upon the *lengu* or women's counterpart, and upon the exulting display before the drums which is permitted to those who have military and hunting exploits to their credit. These features become progressively attenuated westwards towards Ulovedu. The stress upon display reappears among the Mađala, though in a different form, for there we find the esoteric *khidinkhi*, which is at once a dramatic dance inspired by the sacred drums glorifying the prowess of the chief and of warriors, and a rain and fertility rite, blessing cattle and crops and safeguarding the people against disease. In drawing into the complex the welfare of the cattle and in the absence of the *lengu*, the Mađala pattern differs from that of the Laudi, but approximates that of the Xananwa-Đokwa-Moletshe. These differences coincide with the emphases of the different cultures. The Laudi have an attenuated cattle-cult, though it is better developed than among the Lovedu; whereas the highveld Sotho, influenced from the west and south-west, have a fuller cattle-cult, though by no means as elaborate as that of the west (Tswana) with its seasonal migratory life, conditioned partly by pastoralism and partly by a desire for security in a difficult environment. Among the Laudi men's and women's initiations are often combined, but on the highveld they are markedly separated, for the *nyali* and *nakwera* exist as distinct institutions and the Bird, guiding spirit of the *nyali*, is usually absent. In the third area, that of the Xananwa-Đokwa-Moletshe, the dispositions are in many respects quite distinctive. The drums become the focus of an elaborate fertility cult, rain-making stands outside the complex, and the chief *motif* is not display, but dramatization of obedience to the gods and loyalty to the chief. The supreme moment is when the manhood of the tribe, collected in the cattle kraal, receive the command of the gods communicated, under inspiration of the drums, by the *zwiđajani*.

There is every possible variation in the patterns among the intervening tribes. In some, such as Tswale, Moila, Dikxale, Mamaroko, and Uirwa of Makhatho, the cult is often structurally unintegrated, standing outside the province of the chief and consisting merely of 'schools' managed by outsiders who have their own drums. The cult in these cases is practised merely for revenue purposes; it is a 'business' as the

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Natives say; the alien drums are pierced and rendered useless at the 174
death, not of the chief, but of their owners; and the *zwidajani* are often 173
visitors from tribes where the cult is better developed. Among the 177
Lovedu the cult has been only partially accepted; the pattern is the pattern of the focal area in the east. The features that have been attenuated or elaborated can be explained in the light of the emphasis of Lovedu culture: there is no display, no stress upon fertility, no linking with the welfare of the cattle, no elaboration in connexion with agricultural ritual, but the *zwidajani* command peace and agreement among men.

Elsewhere in this book we have given slight indications that the Lovedu 177
interlocking *munyuulo* exchanges and social structure can be traced to Karanga models; that the Lovedu have rejected the pattern of the wedding feast and wedding gifts which comes from the west; that Lovedu legal arrangements are the resultant of composite forces; that the smeller-out and the cult of spirit possession come from the Shangana-Tongs and Thovolo. These and many other borrowed culture elements may be followed up with advantage, and indicate the magnitude of culture change. But for our purposes, before proceeding to discuss the nature and effect of the impact of Western culture, a brief reference to Shangana-Tongs influences will suffice. Despite similarities in detail—an attenuated boys' puberty rite, the conception of *makhuma* (ritual defilement), the indirect warning to the witch by *ku thela*, to mention a few features—and despite the extensive reception by the Lovedu of Shangana-Tongs elements of material culture—fowls, various crops, and methods of storing and threshing and stamping—the striking feature remains the great gulf between the two cultural configurations. They have, for instance, different views as regards sex morality, different marriage patterns, different conceptions of the hierarchy of age and the position of women; they deal differently with the situation of death, with rain-making, display, and regimentation, and, whereas the social groupings are totemic among the Lovedu, they are non-totemic among the Shangana-Tongs.

There are many other divergences, but one difference that calls for comment is the attitude to and reception of European culture. More adaptable, if brazen, than the Lovedu, at least in their new environment, the Shangana-Tongs have, as fugitives under Sotho domination, more complacently submitted themselves to European conquest. Disciplined by the military heritage of the Zulu, they made efficient police and soldiers, especially against their Sotho overlords. Their training in competition, trade, and display enabled them to respond better than the Lovedu to the stimuli of Western culture. Above all, European penetration benefited them, while it dispossessed the Sotho. The history of the contacts and reactions is the history of a century, which is far too complicated for treatment here. But this can be said: the Shangana-Tongs gained land and the right to be ruled by their own chiefs; the Lovedu lost land which was given to their erstwhile subjects; the prestige of Mujaji in the eyes of the white man waned while that of Shangana-Tongs chiefs waned; and the Shangana-Tongs subservience

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177 to the European hardened Lovedu antagonism and resistance both to the European and to his protégés.

THE ICONOCLASM OF CHRISTIANITY

177 797 Effective European contact with the tribes of the lowveld began only in the decade 1880–90. At first Mujaji II hoped to play off Christianity and the secular authorities against one another, but they proved to be inseparable allies. Christianity in those days tolerated no compromise with pagan practices: it could not envisage the salvation of souls except through sweeping away heathen custom. It interceded on behalf of the Native against the encroachments of an acquisitive society, but conducted its crusade with the support of the civil arm of that society. When Mujaji was recalcitrant, she was reminded of the fate of Sekukuni (1877) and Cetewayo (1879); when she complained that the new creed was iconoclastic, Albasini replied that the Government also 'had the Book'; and when farms were parcelled out to settlers, the missionary became landlord of 4,850 acres and exacted labour and fees from his tenants. The Native was already angered by the raids of Buys, servant of the Republic, freebooter, and 'upperhead or great captain', and of Albasini, Native commissioner, Portuguese trader, and self-appointed chief of the Magwamba (Knobnose-Shangana-Tonga). Thus he could hardly have been expected to receive with open arms either the missionary or the settler.

The highest praise is due to the missionary for his superhuman efforts, his espousal of the cause of the Native, his intercession that gave the Loveđu their location, his unrewarded labour of love, and the inestimable gift of education and a new outlook on life that he brought. Too little has been made of these services, of the difficulties overcome and of the ingratitude he encountered. Khashani, first evangelist and royal kinsman, was martyred (1884); and so fierce was the resistance to Christianity that the drought of 1881–2 was attributed to those who were its apostles. But all this we must pass over, for it is with the reception of Christianity and Western culture into Lovedu culture and its response to the challenge that we are concerned.

The historical background of Christianity is a sharp differentiation of converts from pagans, in order to minimize the danger of relapsing and to ensure the growth of solidarity and communal interests in splendid Christian isolation. But the result was the ranging of Christians and pagans in opposite camps and fierce conflicts of loyalty. The history of Western culture is not distinct all along the line from Christianity, but it may be distinguished as distant and distasteful control rather than direct and deliberate disruption of custom, causing hindrances and frustrations and antagonism among all sections, not preaching a new way of life to the carefully segregated few.

The great changes effected by Christianity are those among converts. Half a century of evangelization has brought forth conversion among 3 to 5 per cent. of the Lovedu. Beyond this small insulated minority there have been repercussions, but, owing to the segregation of the Christians in mission settlements and the protective secrecy of the pagans, these repercussions have not been great.

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By far the greatest concentration of Christians is upon Medingen, the mission-owned farm. In 1936 the total population of Medingen was 1,870, of whom 893, or just over 47 per cent., were Christians. In 1911 the population was 1,731, and, as nearly as can be determined, 780, or 45 per cent., were Christians; and the figures respectively for 1921 were 1,883 and 990, or 52 per cent. The striking fact is that, despite the many influences favouring an increase of numbers, the percentage of Christians has remained practically stationary. The most powerful missionizing agent is the school, which is attended by about 300 children, who tend to complete their school careers with confirmation; moreover, in the past, Christians from everywhere sought sanctuary on the mission station, while there are powerful evangelizing forces on the station as well as obstacles to the settlement there of pagans. Figures of increases or decreases are not available for the rest of Uulovedu, where one of the most significant phenomena is the relapse to paganism in the last decade of large numbers of the royal sons. Among those who have relapsed, however, an impression has been made, though often they are, like the sophisticated Native, the most implacable enemies of the faith in which they have been nurtured. It is the disruptive effect of Christianity upon custom as seen among converts living on mission stations that we propose first of all to examine, turning thereafter to positive contributions among these converts and ending with a brief consideration of the repercussion among the rest of the population.

The distinctive feature of Christianity is that it breaks down in order to build up. In the form in which it appears on the mission stations it is not merely hostile to repugnant custom, but also works against everything that can be recognized as custom. Converts and their teachers hold that, without complete and irrevocable severance from traditional values, the emotional background easily reasserts itself and undoes the work of Christianity. Participation even in innocent heathen life evokes disturbing associations. To outlaw merely the repugnant part of a custom is useless; the prohibition must be total. An attempt to differentiate is like an attempt to give reasons; the reasons for a thing are liable to be confused with its substance and explanations often merely obscure the issue. The old, even if only doubtfully incompatible with Christian practices or beliefs, must not be presented to conscious attention. Hence Christianity draws the individual away from all things tribal. Compromises are impossible upon such questions as the freedom of the sexes, beer-drinking, polygyny, and among the older population even *manywalo* (bride-price); there is no room for a liberal interpretation of our system of religion or morality. The policy in the past has never been to graft the new upon the old; it has been to destroy the cultural pattern and to substitute another, irrespective of whether it could be woven into the remainder of the social scheme or harmonized with existing beliefs and institutions.

This is not an indictment of missionary effort; it is the result of a considered policy conceived to be in the best interests of posterity. The mission had, from the earliest times, to contend with lack of discipline, slackness where there was no supervising foreman irritating habits of

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177 duplicity and ingratitude, suspicion, and attempts to take advantage of
797 kindness. These were construed as barbaric traits that had to be uprooted. There appeared, in addition, to be an unusually large number of anti-Christian practices: the tribal justice, proceeding upon no fixed principles, seemed corrupt; there were periodical smellings-out of witches; people believed in the divinity of the queen. Dancing and drumming were obnoxious, not merely because they were 'heathenish din', but also because of their association with the idolatry of the *digma* and the 'schools', the sexual laxity at the *gisha* dances and possession by spirits.
[533] There were also mendicant minstrels who played the xylophone (*dibila*) and sang for their food and lodging, whose songs did not always express Christian sentiments. One, for instance, not long ago, used to sing, 'Christians are cheats who put us to sleep before we eat [referring to grace], so as to kill us unawares', and another's song rang more crudely: 'The husbandless woman climbs to the roof of the hut; she urinates and the rats fall down in a faint'.

Early Church policy laid down what should be outlawed on mission-owned farms; wife-purchase, shrines, *digma*, rain-making, witchcraft, divination, 'strengthenings with medicine', the consecration of weapons, and other repugnant customs. It stamped as particularly reprehensible theft, sexual offences, opposition to the Church, and, later, migration to seek employment in the sinful towns. The sanctions with which it can enforce obedience upon a self-governed estate include refusal of such privileges as baptism and confirmation, public denunciation in church, various penalties, such as road-making and catechism classes, and even expulsion from the mission station. Natives believe that the whole system is served by a network of espionage, and the intrinsic difficulties of the situation have been immensely increased by the fact that financially the mission station largely relies upon the contributions in fees and work of its tenants. On one occasion a self-constituted committee of disaffected tenants in Johannesburg, who were in arrears, accused the mission of capitalistic exploitation and of robbing the Natives of their country, and drastic action was necessary.

177 The Christian attack upon the marriage pattern and especially polygyny
795 has led to many subtle reactions. Devout Christians of the old order still
184 refuse to accept cattle, but surreptitiously pocket money payments which by the nature of the case can be used to subserve personal, not social, ends. The Church no longer sets its face against *mawunalo*, but seeks to turn it into a kind of dowry, and Christians call it 'thanks'. The Christian's freedom of choice of a mate weakens the reciprocities and emphasizes independence and materialism at the price of the patterns of co-operation and long-range mutuality. A Christian often marries a non-relative, but cannot easily escape the complex net thrown over the whole social structure by the cattle exchanges. He may have to face the opposition of those relatives whose displeasure may cause illness to him or his family. If he marries a second wife, his cross-cousin, he is excommunicated, and he will be unable, even on his death-bed, to secure the final consolation and blessing of the Church unless he sets aside his pagan wife. Polygyny, the inheritance of wives, and beer are so deeply rooted in

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the culture that they constitute the gravest difficulties of the mission as well as the most formidable obstacles to embracing Christianity. Christians are required to build a house before marriage: this again tears them out of the context of parental influences. Wedding feasts and bridal gifts introduce the pattern of the highveld Sotho and of the towns, but without serious disruptive effects.

Christian marriage sets up community of property and strikes at the economic independence of women; it emphasizes patriliny, but, in compensation, introduces a conception of marital companionship. Families are larger, because the old spacing of children has broken down: monogamy, proscription of the institution of 'lovers' (*vuḓavu*), the opposition to anything pagan, the diminished control of the old women are some of the reasons. There is more illegitimacy because the marriage of girls is later, examination for virginity is considered un-Christian, the disciplinary influences of the initiation 'schools' and of parental authority have weakened, and there is no training in the rules of incomplete sexual intercourse. Among some of the other results, it may be said that Christians are less complaisant about the infidelity of their spouses and that the care of a brother's widow occasions serious conflicts.

The iconoclastic effect of Christianity may be illustrated in a few other spheres of culture. Christians often object to performing the services to the chief expected of every tribesman. At the capital they plough one of the queen's fields, but have largely withdrawn themselves or have been excluded from the political and legal organization. They do not submit themselves to procedures involving appeal to the smeller-out, regard as repugnant the duties of messengers in 'blood' cases and, by extension, those of all court messengers, and, since the regular court sessions are held on Sunday, they cannot attend them, nor indeed are they welcomed as members of the *khwo*. At Medingen the districts are not recognized and the majority of offences come before the council of elders or the missionary. Christians disregard traditional holidays and taboos, such as those after deaths and the first rains or when lightning strikes down to earth. They defiantly plough over sacred places to show the absurdity of superstitious fears. They neither kill twins nor observe the rules as to burial in wet places. They oppose the 'schools', avoid the dances and ignore the firstfruits rites.

It is un-Christian to become possessed or to have the 'dirt'-removing rite after death. Even important royal kinsmen who become Christians must be buried in the Christian cemetery, not where they will be contaminated by heathenish associations. The bearers are Christians, and pagan relatives follow the hearse in the rear, segregated from the Christians, for they do not know the hymns that are sung. The corpse is made to face west, towards the setting sun, not north, whence the Lovedu came. When the queen's brother, who became a Christian on his death-bed, was buried, the only concession permitted to custom was the placing of an ox skin upon the coffin; no wonder that his spirit did not long lie at rest and that subsequent drought was attributed to his complaints. Not only are pagans and Christians separated in the

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177 procession to the grave, but, after burial, relatives on each side have
795 their separate rites.
184 All this is but a reflection of the attempt to make the segregation as complete as possible. Even the visible evidence of different styles of building, of dressing, and of living together was in the past more boldly thrown into relief by the geometrical villages, with their square houses fronted by flower gardens and straight streets crossing one another at right angles and ornamented with orange trees. But the Christians' efforts to differentiate themselves from pagans are limited by two main factors. Neither the Bible nor their limited experience of the world has suggested too many different ways of living and behaving. In large spheres of culture they know no more than is supplied by the traditional background; and limited resources often make impracticable the adoption of different standards and attitudes.

Christians tend to defer in everything, not to the tribal, but to the church authorities. Local problems and church matters, as well as relations with the European, are advised upon and guided by the church and its officials. Christians set themselves up as interpreters of and intermediaries with the European; they tend to assume command upon occasions of European festivities or of intervention, except that of official business with the chief or the councillors. They crowd round inquisitively when agricultural officials arrive, while pagans avoid them; they prepare the programme or draw up the illuminated address when there is a celebration, such as the Coronation in 1937 or an agricultural show. And they work out these plans and addresses in consultation, not with the tribal authorities, but with the evangelist. It is not unnatural, for they complain that the tribal authorities will never learn and never listen to their advice or accept their suggestions. All this occasions friction and divided allegiance, it weakens the authority of the queen, and it antagonizes the pagans.

In recent years there has been more co-operation. The old influential Christians have died and the educated young pagans have learnt to manage things for themselves. Agricultural officials, despite active resistance from pagans and co-operation from Christians, realize that their work is incomplete without sustained efforts to secure the interest of the pagans. Christians are vouchsafed no information from the capital and their opportunities of leadership and interference become limited. Jealousies among Christians have led to disunity and they have lost control of the postal arrangements. The secretarial duties of the chief are undertaken jointly by a Christian and several pagans. And young men who in the past found their major opportunities in identifying themselves with the Christians are beginning to find it more profitable to side with the pagans. This is but a reflection of more universal trends: the importance of the church has receded before the rapid expansion of the activities of the administration, industry, and commerce; these activities are no longer in active co-operation with Christianity, and differences in religious outlook between pagans and Christians tend to be over-shadowed by the feeling of common hostility to and distrust of the European. How far the new tendencies will lead to constructive

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co-operation and to bringing Christians into more realistic touch with the total tribal environment are questions too large for consideration here.

But Christianity has not destroyed only; it has also built up. Christians wholeheartedly embraced education; pagans, believing that education implies the acceptance of a foreign faith, are torn by conflicting loyalties, and their ardent desire to acquire the three R's expresses itself in the attempts made to set up a tribal school, which will be the agent, not of an alien creed, but of traditional values. Education and the outlook it has engendered have equipped Christians for meeting the impact of Western conquest and culture. Schoolchildren lose much of the lore of the veld and the training of the tribal initiations, but they gain new games, new skills, and new knowledge, implicit in which are assumptions regarding the nature of man and the purpose of existence. The church, through its preachings and schools, has been the channel of more than half the influences of Western ethics and culture in their positive effects. Its future lies in its control of education, for its religious mission has become submerged in a mass of technical and routine duties, entailing the preparation of pupils for examinations and the filling up of forms, with consequent loss of personal contacts and pastoral care. Its religious influence is evident in grace at meals, prayers for oneself, church services, Biblical Christian names, feasts, sacraments, and periodical visits of the women of one settlement to commune with and advise those of another. But on the whole the purely religious has been eclipsed by the educational effects. The two are inextricably interwoven; and their separation might well mean that Christianity will have no message for modern man and will be regarded as linked with the repressive, not the progressive, forces of Western civilization.

The valuable adjustments brought about by Christianity are the adjustments towards the modern world: receptivity to Western standards, less reluctance to co-operate with Europeans, and aspirations to seek self-realization amid the opportunities offered by them. Christians are less sceptical than pagans of European health services and of the innovations of the agricultural demonstrator; and they are better equipped and, until recently, were more eager to accept such Government posts as those of interpreters, policemen, and forest rangers. Only Christians can be teachers. Christians are driven to action by the idea of progress; they seek their future and achievement in change; and they attribute the disabilities under which the tribe suffers to the ignorance of their pagan rulers. Not much of what they have learnt intellectually has merged integrally with their lives, but they are less frustrated than the pagans.

Their outlook stands in close relation to the great extension of economic needs necessitated by Christianity, such as church and school fees, books and occasionally newspapers, better clothes and more European household articles, brick houses, wooden coffins, and burial societies. Their contributions, which help to support the widespread organization and institutions of the Church, constitute one of the main resistances to conversion; but the necessity to meet the new demands has made them keener agriculturalists than are the pagans. You sometimes hear a pagan derisively call out to Christian workers, not the friendly greeting '*Uashwe*'

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177 (workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian
795 reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians
184 are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement, occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities, Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion, develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.
177 There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the
795 tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft
184 which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence
578 of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to
754 administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers. Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven underground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain, albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witchcraft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witchcraft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

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The repercussions of the Christian outlook in the tribe as a whole may be referred to briefly. The tendencies are changing because of the recent re-absorption of Christians into the tribe, but the main results to-day are still those coming from the segregated Christians. Christian holidays have to some extent become part of the life of the tribe. Sunday is, as far as agriculture and building operations are concerned, a day of rest, but, for this reason, it is set aside specially for public business, such as tribal gatherings and *khɔrɔ* trials; and one result is that Christians, even if their moralizing and attempts to improve law and procedure were better tolerated, are excluded from participation. People occasionally have 'beer of Christmas' or 'New Year'. Twin murders can no longer be reported to the queen, as there is danger of implicating her, and Christian women, more interested in the pregnancy, legitimate or otherwise, of their friends, threaten to take action if they suspect a murder. But the effect is unsuspectedly complicated: a pagan mother who under pressure allows her twins to live may be refused assistance by her husband's mother, and often reacts by underfeeding them in order to starve them to death; and much greater secrecy is maintained. In 1923, after a few convictions in the European courts, the queen forbade the killing of twins and ordered births to be reported to the mission station; but the rule became a dead letter as soon as it could be safely circumvented.

Real or pretended sensitiveness among pagans to Christian values has had some effects. Not only do pagans ascribe their misfortunes to disregard of duties fostered by the example of the Christians, but they advance Christian values as excuses for not fulfilling their own obligations. They may condemn the Christian intrusion as causing drought or disobedience, but they may justify their own doubtful behaviour upon principles of Christian ethics. In 1937, for instance, Mashishimali refused to accept a *gɔsha* dance on the ground that his wife's brother, who lived in the village, was a Christian, but the real reason was self-interest and unwillingness to kill a beast and to burden himself with feeding the dancers. For a similar reason, an old woman, nominally a Christian, refused to allow her son to accommodate the dancers, but the reason she advanced was the pagan associations of the drums. Slackness in obeying the queen is ascribed to the example of the Christians, who break taboos with impunity and escape their obligations as messengers of the *khɔrɔ* by declaring that the work is un-Christian.

At one time Christians could terrify pagans by predicting eclipses and locust invasions, visitations which they ascribed to the obstinacy of the pagans in refusing to accept the gospel; this weapon is useless to-day, but the Christian hell causes some uneasiness of conscience and repressed fear, especially evident in dreams and during illness. There are death-bed conversions, and the evangelist is sometimes anxiously called to interpret alarming dreams. Masilu, a budding doctor still learning the bones, which had been discarded by a Christian relative, suffered from a persistent illness. While bed-ridden he dreamt that he had ascended a great ladder half-way to heaven and came to a luxuriant country. There he saw two roads, but he was stopped by the guardian of the gate to which one of these roads led, and told to take the left-hand road going to the

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177 west. He suspected that that road led to hell. The evangelist, called in 184 for consultation, prayed for his soul, explaining that the dream clearly 195 warned the pagan sinner to mend his way of life if he wished to be admitted to the road that led to salvation. Masilu was half-persuaded, but when his wife scorned the imposture and he had regained health, he let the matter slide. But sometimes conversion takes place in such circumstances, especially as the view is held that many people, after a dream of this nature, suddenly die. We may also associate with Christian ethics such phenomena as the growth of a sex-guilt complex, the wearing of blouses to cover the breasts, and the repression of virginity observances.

The persistence of a belief among Christians that the restrictions imposed upon the tribe may be attributed to backwardness and refusal to give up custom has not been without its effects. Sophisticated pagans share this belief with the Christians, but on the whole the assumption of enlightenment and superiority derives from the conception, fostered by Christianity, of the darkness of the pagan world. There is much that can be advanced in support of their contentions: the location allotted to the tribe, it is urged, would have been larger if the whole tribe, not merely a portion of it, had presented itself to General Joubert when, in the 1890s, after their defeat, he commanded their presence in order to enable him to give them land proportionate to their numbers; and, similarly, the stringency of the dipping laws, the absence of any benefits from the fund of the local tax, the ascendancy of the Shangana-Tonga are laid at the door of the ignorance of the councillors. Christians allege that in other tribes, where there has been enlightenment, disabilities have disappeared. Some pagans, half-accepting the impeachment, blame their leaders; others, and they are in the majority and the most influential, resent the imputation and fiercely resist every suggestion that comes from the Christians. On the whole, however, the obvious advantages of knowledge of the ways of the white man and of the outside world cannot be gainsaid: it is the educated Native who gets the best posts and secures exemption from carrying passes. But where enlightenment is paraded by Christians, it merely occasions more resistance and opposition.

THE CHALLENGE OF WESTERN CONQUEST

177 The influence of Western culture, as a force distinct from Christianity, can be fully interpreted only against a background that extends, as regards time, to the earliest contacts between Bantu and European and, as regards space, over the whole of South Africa. Attitudes and reactions observable in Lovedu are often intelligible in the light, not of local misfortunes, but of experiences of tribes in other parts of South Africa. We cannot here discuss this question; indeed, the problems arising from the impact of Western culture within the tribe alone are too complex for summary treatment. On the whole, there has only been legislation against utterly repugnant custom and, until recently, the restrictions that have been efficiently enforced were few, and did not strike directly at the integrity of custom. The policy has been one of *laisser-faire*; and no active attempt has been made to graft new culture elements upon the old patterns. The

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integration that has taken place has been a response of the culture itself to the challenges of the new order. Therein lies the greatest difference from the manner in which Christianity has influenced the culture. Since 1938 the policy has changed somewhat, and there are more active though still not conscious interferences with custom; but among the Lovedu the effect as yet has been negligible. 177

The labour migration to towns and farms, necessitated by taxation, is reluctantly undertaken. The Lovedu are not easy prey to recruiters, who have to give assurances regarding, not only labour and other conditions, but also immunity from arrest for arrears of tax. The ideal is to return home, for 'The only place one never returns to is the womb'. The migration has not had the great effect that is reported in other parts of Africa: very little that is brought back is incorporated into the culture, even the accent men acquire in towns being rapidly discarded: marriage ceremonial does not require the presence of the man, his bridal visits being often undertaken by others; the pivotal position of women in the social structure minimizes disturbances; and, since during the whole suckling period a husband should partially avoid his wife, his absence for six months or so in town is not a serious problem as far as sexual adjustments are concerned. The absence of the men creates difficulties in holding the initiations and in economic dispositions. But the salient fact is that the energies liberated by the use of the plough exceed the drain caused by the labour migration. Old men, who no longer pay taxes, conduct the political and legal affairs of the tribe, and women, who do not migrate, control religion and ritual.

In legal arrangements there have been changes. But the deprivation of the power to enforce decisions means little to the old culture, which never relied upon force, though it may mean something when the sanction of reciprocity has become undermined. The force of the law is being destroyed, not by the limited jurisdiction allowed, but by the interference of solicitors and the multiplication, so it is believed, of criminals acquitted or protected by the European. Witches, they say, escape punishment by Europeans, because Europeans neither have witchcraft nor understand its workings. We have elsewhere noted some readjustments in legal procedure. Here we need add only a few further points The *khɔrɔ* must be careful lest dissatisfied litigants report procedures or decisions that are illegal by European standards; but, on the other hand, it sometimes threatens recalcitrant debtors with the dire consequences of being sent to the European, and such is the disinclination to be judged by the European that the threat is generally effective. The *khɔrɔ*, for instance, takes care not to order an expulsion (which is illegal) before the crops are reaped, as the victim is then more liable to appeal, while many cases may be quoted in which the threat to send a litigant to the Native Commissioner has led to a solution by agreement. The weakening of the sanctions of reciprocity has led to increasing resort, not to the European courts, but to 'sending back' the evil. 177 692

The *khɔrɔ* has more and more to deal with written evidence, such as cattle lists, letters between the parties and from farmers, and pieces of paper on which had been noted the marriage cattle that have passed. 177 695

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177 695 The handling of this evidence is woefully unskilful, but important distinctions must be made. Where the writing takes the place of the notches that used to be cut on sticks to indicate the cattle that had passed, it tends to be accepted if there is other supporting evidence; statements in a letter of the amount of money sent with the letter are generally given credence; but sentiments expressed in letters and written accounts of the circumstances of a case are usually completely ignored or dismissed as unimportant. In one case where a husband wrote that he had definitely deserted his wife, the court ignored the letter on the ground that, unless the husband gave his evidence in person, he might well reverse his attitude and appeal to the Native Commissioner. The subject of the development in the handling of written evidence is a large one; but to what we have said we would merely add that the recording of evidence in writing has been attempted, since 1932, in only fifteen cases all told. The attempt has miserably failed. The usual record reads approximately as follows: 'Andrew Malopo *v.* £19. 5 Jim Malate 2/8/32', and to that cryptic statement nothing is added by way of such embellishment as the nature of the case, whether the date refers to the day of trial or retrial or payment, whether in fact there has been payment, and so on. Native Commissioners have sometimes tendered advice about how cases should be decided and recorded, but it is beyond their province, and the results have been precisely nil.

177 642 Political institutions have suffered no fundamental change. External relations are maintained through the wives the queen still receives from, and the rain she still gives to, foreign chiefs; the suppression of military exploits and cattle raids has not affected the Lovedu. Relations with European authorities have modified initiative and control over large spheres of policy, for the tribal authorities receive instructions rather than discuss suggestions, though consultation is nowadays a recognized preliminary to the introduction of an innovation. The tribal gathering (*khivij*) never was important in Lovedu; now it discusses perhaps more tribal matters than in the past, as well as European proposals and demands, but it has little power. The councillors, presenting European matters, sometimes give a distorted version, finding it difficult to justify either the measure proposed or their inability to bring about modifications or to circumvent it; and very often they do not mention important points at all. The widespread tendency to justify a desired action by saddling the European with responsibility for it reappears again and again. The people may be told by the councillors (who have a car) to mend the road, because, they say, an official who broke the spring of his car upon it has complained to the Native Commissioner; the administrative admonition to maintain better control over young boys going to work without their parents' consent was presented to the tribal meeting as a warning that boys not carrying tax receipts would be arrested if found at beer parties. (By traditional standards, now maintained with difficulty, beer parties are only for adults.) The justification or circumvention is upon the pattern that is known, and that pattern, despite the intervention of the European, remains intact.

177 231 656 Measures taken to protect national (South African) interests, such as

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *hu fisa*, the care of cattle by others.

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness.

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass.

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tsonga introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant, the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders

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177 planted with sweet sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of
241 stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its
134 utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

177 A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money
437 subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with
[182] Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The
182 suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes
[164] attributed to Nyasaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894–6. The psychological determinants of change are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutri-
146 tion. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation
182 that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doctored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European justice are compensated by magic (*hu nicicla*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digoma* and the *zwidajani* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

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177 culture and in the small body of segregated Christians, has been indirect response in attitudes and in the old institutions rather than incorporation of culture elements. The purpose has been to circumvent, if direct resistance was impossible, rather than to accept or embody.

Among the vast majority of the people the long-range pressure of new needs and the indirect response in attitudes has left intact almost all the essential features of the culture. Lovedu religion remains a reality, showing few signs of being modified by Christianity. Ritual is practically untouched—even Christians believe in the magical power of the queen. Magic and witchcraft have become more rather than less elaborate and have been applied to every new introduction from the European. Among the most devout Christians the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and of therapeutics still hold sway. The essential structure of the political, social and marriage systems is intact, though the reciprocities have weakened. The 'schools', which in 1938 we had thought dead, have been energetically revived, everything in the country during the whole of 1939 being made subservient to the supreme purposes of the *vyali*. The need for dramatizing social values, and for self-expression, which is served by the 'schools', becomes greater as frustration and the lassitude of under-nourishment increase. The bases of subsistence have deteriorated and Natives are not slow to point out that in the sphere of culture most affected by the European the evil effects, despite the gains, are most evident. They blame the plough for the destruction of riverside gardens and for soil-erosion, but they realize that it is impossible to go back to the hoe; and they dislike the new forms of employment, but are unable to see any way of doing without them.

The Lovedu are now entering a new phase, that of greater interference by the European and of increasing community of interest with other tribes. This will ultimately mean a more direct challenge to their institutions and a response in terms partly of their local, and partly of a more comprehensive cultural configuration. The necessity of studying culture contact and culture change comparatively and over large areas will thus be more imperative than ever.

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THE LOVEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. KRIGE

The World View of the Lovedu

101 THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

144 Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and
177 Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga
563 immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this
642 group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

231 Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the
241 South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pur-
231 suits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

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by the institutions and by the reciprocal duties and responsibilities between individuals and groups inherent in the social structure. 577

Effects of Culture Contact

This picture of the world view of the Lovedu presents living practices and conceptions, not a dead and reconstructed past. Christianity has, indeed, modified some aspects of the culture: Christians are prevented from performing their kinship obligations in the traditional manner; they have accepted European ideas of trade for profit and use institutions such as the work-party for the exploitation of their fellows; but witchcraft, which they are supposed to have rejected, is as a result of increased tensions even more rampant among Christians than pagans. Christians substitute God for the ancestors, but continue to believe that the queen makes rain, albeit by the will of God. They tend to discredit the powers of charms but not of *mupaga*, while 'heat', *makhama*, and 'shadow' are still real forces, and the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and misfortune still hold sway. Even these minor modifications have to be viewed in the light of the fact that Christians constitute only about 5 per cent. of the tribe and are relatively isolated. 177 795 771

The influence of Western culture as a whole is more insidious. The knowledge acquired by young men working in the towns and returning to the tribe holds implications as regards the nature of the universe and the destiny and purpose of man which they cannot harmonize with the traditional world view. They tend to despise what the old men cannot or will not make intelligible to them, such as the significance of the *digama* and the *zwidajani* which appear to them to be shams. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect for their elders and for traditional values and institutions. But the total effect is minimised by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older, begin to play a part and to have a stake in the culture. Moreover, they are sensitive to insinuations that their doubts are due to the white man's insidious influences and soon repress them as unworthy and disloyal. 177 771

The younger generation tend to shirk unpleasant responsibilities. Thus Jim refused to take over the family office of keeper of the rain-medicine, fearing the risk of sterility which handling of this medicine entails. The absence of many adult men, who are away as migrant labourers, makes the organization of the great ceremonials difficult. Reconciliation and the restitutive sanction are no longer the great forces they used to be, since the closely knit system of reciprocities, everyone's dependence upon day-to-day mutualities and the imperativeness for social life of co-operation, no longer exert the irresistible pressure on the parties to carry out compromises reached in the courts. Aggrieved litigants, reluctant still to invoke European intervention, increasingly resort to magicians who have developed a whole new system of revenge magic to even up matters. The trend is to put their faith in magical retaliation rather than in the sanction of reciprocity. 178

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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

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421 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship
571 and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable [496] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily [273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintaining social relationships. This is changing now under conditions [177] of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes
571 the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new
431 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small
571 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the
602 same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even
421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and
571 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples.
431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went
931 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour
643 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies.
571 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a *theri* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, [588] Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge lede dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyage manafi a de a athnidele*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

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administration came the introduction of the Pedi idea that a man has a claim to both the cattle and the children in the case of malicious desertion. Old men in the 1930's called this a white man's law; today people are claiming it as a Lobedu custom. Only two of the oldest men at court were able to tell me in 1962 what had been common knowledge in 1936. The present custom is for the husband on receiving back the bride-price to return some of it (one beast for each child or sometimes two for a girl) for the rearing of the younger children that remain temporarily with their mother. A father's hold over such children is in practice tenuous though the court will always uphold his claims.

The issues in divorce are rarely simple. The simplest case I came across was one in which a man became insane. His wife left with her children to live with her brother who returned the bride-price. Usually, however, there are endless complications and cases continue for months, even years. If, for example, a man chases his wife and children away and the wife wants to return, he may in the end lose both the children and the bride-price despite the proverb quoted above.

The Domestic Group and the Importance of the 'House'

We have discussed the role of property in establishing and maintaining marriage relationships and links between families. Control over material resources also plays an important part in the structure of the polygynous domestic group with its economically independent 'houses' so characteristic of the Lobedu.

As head of the family the husband has full control over all family resources. Yet each wife forms with her children a unit of production and consumption, the independence of which as against other 'houses' has to be respected even by the husband, whose control thus becomes limited the moment he marries a second wife. This is why a Christian woman among the Lobedu never has the economic independence that a woman in a polygynous household has. There are safeguards against the infringement of the principle of the independence of the 'house', as we shall see.

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu

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its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old, M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and *mahoru* ants, for even blackjacks are scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when European vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, specially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. Those, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes.

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of three different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

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neglect of many of the old crops. The balance may be restored by 241
European vegetables, such as tomatoes, cabbage, onions, and carrots. They are planted in irrigated gardens; these, however, are not numerous and could never supply the needs of the whole population. The parsimonious peasant, well-filled with porridge, is hardly likely to spend much time on what are looked upon as luxuries rather than as necessities.

People know that to have many crops in the same field places a great 241
strain on the soil and lowers the productivity of each crop. Yet as a 242
measure of economy, dictated by conditions, every one to-day plants side by side as many different crops as possible. Eleusine is an exception and mealies are spared the worst mixtures, though it is rare indeed that in-between the mealies you will not find pumpkins and nuts. Millet and kaffir corn, however, stand alongside sweet sorghums—in the old days planted only on the boundaries of fields—beans and groundnuts, pumpkins, and calabashes. There is no more virgin soil on which the old incipient ideas of rotation of crops can be practised. If by chance new soil is turned, its rich content of ash will no longer be placed at the service of eleusine, as was the old rule; mealies, which followed eleusine as a second crop, are now so much more important that the old priority of eleusine gives way to a mixed crop of mealies and eleusine, though mealies alone are preferred. When mealies, after two or three years, begin to answer badly, millet is planted, in accordance with the old rotation. To-day there is some idea that beans revitalize the soil.

But we must not exaggerate the scientific value of these principles. Rotation was essentially a method of draining from the soil, with more and more hardy crops, the last ounce of energy; a crop was not thought to recondition the soil. On soil that is too poor or unsuitable for any of the cereals, groundnuts are often successful; but usually it is left to lie fallow for many years. In the old days it might have been wholly abandoned; but to-day lands that have lain fallow for thirty years and more are being reculti-
vated, at least if they are not along the steep or stony slopes of hills where
ploughing is difficult. The shifting cultivation of the past is no longer 241
possible; there are less men available for clearing, which, moreover, has 178
for long been discouraged by the tribe itself and to-day is forbidden by Governmental regulation. Plough culture also has introduced new practices. These and other changes have had far-reaching results. Time and space for single-crop gardens are lacking. It is convenient and the most economic utilization of the available resources to put into the soil behind the plough a mixture of all kinds of seeds. Some of them will be smothered by the others and that will be a calamity if the staple crops suffer unduly; for that reason the problem now is to determine, with reference to soil and weather conditions, which crops will significantly lessen the productivity of those to which priority is accorded. Everything that requires to be planted separately is as far as possible left aside. Crops specially planted by women tend to fall behind in the race. Women do most of the hoeing to-day, and their labour, valuable as it is on the steep slopes and among the stones, cannot keep pace with the plough. Moreover, men make the modern gardens by the sides of streams, and the many beans, groundnuts, and native potatoes, which the women

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241 planted, disappear before the advance of European vegetables. This is
178 as yet not a great change, because there are very few of these gardens, and it is far beyond present resources to construct irrigation furrows.

The balance is also upset by other tendencies. Agriculture is still a vital interest, but others are beginning to compete with it, and the various cultural devices by which interests were massed behind the various stages of agriculture are no longer as effective as formerly. Mobilization of energies by the seasonal calendar and their concentration at the strategic points of time and place are only partially effective. The unfolding of nature, the increasing signs of the coming spring, the more and more suspicious banking up of the thunder-clouds used to be like the culmination of intensive propaganda playing upon the emotions of the people. As the first rains fell and the scent of the veld rose to men's nostrils, they seemed to liberate internal secretions which drove men to action; and the example of the first workers in the fields made the impulse irresistible. But to-day, though much of this is in evidence and one still sees an impulsive restlessness canalized into productive activity, the reactions are, according to Native accounts, much weaker. Neither internal secretions, if such there are, nor suggestion in a tense situation have their old overpowering effect.

[461] Translation of the impulses aroused into useful action is to some extent inhibited by enervating listlessness, at least among a proportion of the people. They are people puzzled by the changes around them or caught in the vicious circle of malnutrition and weakened incentives. They seek solutions in smaller exertions, lotus-like inactivity, and excessive beer-drinking, and in the hierarchy of ideals, these values are beginning to become unduly prominent. It would be disastrous if they created a cultural pattern, as the tendency suggests, in which agricultural work is mere drudgery and people concentrate upon easy crops, thus over-simplifying a wholesome simplicity in food and, as a cumulative result,
[146 not fulfilling, but draining the joys of life. Even to-day, weakened by
164 unbalanced nutrition, many more people succumb to tuberculosis,
754] bilharzia, tape-worm, even dysentery and malaria; as disease spreads and shakes the sense of security, sorcery and witchcraft become more common interpretations, and men must rely upon magic to restore their confidence. It is in agricultural practices that some of the greatest changes have occurred in the society. But, as will be seen, the changes are not of a simple nature.

These are the tendencies; but we must remember that the foundations of the society are deeply laid and the tensions are evident only in the upper superstructure. The people have a remarkable capacity for making adjustments, at least when no profound social arrangements are effected. They have adopted new crops, changed from hoe to plough cultivation, and adjusted themselves from unlimited to limited land. Unfortunately, they do not as yet have faith in manure. They have seen, they say, that manure raises an excess of weeds and that for sugo beans it is useless, even dangerous. One cannot appeal to the value of medicine, because only witches 'doctor' their fields, not indeed to fertilize them, but to steal the crops of their neighbours. Garden magic is never

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legitimate, for men rely upon their labours and place their faith in the rain, the making of which is the prerogative of the queen. 241 178

Failure of one's crops is attributed, not to witchcraft, but in a bad year to the heat of the sun and in normal seasons to indolence or bad soil. In the last resort, however, when every one suffers equally, or when there is a major drought, the calamity is regarded as a punishment by the gods, who 'hold the arms of the queen', or by the queen herself, who is displeased in her heart. Diseases and pests are not magical visitations. Though called 'the witch of the mealies' because it saps their strength, witchweed (*Wormskioldia longipedunculata*) is neither sent by witches nor combated by supernatural means. Destructive insects and parasites, such as stalkborers, weevils, and caterpillars, are regarded, not as being 'sent', but as perfectly natural results of untimely planting or unseasonal rain. Birds, monkeys, rats, and mice are, generally speaking, combated by the practical means at the disposal of man, such as trapping or scaring. Numerous other precautions are taken: one does not plant millet unless one's neighbours do likewise, because when there are many fields, all, not merely one, will be at the mercy of predatory birds; people favour bird-proof corns, though they are harder to thresh; late-maturing crops, whatever their productivity, are discarded in favour of those ripening early, because they cannot be reaped before the cattle start their unrestricted grazing; and a much-favoured peanut, which is also easy to reap, is liable to sprout unless special precautions are taken. In short, the problems of agriculture are tackled in a practical manner. 241 [731]

This does not mean that a practical demonstration of the superiority of new methods will always have the desired effect. Agricultural demonstrators have made very little impression. It is often thought that this is due to the improvidence, lack of ambition, and innate conservatism of the 'savage'. A farmer will tell you that, after years of experience on his farm, his Native labourers go home to practise their primitive, wasteful methods. The trouble is not savage incapacity, but the incongruity of our ways, our technology, and our ideals with theirs. The demonstrator is like a teacher speaking a foreign language and working with material and concepts which do not exist in the society. He often is wholly ignorant of the background of belief. His education makes him unduly scornful of savage superstitions, instead of using them to advantage. In agriculture, among the Lovedu, there is one practice we might call superstition. It is *ku xpa*, a method of safeguarding crops with medicine against the *depredations of birds and monkeys. It is quite harmless*, absorbs little of the time or energy of the few children who scatter the medicine, and does not preclude the use of other, more empirical methods. There is no need to waste eloquence upon eradicating a practice which strengthens the interest of the children in agriculture, causes no slackening in their scaring activities from the platforms erected in the fields, and, in the last resort, is an effective psychological device; for it equalizes the struggle of man against nature and maintains at the requisite intensity the confidence which enables him to strive hopefully against his difficulties. 241 177 [789]

Practical knowledge is undoubtedly the weapon with which demonstrators should combat progressive degeneration in agriculture; but it is

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241 177 not practical knowledge applied from our point of view; it must be from their point of view. Instruction must be articulated with their practices and techniques; it must take into account their arrangements and their rhythm of life. The knowledge imparted must be applicable to their conditions and be linked with the instrumenes at their disposal. For the dietician to extol the virtues of a new crop, for the doctor to show that bacteria more readily enter where resistance is lowered by deficiencies in food, even for the agricultural demonstrator using his superior implements to demonstrate the practicability of the crop—all this is very nearly fruitless. These things will have their value when they can be fitted into the Native's world of thought and technology. In the meanwhile, the execution of our plans, sound though they be in theory, is merely causing irritation and resistance.

241 476 ●178 All the old Lovedu cultivation was on the hills or along their slopes and, generally speaking, close relatives, not necessarily relatives through males, had all or some of their fields in large blocks (*dzwo*). Unlike the Tswana custom, these blocks stood in no relation to the social organisation; the land was not pointed out by the chief and its size was not predetermined, but depended upon the energy of the individual cultivators. The *dzwo* was a matter of convenience and utility: the concentration facilitated co-operation in clearing the fields, economized the labour necessary for protecting the gardens, and made mutual assistance in hoeing and weeding much easier. No doubt the arrangements also mobilized incentives and added to the joys of life. There is to-day nothing left of these blocks. The old ones have inevitably fallen into the hands of more and more scattered people and no new ones can be created because large blocks of land are no longer available. The tendency towards dispersal and fragmentation was still further emphasized when Shangana-Tongs cultivation proved the fertility of the valleys. To-day a man must take land where he can find it, and though the Lovedu still live on the hills, they have their lands scattered all over the country. Indeed, since it is easier to plough on level ground, the hills are liable to be neglected, though wisdom dictates that it is best to have fields in two different environments. The result is that a man's fields are widely separated, sometimes being as far as ten miles apart.

241 462 The old division of labour in agriculture between the sexes was not uneven; both men and women hoed, weeded, and reaped. Only men cleared the forest, but against this only women cultivated certain crops, such as groundnuts. The old pattern is still more or less maintained, at least in principle. But cultivation by the plough has changed matters. Men look upon hoeing as the work of women, although the old ideal so much survives that they despise the Shangana-Tongs because their menfolk neither hoed nor weeded in the past. To-day hoeing and weeding among the Lovedu fall largely upon the women, and ploughing almost exclusively upon the men. This is not a fair division of labour; it might be fairer if the other activities of men, such as hunting and public life, had not become greatly attenuated. For the women are always busy, and their work is more monotonous than that of the men, who, despite the labour migration to the towns, have much more leisure than women.

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More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do. 241 462

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new alinements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions: it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet. 241 134 178 [476]

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is 241 311 [K]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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824 called the small hemp, *khibajabajani*. The large pods of *legamani*, a
192 peanut of the *masaintika* variety, are likened to leggings, for which they use a corruption of the Afrikaans word *kamasters*. *Khiṭhava-misisi* in scientific nomenclature is *Amaranthus spinous* but, for all that, it pricks the 'missus' (*hu ṭhava misisi*). We link the sunflower with the sun, but they call it *munɔntshakhuhu*, fattener of the fowls, because the unaccountable European, instead of leaving fowls to their own devices, fattens them (*hu nɔntsha*) with its seeds. It would be tedious to give more of these interesting names. Suffice it to say that, upon whatever principle they are given, they furnish examples of close observation, of humour and poetry, and of practical sense.

824 In the command that the Lovedu have over the material supplied by
461 vegetation, knowledge of the suitability of the plant to be used is by far the most impressive aspect. By contrast, preparation of the material, by seasoning or otherwise, and skilful or artistic manipulation to produce the required result lag far behind. Utility rather than artistic beauty is the main consideration; a carelessly made article, generally speaking, serves its purpose as well as one well executed. There is not much specialization and a high standard of workmanship is not aimed at; most men know what wood to select and how to make a great variety of ordinary household articles. Special skill is needed for making wooden dishes, drums, and milk pails. The most skilled work is perhaps the making of baskets (*zwiruduana*), which is done by men. This is not the place to describe the technique of the arts and crafts; all we need insist upon is the widespread knowledge of the virtues and defects of the plants that can be used.

824 Modern conditions have brought about a serious decline in craftsman-
178 ship and in familiarity with the vegetation. Schoolboys no longer have the extensive opportunities of learning veld-lore which herding provided. Herding is to them hardly an institutionalized induction into nature study; instead of being a part of life itself, it assumes the aspect of distasteful labour. The introduction of European articles also lessens the interest in the qualities of the vegetation. Yet these influences are in their infancy. They have made some impression upon the material elements of the culture, but they have tended to impoverish rather than to replace the old. You see petrol tins side by side with water pots, ugly sacks ousting the picturesque granaries, patched pieces of boxwood replacing reed doors, cast-off European clothes instead of graceful coverings of skin, machine-made blankets beside hand-woven grass mats, and axes and knives, no longer from the smithy, but only from the stores.

178 More serious is the threat to the traditional outlook. Christianity
313 stresses the virtue of being different from the pagan, but the status of Europeanized Natives is precarious both in and outside the tribe, and there is no co-ordinated view of life that can successfully combat the subtle economic onslaught of European culture. And, since 1938, the legislative prohibition of cutting down trees, except after permission having been obtained and a fee paid, threatens a change of which the results cannot be foreseen. Many trees, and among them some essential for the crafts, may not be cut down at all. The inconvenience of walking

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twenty miles or more, quite apart from the fee, when wood is required for so small an article as a hoe handle, a spoon or a basket, encourages general evasion of the law. Destruction of forests is never wanton; it was necessary to relieve the pressure on the land, and to supply the needs of shelter and warmth. The arts and crafts did not lead to any significant encroachment. Blue-gum plantations can meet some needs, but not any of the specialized needs, and sun-dried bricks, already much in evidence, can extensively replace poles in building. But if we are anxious to lessen the sense of frustration, which the clash of Western culture makes inevitable, we should encourage, not destroy, the arts and crafts. Reclamation of the reserves is essential, both in our interests and in order to implement a policy of segregation, but if it is at the price of those things that give meaning to life, it might well ruin the spiritual foundation of the segregational structure.

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munyualo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities. 357 736

Rather like the *mulada* was the *muruiwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ṭuḍa* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'. 735 178 437

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilebe* arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or cattle of others. The standard payment is 10*s.* per acre ploughed. The advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn-tree'. There is an ill-defined custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the mother's brother, cares for (*hu itla*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maledi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid. 464 426 [465] 835 431

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufimsa*, uses the cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a 231 465

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CHAPTER XVII

CULTURE CONTACT AND CULTURE CHANGE

The relativistic approach: value of comparative and historical study—*interpenetration of the tribes*: ethnogenesis of the Lovedu and evolution of some of their cultural patterns—*the iconoclasm of Christianity*: breaking down and building up among converts, repercussions among pagans—*the challenge of Western conquest*: the indirect responses of the culture and its undisturbed foundations.

THE RELATIVISTIC APPROACH

For the past half-century Western conquest and civilization have been 178
challenging Lovedu culture. For centuries before that various Bantu cultures had percolated into the Lovedu lowveld. As a result, there has been cultural change, not only in the past few years, but throughout all the ages. Change is inescapable, continuous, ever-present, and there is no evidence that in the European period it has been revolutionary, while in the pre-European period it was merely evolutionary. There is a distinction, but to present the contrast as that between disruptive change and gradual development is unwarranted. The greatest disturbances brought about by contact with Western culture cannot, in their effect upon institutions and cultural patterns, be compared with the major cultural evolution, not only of the Lovedu, but of many other tribes, within measurable periods of time.

The evidence of great changes afforded by an historical and comparative 174
study of the tribes of the Northern Transvaal is overwhelming. Thus, for instance, the cultures of the Lovedu and of their kinsmen, the Mamavolo, have widely diverged since their separation from one another 250 years ago. The Mamavolo are like their immediate neighbours, the highveld Sotho, and unlike the Lovedu, not only in their handling of the major cultural complexes, such as the royal institutions, the 'schools', marriages, agricultural ritual, and village structure, but also in countless details of culture. They tolerate no female rulers, have given up ritual suicide of the chief, no longer appeal to the rite of the door to determine succession to the throne, and neither accept wives as tribute nor redistribute them in order to link up the political system. In minor details, such as their material culture and methods of threshing, and the absence among the Mamavolo of *thupula* (dedicated) cattle and of the practice of elongating the *labia minora*, their differences from the Lovedu are equally striking. The total impression of their culture and of their methods of expressing hostility to the European differs so greatly from that of the Lovedu that it is difficult to credit the common ancestry of these two tribes. Yet the evidence of history and of remembered, but no longer practised, custom is decisive.

Moreover, misgivings soon disappear in the light of further historical and comparative investigation. The Shai, immigrants since *c.* 1790 into the lowveld from amid Pedi and Transvaal Ndebele in the south, resemble the Lovedu far more closely than do their kinsmen, the Mamavolo. The

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

634 characteristic of Lowveld political organization. Districts are still of
624 great importance, and the district head is a busy and important man, both socially and politically. Contact with the European has resulted in two diverse tendencies observable in our area: among small tribes,
634 such as Phalaborwa and Sekhopo's Lobedu, there has been increased
624 centralization, the chief taking over functions, such as allocation of
178 land, which used to be the province of headmen; elsewhere, especially in the large kingdom of Modjadji, district headmen are in many respects becoming more independent, exacting from underlings labour to which they are not entitled and even controlling other districts to which they have no right.

624 Women may here, as among Venda, be heads of districts,[1] and, though the proportion of women to men is never high, they are often
562 the most important district heads in the tribe. Women become headmen in a variety of ways: among Lobedu a woman of the royal family may be appointed head of an area (generally, nowadays, over newly-bought tribal land) and though in practice her husband may do most of the work, she it is who is recognized and approached in the last resort. A daughter of the chief house succeeds her father even if there are sons of other houses; a woman may succeed her husband when the children are too young, and though, strictly speaking, she is only a regent in this case, she often continues to rule until her death and long after her son has attained his majority. Or a *rakhadi* may be asked to act as regent for her nephew, in which case she very often secures the succession for her ownson, ousting the rightful heir.

695 LAW AND JUSTICE. The Lowveld was the land of the ordeal, the only method by which witchcraft could be discovered or difficult cases of theft and adultery, where evidence was inconclusive, be decided. Boiling medicated water which scalded only the hands of the guilty might be used or a concoction be drunk which intoxicated the culprit, leaving the innocent unaffected. Except for occasional use among the Phalaborwa, however, the ordeal has been completely ousted by the Shangana-Tonga smeller-out and a modern method of dealing with witchcraft has developed over the whole of the Lowveld, which has spread not only into Vendaland but also into portions of the

[1] Except among Phalaborwa, Tsolya, and the people of Tswale and Sekhopo.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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by the institutions and by the reciprocal duties and responsibilities between individuals and groups inherent in the social structure. 577

Effects of Culture Contact

This picture of the world view of the Lovedu presents living practices and conceptions, not a dead and reconstructed past. Christianity has, indeed, modified some aspects of the culture: Christians are prevented from performing their kinship obligations in the traditional manner; they have accepted European ideas of trade for profit and use institutions such as the work-party for the exploitation of their fellows; but witchcraft, which they are supposed to have rejected, is as a result of increased tensions even more rampant among Christians than pagans. Christians substitute God for the ancestors, but continue to believe that the queen makes rain, albeit by the will of God. They tend to discredit the powers of charms but not of *vuyaga*, while 'heat', *makhuma*, and 'shadow' are still real forces, and the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and misfortune still hold sway. Even these minor modifications have to be viewed in the light of the fact that Christians constitute only about 5 per cent. of the tribe and are relatively isolated. 177 795 771

The influence of Western culture as a whole is more insidious. The knowledge acquired by young men working in the towns and returning to the tribe holds implications as regards the nature of the universe and the destiny and purpose of man which they cannot harmonize with the traditional world view. They tend to despise what the old men cannot or will not make intelligible to them, such as the significance of the *digoma* and the *zwidajani* which appear to them to be shams. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect for their elders and for traditional values and institutions. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older, begin to play a part and to have a stake in the culture. Moreover, they are sensitive to insinuations that their doubts are due to the white man's insidious influences and soon repress them as unworthy and disloyal. 177 771

The younger generation tend to shirk unpleasant responsibilities. Thus Jim refused to take over the family office of keeper of the rain-medicine, fearing the risk of sterility which handling of this medicine entails. The absence of many adult men, who are away as migrant labourers, makes the organization of the great ceremonials difficult. Reconciliation and the restitutive sanction are no longer the great forces they used to be, since the closely knit system of reciprocities, everyone's dependence upon day-to-day mutualities and the imperativeness for social life of co-operation, no longer exert the irresistible pressure on the parties to carry out compromises reached in the courts. Aggrieved litigants, reluctant still to invoke European intervention, increasingly resort to magicians who have developed a whole new system of revenge magic to even up matters. The trend is to put their faith in magical retaliation rather than in the sanction of reciprocity. 178

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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178 But the rewards of participation in reciprocal give and take and the penalties of being denied these reciprocities are still strong sanctions.

On the whole, therefore, culture contact has not yet brought about profound changes in Lovedu conceptions of the order of nature or of the relations of men to one another. The old outlook is still intact, even though some of the values supporting it cannot be maintained for much longer at an intensity sufficient to make them effective forces.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about those alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old, M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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(h) The incidence of cross-cousin marriage and its variations in two generations of descendants of A (counting only the actual members of his lineage as shown in Figure 9) over a time-span of over sixty years (i.e., from about 1895 to 1962) was 31 per cent (nine out of twenty-nine marriages). 582 613

The arrangements in the above lineage segment are by no means unusual. This lineage is that of a district head, but it is representative of numbers of cases that could be chosen from among non-Christian traditionalists who still form the majority of the tribe. 58 613 178

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phaia* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*mutupe*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ena*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *mutupe* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *melale* or

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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on getting food, shelter, and the material comforts—in short, on pragmatic adjustment to nature by the application of empirical knowledge—than on any other aspect of their culture.

The agricultural complex of activities is the end to which the major portion of the people's resources in land, labour, power, capital, and economic energies are directed. For success, practical knowledge of the environment is of the first importance. A feeling of security is attained in agricultural activities, not so much by magical as by empirical means. Skill, experience, close observation, hard work—these are the primary requisites. The struggle to make the soil yield up its fruit is not conceived to be waged or determined by mysterious forces. This does not mean that a European will be impressed by their methods of tillage. Their conditions of life, their technology, their control over nature are different from ours. The manner in which people invest their energies and draw out their rewards does not conform to our ideas of efficiency. We deplore the poor tillage, wonder at the wastefulness during periods of plenty, inveigh against thoughtless improvidence. Lack of intelligence, we say, is the reason for their lack of systematic planning against recurrent famine. But we forget, among other things, that practices based on shifting cultivation, though unsuitable in the new, crowded environment, are still alive; that the problems of storage against the ravages of termites and weevils have not been solved and, with the materials at the disposal of the Native, cannot be solved even by our experts; and that, in the absence of organized exchange and marketing facilities, there is no incentive to produce more than for the annual needs of the household plus the surplus for beer-making necessary to maintain social relations and one's reputation for generosity. Practices which ramify into the cultural structure cannot be changed, costly new materials for combating pests cannot be acquired, nor can a whole superstructure of economic distribution be built up at a moment's notice. While the old values that gave men confidence and sustained the society continue to survive as they do, it is they which will regulate the application of knowledge and resources. A man may wish to increase his food supply, but not at the price of giving up too many of the things valued in the society; a surplus beyond a certain limit means nothing and suggestions for an improvement in methods may thus fall on deaf ears.

We can here refer only cursorily to a few aspects of Lovedu agriculture. There are, firstly, the various crops. In modern times, maize is considered the most important and are the staple crop on the hills, where they also have the first claim on the best soils. It is elusine, however, the oldest of the Lovedu grains, that is given to the gods. But no one, so say the old men, must neglect kaffir corn (*Sorghum caffrorum*) and millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*), for upon them greater reliance can be placed in times of drought. In the valleys, despite their vulnerability to the ravages of birds, more of these latter two crops are planted than maize, largely because they do not answer on the hills. Cereals are cultivated by both men and women; and, in addition, every woman plants also ojaje beans (*Vaundzeia subterranea*), peanuts (*Arachis hypogaea*), pumpkins, native beans (*Vigna sinensis*) and mung beans

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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CHAPTER IV

CO-OPERATION AND EXCHANGE

Arrangements of and changes in the work-party, partnerships, and solitary occupations—relative roles of economic and goodwill exchanges—beer, dances and bride-price as vehicles of reciprocal exchanges—aversion from business.

181 To convert to his use the material resources upon which man relies for subsistence, some organization of labour is necessary; man must co-ordinate his energies with those of his fellow man. He must co-operate with some and he may consider himself as a competitor of others. The Lovedu is an individualist, but life is hardly regarded as a competitive struggle, even in respect of the things that are limited in supply. Men aim, not so much at achievement and riches, as at maturity and self-sufficiency. There is no single scale of attainments by which men measure themselves against one another. Moderate success is credited to industry, but immoderate success may be suspect; he who reaps much more than his neighbours is in danger of being looked upon as an enemy in league with anti-social forces. The Lovedu do not display either their emotions or their possessions; ostentation is appropriate only to states of exhilaration. Self-expression finds its legitimate scope, not in worsting a rival, but in a gradually expanding responsibility and prestige. The society has a hierarchical framework so constructed that rank and age interpose themselves between possible competitors. This does not mean that there is no competition, but the great emphasis is upon co-operation.

476 The two methods by which men pool their resources in order to provide for their primary needs are working together in mutual helpfulness and exchanging the products of their labour. Co-operative working together arises chiefly in agricultural and building activities, where its main purpose is easily intelligible; exchanges are not felt to bear such a direct relation to the differentiated needs and activities of men. Yet fundamentally co-operation and exchange are part of the same system of values. Mutual helpfulness is highly esteemed and aggressive exploitation deeply despised. In the co-operative situation these values are intrinsically present; but the exchange situation must be reconstituted to bring it into harmony with them. The problem in co-operative situations is to harmonise with them the individualism of the peasant; the problem of exchange situations is to eliminate the idea of a commercial transaction; and in both types of situations this is done by the stress upon reciprocity. The purely economic aspect tends to become wholly obscured, except in modern forms of co-operation and exchange. In them the helper becomes a servant and exchanges become 'bizzie' (business). Service and 'bizzie' are tolerated only so far as they conform to the old pattern and values.

476 571 The *lejwa*, which is the most distinctive form of co-operative work, consists of a more or less casual group of workers. Neighbours, relatives,

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strengthens the tendency towards cunning and duplicity (which safe- 157
guard the secrecy of the rain charms) and has given rise to the impression among Europeans that the Lovedu are cowardly and deceitful, lacking the manly qualities of their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga. Foolish valour is discredited, for 'It is at the home of the coward that the porridge bowl is not thrown away': he lives to eat another day. The prestige of a 562
queen as ruler also maintains the high status of women in a patrilineal society. Nowhere else are so many women heads of districts or in such important political positions. Women own cattle, have wives and may aspire to headship of large villages; and in the social system the main forces are oriented from the pivotal position of the cattle-linked sister. A wife or mother is queen of her establishment, as its old Khilovedu name, *mulaqo*, indicates: *ku laqa* means to control like a leader, while *le laqo* describes the excessive control of some overwatchful kraal heads.

Agriculture is not important as a field of achievement, for stores 556
cannot be accumulated; immoderate success is suspect and a man cannot 555
establish or alter his status by economic means. 'Yours is what you eat; what you set aside is another's', means both that expending energy upon accumulating goods is lack of balance and that the 'haves' cannot be ungenerous to the 'have-nots'. Nor is the royal complex of institutions, except in so far as it interpenetrates the social system, a field of achievement for ordinary men. It is the social system which, besides being one of the great pillars of security, provides the scheme in which man seeks self-expression and recognition. There are wide avenues of achievement for men, especially in the *khoro*, and women may aspire to influence within the *manyualo* complex and its 'houses'. There are other fields of achievement: men may find satisfaction in the circle of the huts of their wives, women in spirit possession, and both men and women may become doctors, district heads, craftsmen, or story-tellers, while the adventurous may seek expression in the fantasy of manipulating the forces of witchcraft.

But all these avenues are available only within the arrangements of the 181
social structure, which on the whole are designed to eliminate competition 692
and to reward co-operation. The activities of the *khoro*, in which men seek and display their highest self-expression, throw into bold relief the qualities and traits that are most esteemed in the society: mature wisdom, appeasement, reliance, not on force, but on agreement, and confidence in the effective operation of the long-run reciprocities of the social system. The task of the *khoro*, the most honourable and most arduous of all tasks, is successfully achieved only if the disputants can be guided towards reconciliation and acceptable compromises. Certainty—the idol of security set up by our aggressive society, the fetish worshipped by legalistic practitioners and the obsession impelling our courts to adjudicate upon conflicting rights according to strict law—is not a feature of the *khoro*. The *khoro* is oblivious of the fear that hard cases will make bad law, for it need not, as we do, steel itself against tenderness for the hardship of the unwitting offender, lest exceptions upset the certainty of the law and that elegant symmetry which, as we conceive, guarantees security. In

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181 the *khwe* the exigencies of personal adjustments may overrule the decrees
692 of the law. In the setting of the *khwe* we thus see emphasis upon compromise and informality, faith in muddling through rather than in meticulous certainty, and reliance upon the pressure of the social reciprocities, not upon the sanctions of force. We may, in the context of European society, call them care-free standards, but that is to fail to see their place among the Lovedu.

181 These characteristics are faithful reflections of what one finds in the society and what is proper to the social structure as a whole. This structure provides the pattern of long-run reciprocities which, without the support of sanctions of force, ensures mutuality and co-operation. The reciprocities are motivated by inevitable necessity: 'The well-doer does well unto the well-doer; it is only his despoiler that the despoiler despoils'. Side by side with insistence upon give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as strenuously striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. Co-operation is essential to life and its tasks, for, says the proverb, 'One leg cannot dance a *gwhe*'.

It is striking how the culture by re-interpretation prevents the struggle apparently inherent in the objective situation, such as when there are limited prizes or resources. The Reserve is overcrowded, the population presses hard upon the natural resources, and land is scarce; yet the people act as if the old abundance of land still prevails. They attribute ordinary shortages, not to scarcity of land, but to the indolence of the modern generation, thus rephrasing their difficulties in a manner which is congruous with social values, reduces the possibility of competition and permits of the resolution of the difficulties by human effort. And, generally speaking, economic resources and especially the *mayunde* cattle exchanges cannot be manipulated to acquire wealth or status or position. There is no special prestige attached to possessions and no socio-economic stratification of classes; for a great man, whether he be poor or rich, is first and foremost a royal relative, and the purpose of economic activities is self-sufficiency and independence. What particularly struck us was the absence of competition in craftsmanship: we have often seen one potter appraising the pots of another; we have always found it useless to urge expedition upon one worker by hinting that otherwise we would place our digger with another; and it seemed to make little difference that the money was badly needed for tax purposes. Lucrative trade, calculation instead of mutuality in the work party, and display, both of possessions and of personality, are intensely disliked.

To the same pattern of values as non-competitiveness belong the disinclination to make comparisons and the aspiration towards equality with others. The role of these attitudes is not merely economic. The former reflects lack of interest in analysis as well as the absence of graduated yardsticks for comparing quantities and performances. Linguistic devices for expressing comparison—adjectives have no comparative or superlative forms—can hardly cope with our distinctions. It

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is very difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things we quite naturally compare, such as objects of craftsmanship, achievements of individuals, or other elements of culture. They do not share our interest in analysing out parts of a culture complex in order to compare them, and they generally regard the complexes—for instance, two different types of dance—as wholes incommensurable with one another. Of course, they do compare things, but as regards economic goods they are chiefly concerned to be favoured equally with others. 'What are you stinting me of?' is a common phrase implying, 'Am I not, equally with others, entitled to share in your generosity?' A child, asking us for sweets, often says, 'Give me *also*', for he is begging for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors, the prayer is quite often phrased in such terms as 'Give *us also*' or 'Let us have health *like others*'. When a son had just been initiated as a doctor, his father prayed simply, 'Let him also be able to heal nicely,' and when a son was ill in town, the words, despite the competitiveness of town conditions, were 'We say, let him be "cool", Mother, and in his work let him be like others.' To stress, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with, or greater than that of, others is evidently improper. [8]

Competition is not always eliminated. Doctors are not conceived to be rivals for a limited clientele, but they are said to 'try' one another: cultural definition diverts attention from the objective social situation of a limited number of customers, in which competition is discouraged, to the magical sphere, in which the fantasy of competitive strife is permitted. But the most striking arrangement that limits competition is the socially recognized, albeit not rigidly prescribed, hierarchy which defines men's status according to seniority or rank. 'Robes may be passed on [to strangers], never royal rank'; or, again, 'What becomes worn by age is clothes, not noble rank', because a nobleman can never lose caste or position. Younger brothers are taught to defer to their elder brothers, and in spite of displacements of district heads, it is hardly conceivable that commoners can oust royal relatives. Where the rivalry is fierce, as among councillors at the capital, it is part of an institutional conflict and may not be openly displayed.

Dancing and music relieve the monotony of life, there is adventure in illegitimate sex relations and in the outlawed activity of witchcraft, but it is beer which provides the predominant recreation. Both beer and dancing belong to the co-operative, reciprocity pattern, whereas witchcraft is essentially competitive and anti-social. Unlike the Shangana-Tsonga, the Lovedu dislike display in dancing, except in the esoteric dancing of initiation and the individualistic dancing of adherents of the alien cult of possession. Dancing, like beer, has other than recreational significance, and it is the manner in which beer has been integrated with diverse aspects of the culture that we may profitably consider. [535]

Beer is the humanly satisfying element, even the justification of many actions; it is a recognized means of maintaining prestige and hence of achievement; and, as the medium of goodwill exchanges, it also subserves security. No occasion, whether social or ritual or religious or economic, [8] 273

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181 is complete without beer. During some seasons of the year, people are
273 in a perpetual state of exhilaration: some are singing or gossiping near the beer pots; some are expectantly watching their concoctions mature; and the rest are recovering from the last beer drink. Drunkenness is deprecated, but drink induces a state in which behaviour otherwise frowned upon is tolerantly regarded. Beer parties should be orderly, for they are occasions when some of the restraints of life may be relaxed and when jealousies and divisions, normally under control, may rise to the surface. Though ostentation, even self-praise, is allowed in states of exhilaration, beer must be drunk with decorum; it should be lingered over, not bolted in haste.

181 A multitude of values centre round beer. It is a nourishing food, taking
273 the place of meat feasts elsewhere; it is also the food of the gods. Beer is so
574 great an attraction that it would be sheer lack of balance to keep one's appointments, to attend to other business, or to be worried by the passage of time if a beer party is imminent or in progress. A man's reputation for generosity depends upon his giving a beer party occasionally, although the entertainment is invariably in connexion with some definite purpose, economic, ritual, or religious. Beer is the medium of goodwill exchanges between relatives-in-law and between neighbours; and, as belonging to this context, the tributary beer from the districts to the queen is transformed from a burden to a pleasure. Beer is at the basis of the group of
[571] *nalojana* (literally, those who eat together), composed largely of kin and neighbours who often co-operate in economic activities; this group cuts across the lines of the district and includes even such alien elements as Shangana-Tonga; and the main obligation of its members is to call fellow members to any beer that is available. Reconciliations are effected by beer, which also 'opens the way for the mother-in-law'. All the essential reciprocities are maintained by beer: a man returns a borrowed article with beer; a family doctor, instead of being paid for his services, expects to be called to the family beer; and in the work party beer removes labour from the category of subservience to that of mutuality. With beer one thanks, but with money one pays.

181 None of the interests that we have considered are intensive, and none of the striving, whether for security, achievement, or recreation, is concentrated. The diverse ideals and achievements that are permitted in social arrangements enrich personality and encourage the qualities of balance and wisdom; and the insistence upon a reciprocity which is not motivated by distrust, conditions mutual helpfulness and suppresses aggressiveness and display. An important clue to Lovedu Weltanschauung is their attitude to what may be considered to be ultimate power, the power through which the final goals of life and security can be attained. Such power is sought, not in privations, tortures, visions, and self-oblivion, but in normality, equanimity and maturity; it is derived, not from breaking the ordinary bounds of experience, to escape to another world and from transcending the limits of the senses, but from manipulating mundane forces and from identification with nature. The Lovedu do not compel cosmic laws by the power of ecstatic states or trances; they bend these laws to their purposes by supplicating the queen and

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moving her to pity and by 'cooling' the heat of the earth and the anger [51]
of the ancestors. Frenzy and excess are outlawed, moderation and balance are honoured. They have little conception of the Buddhistic Nirvana or annihilation of human existence, of the fanaticism and fatalism of the soldiers of Allah, or even of Western concentration and intensive striving. From the point of view of our values, the Lovedu are Laodicean, 'lukewarm, neither hot nor cold', happy-go-lucky. They are always saying that they will 'try', never that they must succeed. But there is nothing intensive about their striving. A man faced with a difficulty is always advised to 'persevere', but that does not imply our grim determination, being more like the leisurely manner in which they set about all their tasks.

This theme permeates every aspect of the culture. In the boys' circumcision the object is to break the child of his wildness and lack of balance, and the purpose is achieved, not by excessive tortures and privations, but by the mature guidance of the old men. Neither strength nor stoicism are much made of, and the virtues inculcated are balance and self-sufficiency. The Lovedu tolerate ostentation only on occasions appropriate to exhibitionism, quite unlike even such nearly related tribes as the Majala and Phalaborwa, who have institutionalized boasting displays by those famed as hunters or warriors. In the field of the [78]
magico-religious, fastings and visions do not figure, except among the possessed and the smellers-out, the latter always foreigners, the former a recent introduction. Possession in its Lovedu context has been shorn of its paranoic elements, its exaggerated trances, and its inception in a mental cataclysm. Cataleptic seizures do not serve as inductions to the super- [80]
natural as among the Nguni, for fits are due to witchcraft, and, unlike the smeller-out, who is a Shangana-Tonga and works by insight and exaggerated procedures, the Lovedu doctor divines by his craft and acquires power by learning and experience. Prayer is not an emotional [81]
outpouring of the heart, but a communication as between man and man. [82]
Dissension in her country upsets, and anger in her heart inhibits, the power of the queen. Spells are not characterized by intensity or malevolence; they are often merely directions to the medicine to bring about justice or to restore the balance. Even at a death or burial, there must be no display of distress, no undue weeping; both the dying and the survivors resign themselves with a calmness that is the admiration of Europeans who know the Lovedu well. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to injure her next child; Mpuru, now thirty years of age, was born a cripple, it is said, because his mother, Makwedu, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. We have never seen weeping at a funeral, and the property of the deceased is not so contaminated that it has to be destroyed, though in the midst of the Lovedu the Shangana-Tonga phrase death as a terror situation, even pulling down the hut of the deceased and removing from his village. Suicide is an escape, intelligible enough when a man is insane or (in the old days) has been condemned to death as a witch; but otherwise it is attributed to witchcraft, not to frustration.

In the method by which the themes of both sex and authority are [83]
handled there is the same aversion from excess or ostentation. The Lovedu [84]

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are not sex-ridden; it is we who, by outlawing the impulses, which we subtly stimulate in our romantic ideals, our literature, music, and art in general, create for ourselves neuroses and psychoses, maladjustments and perversions. The Lovedu have no problems of sexual adjustment or compatibility: their attitude is a matter-of-fact one. Sex is handled with moderation; men are warned against the dangers of excessive promiscuity, they learn from their proverb that 'A woman's pubes may break up the family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are wholly undeveloped. In ritual, sex is symbolized to some extent, but only as an aspect of fertility, not as a sensual pleasure, while obscenity is inconspicuous and must sometimes be rationalized, as if it were questionable even under the auspices of the ritual. The fertility theme is itself pushed far back, so that it is unrecognizable in the symbolic background.

The Lovedu are innocent of Lesbian practices. They are also revolted by what they believe the Shangana-Tonga in their midst tolerate—namely, the marriage of immature girls to old men, who they say sometimes manually enlarge the vagina of these girls; and they regard as disgusting that extreme measure of Shangana-Tonga women, who in impotent rage against a man may display their genitalia. Yet the Lovedu are not unmoved; modern conditions are making nubile girls breast-conscious, so that they are beginning to wear attenuated bodices; young men admit to being aroused by the sight of the inner, smooth surfaces of women's thighs; and significantly the common word for the female sexual organs is *ensimoni* (place of the gods) or, among old women, *khitugulo* (a charm or object made sacred by association with the gods), and for the penis, *hoyo ya mudzi* (staff of the village). In the one case of exhibitionism we saw tried before the *khoro*, the culprit, a man, was dealt with tolerantly as if he were an irresponsible madman; masturbation among children is looked upon as 'playing with' the sexual organs, and among boys it is indulged in less for its sexual satisfaction than to prove to their mates that they have reached maturity. The Lovedu do not suffer from guilt complexes because sex is not a temptation to be resisted by painful effort of will.

Again, within the family there is little of that assertion of authority that among us leads to the development of an Oedipus complex. One finds neither stern paternal authority nor fierce resentments and compensatory day-dreaming among children. In the *khoro* authority is distributed, in the work party dominance is resented. There are no institutions that foster the development of strong personalities. Recognition is not given to supermen, and there are no great heroes in Lovedu history. The precocious child is a potential witch and the authoritative councillor is liable to be regarded as intoxicated. One day the great councillor of the queen conducted the proceedings of the *khoro* in what appeared to us to be an expeditious manner, taking command of them, silencing irrelevancies, and crisply announcing his decisions. We could not help remarking upon the masterful exhibition, the order and efficiency, but our remarks caused great surprise and we were told that only a drunken man could have been guilty of the ignominious display. Modesty, not arrogance, and dignity, not assertion, are great virtues.

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In the Lovedu configuration of values, moderation is allied to toleration /81 of differences. The Lovedu do not attach much importance to precision 808 and punctuality, rigid procedures and meticulous fulfilment of promises. Time is not valued and the word for slowness or absence of hurry is the same as that for goodness or moral virtue (*swya*); the only way to ask a man to go slowly is to ask him to go in a good manner (*ga swya*). Time is not the first consideration, for most actions can, within certain limits, be performed to-morrow as well as to-day. 'The far-off well causes thirst', they say, implying that one should drink [beer] where one can and not rigidly pursue some distant goal; the saying is an appraisal of opportunism as against inflexible purposes. Interest very rarely centres /81 in exact forms, word-perfect formulas, or the precise execution of a rite. Prayers and spells are extempore, communications with the ancestors are often disturbed by gossip and intrusions, and consultation of a doctor about questions of life and death may be interrupted by all manner of irrelevancies. In the *khoro* the procedure does not rely upon set forms; there is toleration even of the differences of customs and laws in the districts; and great deviations from the norm are possible if people agree. An actual performance of a rite differs widely from the ideal description given by an informant. The important thing is always the broad pattern, the underlying spirit, not the exact form, the letter of the law; and magical power is hardly ever derived from a precise unfolding of a rite or adherence to meticulous details. The most highly formalized aspect of the culture is the *digwa* complex, where we seem to see the remnants of a highly ceremonious outlook upon life, which was characterized by secret societies, masked gods, and symbolic objects, and by esoteric mysteries enmeshed in fixed forms and calendric observances. The obscure symbolism of the drum cult is inscrutable, but its dramatic interest keeps it alive, even if the power of its mysteries and mummeries appears to challenge the prerogatives of the queen.

Toleration of variations is necessary among the Lovedu to effect the incorporation and willing co-operation of so many divergent elements, especially in view of the fact that the ruling group has neither the means nor the inclination to impose its will by force; it is also implied in the autonomy of the districts and necessitates the elaboration of the links which overcome the weaknesses of decentralization. Variability adds to the scope of individual expression, permitting of the realization of very different temperaments and avoiding the dangers of repression. This is so because individuality will have, within the limits of the pattern, great play, not only in specific situations, such as rites and ceremonies in which the forms are not rigid, the roles of persons not fixed, and the precedences and procedures not invariable, but also in whole societies in which wide expanses of culture are not externalized in conventions or ceremonial. This is true of specific Lovedu rites, ceremonies, and institutions, as well as of Lovedu culture as a whole. Another aspect of the idea that man has many potentialities and many ways of realizing them is expressed in the saying, 'Man is an elephant; he does not eat one [kind of] plant only'—that is, he should try many things.

The socially stressed Lovedu values and the social arrangements are,

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181 of course, not congenial to every one, and frustrations occur; but the society provides for procedures whereby serious frustration is minimized. Thus the loss to one family of a murdered man is solaced by replacing him from the family of the murderer and building up permanent marriage and *mayunalo* links between the two families. Tolerance of variations harmonizes with the insistence upon compromises, and in the setting of the culture it does not create serious problems of instability and insecurity. Security is provided by the integration and coherence of the dominant motivations and interests, the long-run reciprocities of the social system, and the unshakable confidence in the powers of the queen. At the same time the predictability necessary for stability is of a different order from that of our social arrangements; and it is measured very largely by the spirit and the willingness and attitude of people.

181 626 Conformity is not secured by external sanctions of force and only to a remarkably small degree by the ancestors. Nor are people so delicately conditioned to the values of the society that they spontaneously react to conscience. The internal sanctions are only moderately developed and there is no undue sensitiveness to shame or guilt, ridicule or abuse. An offender is not cast out; and a witch, generally speaking, is not ostracized. Over-sensitiveness to rebuffs, even in delicate situations such as when a man begs the favour of joining a beer drink, is deprecated, for, as they say, 'To chase a guinea-fowl [the beggar] is to cause it to go where it can scratch for food', so that it is foolish to feel crestfallen when the remedy is to pass on and seek beer where you will be well received. Nor should a man be sensitively timid or unnecessarily diffident: 'He who feels cold need not be shown the fire'; one may ask for favours and should not feel injured if refused; and there is no disgrace in begging for whatever one needs. Indeed, just as 'An ant bearing a burden cannot crawl under dry wood' (that is, things that will conceal him), so a man who has of the good things of life cannot hope to escape sharing with others who may legitimately beg some of them. Europeans often interpret these traits as obtuseness, shameless beggary, insensitiveness to high ideals, and even insolence.

The Lovedu are sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system, and these forces are set into motion against a man when he disregards the reciprocities upon which the system relies. Since there are few repressed fears the pressure of which on the mind can be removed by confession and atonement, the sense of guilt seldom moves men; offenders very rarely repent merely at the dictate of conscience. The sense of shame is more delicately internalized, but it drives men to make restitution only when the misdeed has been exposed and brought into relation with the reciprocity system. The ego, in other words, is not highly vulnerable, for it is well-balanced, so that frustration of one purpose does not prostrate the individual, and there are many opportunities of escape from an antagonistic to a better disposed group or environment; as they phrase it, 'There is no madman but he has a friend'. Participation in the benefits of the culture depends upon not offending against the reciprocities; but the positive aspect, pride and self-realization in mutuality, is far more important than the negative aspect, fear of being deprived of the reciprocities.

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It need hardly be said that the reciprocities are not precisely calculated equivalences, nor a series of exactly balanced obligations. People do not consciously think of the long-run result of their behaviour, and they know that social duty done is not always sure of its reward. 'Hard as the axe chops, it cannot eat the honey it extracts', they say to warn those who expect that their efforts will inevitably be rewarded.

The traits, motivations, and attitudes of the Lovedu become more and more intelligible in the context of the culture as a whole. Whether they are so delicately integrated that we can speak of the culture as an articulated whole, is not a question we shall try to answer. The tribal boundaries are certainly not the boundaries of the culture, which both in its forms and in its attitudes very gradually merges into the culture of a larger area, the limits of which cannot be exactly determined. In view of the increasingly great variations as one goes further and further from the nucleus, the degree of integration can be regarded relatively only to the area one chooses. Lack of integration is often more apparent than real. With regard both to recently introduced elements and to old elements which in their forms or purposes lag behind the changes of the whole culture, the process of integration is proceeding apace, but can never be complete. Thus the cult of possession is shedding those elements that are incongruous with the culture. There are also apparent inconsistencies in the divergent forms allowed in the districts and in principles of behaviour which are contradictory. Thus, for instance, revenge is permitted in the magico-witchcraft sphere, but is outlawed in the legal sphere. We may compare this contradiction to our approval of killing an enemy in war, which is conceived to be in the interests of national security, and our condemnation of killing a fellow man in peace, which is a crime against the security of life. Cultures often segregate contradictory aspects of social experience into logic-tight compartments, and there is no conflict as long as the contradictions can either be kept distinct or be reconciled. If they are embodied in the cultural system, no pressure is brought to compare them, and there is no lack of integration either in the mind of the individual or in the culture.

Men feel insecure chiefly in the face of disease and death, dissension, drought, and the disruptive danger of European intervention. The Lovedu attribute their fears to witchcraft, aggressiveness and quarrelsomeness, wrong burials, and the 'spoiling' of the country by the white man. We shall deal briefly only with two of these sources of insecurity: disease, which is one of the most constant preoccupations of the Lovedu mind, and the European, whose meddling has changed the shape and meaning of life and has upset the standards of right and wrong.

There is abundant reason for the perpetual anxiety about health, for disease is rife and even minor illnesses provide the occasion for the entry of the witch. Read against the background of their imperfect knowledge of anatomy and of the causation of disease, experience warns men that almost anything, from a simple scratch to the dreaded 'coughing disease', may cause death; in every case, not germs and poisons, but witches and sorcerers, may enter the body and take advantage of the weakness of the patient. Disease is combated, and susceptibility to disease is guarded against, at

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181 753 every step in a man's life. The infant is saturated with medicine: he is made to grow by means of medicine, he is saturated and strengthened, and every upset of the stomach, every sign of disorder, every major change in his life is treated as if it were a grave danger. The child is often inoculated against the 'poisoned shaft', the 'last, fatal arrow' that a malicious enemy might 'hurl' at him. Medicines by anticipation protect those who after their initiation ceremony might be weakened (*ha khoma*) when they resume contact with the world. Even adults in perfect health periodically consult their doctors to discover whether, unknown to them, some one is not planning an attack upon them.

To a European nothing is more amazing than the number of medicines that are tried, rejected, and changed when a man is or supposes that he is ill, unless indeed it is the contradiction that is implied in their preoccupation with their ailments as contrasted with their care-free attitude to life. The Lovedu are always telling of their illnesses, yet they seem to worry as little about them as the Englishman about the weather, although he can hardly converse without complaining about it. It must, therefore, not be imagined that life is weighed down by this interest in ailments; the Lovedu are seldom really depressed. They do not feel at the mercy of a capricious power, for their safety is ultimately in strong hands. They can use medicine to combat witchcraft and, though death is inevitable, their faith in the superiority of the good forces that they can invoke to control evil remains unshaken; for death is only the occasional triumph of evil, which time and again throughout life is defeated by the power of medicine. The outlook which supports security presupposes an ordered universe in which witchcraft is not merely outlawed, but can be overcome by employing well-recognized techniques.

829 177 In the face of the danger of the European, the position is entirely different. The white man is conceived to be part of a world which is antagonistic and incomprehensible; its forces are both disruptive, striking at the very significance of life, and capricious, not amenable to control by any known magical techniques. The projection of the danger upon the supernatural is but one aspect of a far wider conflict between European and Native, conqueror and conquered, perpetuated by divergent outlooks and different cultural configurations.

The conflict is an exceedingly complicated one. There is, firstly, the threat to the security of the Lovedu tribe, a threat that strikes particularly at the position of the queen and at the effectiveness of social mechanisms, causing criminals to multiply, encouraging disrespect for parents and for elders, and weakening the force of the reciprocities. Secondly, in the wider contact of Europeans and Natives attitudes have become vitiated by the antipathies that develop between the group of fellow men and the aliens outside it. The loyalties and trust between those within the group become transformed into hatred and suspicion towards those outside it; in the one case the human capacity for self-sacrifice, in the other case the capacity for selfishness, comes into play. Where the whole value system of the one group clashes with that of the other, antipathies are intensified. Moreover, the differences between the groups coincide with pronounced biological distinctions, such as

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in; and as the result there is a profound distrust which vitiates relations. In 829
the situation of a European-owned mission station, both because of the 177
threat attributed to an iconoclastic creed and of the supposed capitalistic exploitation, the services and sacrifices of a missionary are liable to be rewarded with ingratitude and suspicion.

But however favourable the conditions, the difficulties must not be underestimated. It is the sensitive ego that is easily controlled; if a man cannot ordinarily be moved by an appeal to a sense of honour, conscience, or cupidity, moral pressure cannot easily be brought to bear upon him. Not only is the Lovedu ego not vulnerable, but the resort to kindness and the appeal to high motives are liable to be construed as cunning and an attempt to overreach. 'An ingratiating person', such as a European who comes with pleasant words, the Lovedu say, 'lacks not ulterior motive; if he lacks it, he is doomed' (for in any case he will be suspected). No wonder that the European so often believes that firmness and coercion are the only means of controlling the Native.

The different views held by the Lovedu and the European with regard to 177
certainty and precision lead to many conflicts. The lack of Lovedu insistence upon these traits gives an appearance of irresponsibility and disregard of obligations against the background of European society; and the white man readily believes that Natives are innately like children and always need supervision. As employers, masters, and administrators, Europeans have, in the setting of a competitive, calculating society, no alternative but to stress punctuality and precise regulation; but they are wrong in supposing that the essence of every society must be its regulative aspect and that anarchy must follow if irregularities and disregard of rigid procedures are allowed. The meticulous fulfilment of obligations, upon which the Western commercial structure depends, is not necessary in the timeless Lovedu culture, with its reliance upon long-run reciprocities. The Lovedu would easily understand the parable in which the [11]
people who worked for an hour in the vineyard in the cool of the evening received as much reward as those who had toiled there all day long in the hot sun, for they have little patience with the dull, mechanical systems that measure merit, work, and time by a highly graduated yardstick. In the hierarchy of Lovedu interests and necessities, time and punctual fulfilment of promises are secondary; but this does not mean that in the setting of the culture people are irresponsible and unreliable.

The beer-drinking of Natives is the bugbear of the European em- 177
ployer; it is a real problem to the farmer. Even in the Reserve its social 273
function is gradually giving way to its pathological one. There are many reasons for the change: the greater abundance of grain, the increasing monotony of life, the sense of frustration, and the recognition in the society that relief and excess may be displayed in states of exhilaration. Farmers legitimately complain of the demoralizing effect of beer. Beer can never be used in its full cultural context on the farms, and its prior claims to time and interest can never be harmonized with the requirements of labour service. The problem that is raised is apparently insoluble, for total prohibition of beer leads to the surreptitious drinking of injurious, rapidly contrived concoctions, to a sense of grievance on the part

that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts. 777

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*rupapa*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare. 754 789

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *makaru*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the bones, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased. 829 777 753 [821]

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups is the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *guha*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted. 186

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

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attached to possession and no socio-economic stratification of classes; for a great man, whether he be poor or rich, is first and foremost a royal relative, and the purpose of economic activities is self-sufficiency and independence. Trade is disliked and competition is absent even in craftsmanship. So marked is the disinclination to make comparisons that it is difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things that Europeans quite naturally compare, such as the achievements of individuals or objects of craftsmanship.

Children are taught 'to be like others', not to strive to outdo them and precociousness is disliked. A child asking for sweets often says 'Give me also', even if no one else has been given any on that occasion. He begs for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors the prayer is quite often phrased, 'Give us also', or 'Let him have health like others'. To stress, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with or greater than that of others would be improper. Contrast with this the opportunities for and love of competition in Zulu society where every boy is constantly measuring himself against others, vieing with them in fights, in dress, in love-making, in dancing, for leadership and praise.

The give and take, absence of competitiveness, and lack of force in the social and political structure, make moderation the keynote of Lovedu social life. Outstanding individuals are not tolerated: a show of forcefulness on the part of a councillor one day, which appealed to us as an indication of efficiency unusual in the society, was apologized for with the excuse that he must have been drunk. Display of all kinds is disliked. The elaborate beadwork and interest in dress, so characteristic of the Zulu, are absent, and there is nothing to correspond to the institutionalized public boasting (*ukugiya*) —jumping and stabbing at an imaginary foe to the accompaniment of a string of praises—that plays so important a role in Zulu life.

Excess of every kind is deprecated. Speed is undignified. Things must be done *pa ruya*, slowly, at a regular pace, in a moderate and dignified manner. Excess in human relations, like heat in the cosmic order, is liable to bring disaster. The reaction to death is calm, quiet grief, not the funeral wail of the Nguni or the terror reaction of the Tsonga. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to call down evil upon the next child born to her. Mputa was born a cripple, because, so we were told, his mother, Makwadu, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. Even in scolding moderation has to be observed, for scolding out of proportion to the offence, can, as we have shown, bring evil, even death.

Quarrelsomeness is one of the worst offences. Congruent with this outlook, the murderer or the warrior who has killed an enemy must purify himself to avoid becoming quarrelsome, the threat of which is so unpalatable as to be a powerful sanction. But quarrels and conflicts do occur on account of temperamental qualities, conflicting interests, and other causes; they are also precipitated sometimes through imperfections in the social

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institutions or their inadequacy for meeting all situations. In the resolution of difficulties of this nature arbitration and compromise play an important rule, both judicially and extra-judicially. The genius of the legal system even in its most formal aspects is the skilful use of the restitutive sanction, in its spiritual rather than its material sense. The fundamental objective is the re-establishment of relations that have become broken or strained, and that objective is achieved, not so much by vindicating rules as by reconciling the parties. There is indeed a tacit assumption that the social equilibrium will be maintained if personal relations are suitably adjusted. The primary task of the courts is therefore to smooth out personal difficulties rather than to settle legal issues. For in law as in life it is not the rule that is important but the personal and social relations. The cattle-linking of brother and sister from different 'houses', ordinarily disapproved, is an arrangement that agreement between the 'houses' makes possible, and if the parties agree, even murder can be compounded. Even when a diviner has found a man guilty of witchcraft, it is felt to be necessary that the culprit should 'agree' with the findings, i.e. accept the verdict of the bones. In judicial proceedings a defendant will be asked if he agrees to pay the award; if he disagrees, full latitude is allowed him to expostulate. Should the court sense a genuine grievance it will reopen the case and bring its decision more into line with an amicable adjustment. As laws and institutions exist for human beings, they are not ends in themselves, and even the most fundamental duties and obligations between individuals and groups are conditional upon the ever-invoked 'if they agree'. If people do not agree there can be no relationship. If they have to be coerced there cannot be genuine agreement. This is why the execution of a judgement is left to the parties. The whole social and political structure relies upon the maintenance of good relations without resort to compulsion. Hence the use of the mechanisms of marriage and bride-price to hold in willing allegiance a great diversity of alien groups, who outnumber the Lovedu proper by nine to one; hence also the aversion from regimentation and military discipline. |8| 67|

Great importance is attached to the dignity of the individual. Every person has rights and obligations; even a child's rights to property are respected. If a man feels that he is not being given his due, it is right to complain (*wiarela*) just as the ancestors do when they have not received proper attention. Any indignity to the personality, such as corporal punishment, is socially disapproved. Perhaps it is for this reason that a Lovedu soon becomes tractable if ordered by the court to carry stones or perform some other useless task when he has been guilty of 'despising' the court. |8|

Suicide is not common, but when it is resorted to it is as a protest against wrongful accusations or as a result of the complete frustration of an individual forced against his will into an impossible situation, e.g. a girl forced to marry someone she dislikes. 762

A high value is placed on human life. An aspect of Western civilization that puzzles the Lovedu is that we tolerate the loss of human life involved |8|

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in the use of motor traffic. Are not people more important than speed? The need for even a chief to respect the wishes of his subjects upon whom he depends for a following is summed up in the saying, *Ubuhosi gi vatho*, 'chieftainship is people'.

The qualities or virtues that are stressed, then, in the moral code of the Lovedu are moderation and temperance, compromise and agreement, humility, respect for the personality and rights of others. Courage is not rated very high in this non-military society. Perseverance is often enjoined and is especially necessary in the monotonous tasks of hoeing, carrying heavy loads of wood, walking up steep mountain slopes; but it is never carried out with the single-mindedness that a European might expect. Theft is condemned and there are ritual sanctions against it. If the object stolen has been magically treated, for example, a painful sore will develop on the finger which defies treatment until guilt has been confessed and restitution agreed to. 'Don't steal, always beg (*kubela*) for what you want', children are exhorted. But theft is not a problem in this economically undifferentiated society, though nowadays cases of theft, even if extremely rarely, do come before the tribal courts. Drunkenness is bad only if it leads to neglect of duties or fights and quarrels. To be drunk is in itself no disgrace, it is merely pleasant and perhaps exhilarating, not a condition to be ashamed of. Indeed everyone looks forward to the *mpinde* season when all become slightly intoxicated from the cider made out of the fruits.

Right conduct is relative always to the human situation and morality is oriented not from any absolute standards of honesty or truth but from the social good in each situation. Conduct that promotes smooth relationships, that 'upholds the social structure, is good; conduct that runs counter to smooth social relationships is bad. Courtesy and the respect due to age or seniority are thus of greater importance than truth. A son-in-law who, tired of always being imposed upon by his wife's father, truthfully signified his unwillingness to help him by providing a goat would be guilty, in view of the special mutualities between families related by marriage, of unpardonable behaviour which might jeopardize his marriage. The correct procedure is to agree to help but to be always 'still looking for it' when approached for the goat. It took us a long time to discover that the right way to deal with incessant begging was not to refuse however politely, but to say 'I have none' or 'It is not mine to give'. The polite lie even if palpable is better calculated to maintain smooth relationships than strict adherence to truth. Truth is not good in itself nor is a lie always evil. Lies are objected to when they are socially inconvenient. Yet not only is it expected that a man will lie to get out of difficulties but there are cases in which lying is prescribed, as when children are told to lie to strangers if asked about village affairs. To keep tribal secrets and the secrets of initiation schools is of far greater importance than to tell the truth.

The social orientation of morality is clear in Lovedu sex morality. Sex is not regarded as a temptation to be resisted by painful efforts of will.

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one hand a means of binding the women of the lineage, even after their marriage, by strong links to their father's family and on the other of maintaining from generation to generation the bonds with the maternal kin created by the marriage of the parents.

A woman has a dual role in the social structure. On the one hand by establishing a 'house' in her husband's lineage, she is the means whereby his lineage is perpetuated and its numbers increased; for even after the death of her husband his brothers will raise seed to his name and in the absence of sons she can herself ensure the continuation of her husband's lineage by marrying a woman on behalf of a fictitious son. On the other hand a woman remains important to her own lineage: if she is the eldest child of her 'house' she will officiate at all important religious offerings (if her brother is older he may officiate but she will always be called to collaborate with him); when she dies her name and those of her sisters will be included among the names of ancestors called upon in prayer; she divides out the inheritance on the death of her uterine brother; she guards the interests of the children of her cattle-linked brother's 'house' whence she will obtain a daughter-in-law; upon her falls the responsibility in the absence of her parents of providing an heir in her mother's 'house' (of her father's lineage) should there be no son; and she may even act in the place of her deceased father as ruler over a district until the heir is of age or until one can be raised.

The maintenance of links with married sisters and its complement marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter, by means of which one's links with one's wife's (or mother's) family are perpetuated, are supreme values in Lobedu society. That is why a wife who has no son has little difficulty in persuading her husband to hand over her daughter's bride-price to her brother rather than create links with a strange family. It is possible thereby to 'build a house' (or 'make a gate') at her brother's home from which her daughter's son will obtain a wife. This may at first sight appear to be very like the transfer of rights from mother to daughter but this is not the case. It is made possible by the transfer of cattle belonging to the daughter's husband and is bound up with the great desire to maintain links between the descendants of brother and sister. The right

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PREFACE

[21 [43 THIS book presents the life and culture of the Lovedu, a Bantu tribe in South Africa. Its central figure is a sacred queen. Against the background of our world, she no doubt appears unreal in some respects, like the baseless fabric of a dream, but in others she is real enough. We can, for instance, readily visualize her, without official husband to cramp her authority, bearing her successor by a secret consort; or maintaining her strategic position at the centre of the tribe by re-distributing as favours the wives she receives as tribute. But it is a different and far more difficult matter to depict as real what we regard as mysterious; for, hallowed by a heritage of incest, she is chosen for her role by the ghost of her predecessor, and her destined end is death by her own hands, in order that she may rule by divine right. We have tried to show that these mysteries become realities when we see them as means to the supreme end of consecrating her power to make rain, and when we realize that this power implies control of half the cosmic forces and gives men faith to do their daily tasks.

[21 [62 Our main object has been to describe the culture of the Lovedu. We have set ourselves the task of showing the nature of its parts and their relation to one another. Some space is devoted to the royal institutions; the network of links woven by kinship, marriage and marriage cattle; the legal procedure of compromise and appeasement; and various aspects of magic, witchcraft, and religion. Considered as a whole, the culture emerges as a structure supporting and in turn supported by the Rain-Queen. We may think of the royal institutions as the foundations upon which men build for safety against famines and foes; the culture disposes with reliance upon garden magic for success of the crops and upon a military system for national defence. Marriage cattle and the kin can be regarded as forging a frame which firmly holds the society together, binding its families, foreign groups and territorial units to one another and to the queen. Stresses and strains are taken by flexible devices for adjusting disputes by conciliation. A cult of masks and man-made mysteries appears to surmount the edifice like spires and pinnacles; we may envisage it as the cultural handling of those enigmas of nature, the exalted themes of growth and fertility.

Next, we have tried to outline the attitudes and interests of the people. They appear as carriers of the culture oriented toward the central figure and helping one another to bear the burden of a timeless society. Our chief concern has been to show how their ideals and motives have been moulded by the culture; why, for instance, they frown upon competition and approve moderation, and how it is that they are not troubled by sex-guilt or inferiority complexes. We have finally turned to consider some aspects of culture contact, such as the fear and distrust of the agents of an acquisitive society against whom the carriers of the culture have no weapons save secrecy and deception.

In describing these lineaments of Lovedu society, as its stands facing the onslaught of Western civilization, we have set forth the general

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166 become to interpret economic forces as operating, not in vacuo, but against
164 the whole background of social life.

● 182 It is likewise not economic forces alone, but the diffusion of a new
159 outlook that has caused the major changes in the old co-operative system. Individual achievement was of little account; no one was penalized because he attained only a very indifferent standard of efficiency or industry; people were devoted to a non-material ideal. A man's whole upbringing and training conditioned him to the ideal of reciprocity and helpfulness. Yet in the modern world, where personal achievement is important and rivalries must necessarily arise, the life-adjustment value of this ideal is doubtful. To some extent, the individual adapts himself by accepting European standards when he is in town and relaxing from the strain when he has returned home. He comes back mentally tired, and it is recognised that he is entitled to take a long holiday, even though there is pressing work to be done. His failures in town are attributed, not to causes within himself, but to the operation of external forces. His dismissal is ascribed to the jealousy and witchcraft of a competitor for the same position, and the success of his rival to magic. Rivalry is an unfamiliar situation in economic activities at home, and the competitive, individualistic struggle in the towns is never phrased as being between members of the tribe; the magic that is used to oust him from competitive positions or to cause an employer to favour another is always magic used
[79] by members of another tribe, such as the Zulu or Xhosa. The Lovedu traditionally regard luck magic with some suspicion, at least as applied in economic situations. But it has become increasingly necessary in order to re-establish their sense of security; a whole new technique of charms, burning medicines to attract custom, chewing roots to give confidence (what the European might call "effrontery"), and the like has developed. Many invoke, as before a dangerous enterprise in the old days, the blessing of the gods. Even within the tribal economy itself the spread of ideas of competition has been accompanied by the extension of magic and sorcery to new spheres of activity.

476 That this answer to contact with the new economy may not always
182 suffice, we see among many neighbouring tribes—for instance, the people of Sekhupo, 'brothers' of the Lovedu. Among them beer, the quintessence of situations of reciprocity and co-operation, is converted into an article of sale. Beer is provided, even at *majowa*, as wages, and hence only to the workers; visitors may join the beer-party, but must pay for each calabash they have. This commercialisation is deplored by the Lovedu; it is regarded in the same light as charging strangers for board and lodging, a practice that prevails among highveld tribes; and it is almost as bad as what the Lovedu imagine to be the European custom of making relatives who come on a holiday pay their hosts. 'Our hosts are our relatives', said a Lovedu man to us; but while he was prepared to justify the commercial pattern in which salt, meat, tobacco, European vegetables, even money, oust beer in the *lojowa*, the sale of beer seemed to him intolerable. This view fairly reflects the general opinion, as well as the attempt to harmonize the two patterns, among the Lovedu. Rewards are sometimes given to individual *lojowa* workers, who are

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paid in salt and the other commodities mentioned. But the practice is, except for payment in meat, largely confined to Christians. As far as it exists, it completely alters the old long-run reciprocity pattern. There is no social feast. Collective replaces co-operative activity; for personal profit, not sociability, is the prime motive; the social gain is converted into a labour situation, and the interests of employer and employee begin to diverge. Room for roundabout reciprocity is narrowed; instead of the indefinite mutuality upon which a man who helps others to-day may rely in the future, he receives an immediate and individual reward; faith in long-range equivalence of services and obligations gives way to a desire for direct personal satisfaction.

To the new situation, in which the *lipowa*-giver corrects and directs and the worker obeys and submits, imperfect adjustments have been made. Direction, hitherto unknown in the economic relations of equals, degenerates to exploitation; the answer to unwilling submission is resentment; and the employer is regarded as a renegade and cheat. He is known to buy a bag of salt for 7s.—and to distribute it so that each worker receives only one-sixth of the accepted value (1s.) of a day's work. The conflict, in which the worker retaliates by calling the employer 'unscrupulous', is only beginning. It may resolve itself by new adjustments, even though an approving feature is the fact that it is the Christian who is the budding capitalist and the pagan who is the dependent labourer. From the point of view of progress in agriculture, the danger is that employers are usually progressive, and progress thus comes to stand for anti-social methods. This hampers the work of agricultural demonstrators. It is clear that lasting solutions, even of apparently simple agricultural problems, not to speak of the complicated problems of administration or of wider spheres of culture contact, can be attained only by studying both the forms of the old institutions and psychological reactions among the people to the changes.

Turning to exchanges in the society—that is, purchase and sales, whether cash or kind is transferred—we may consider external and internal trade from the standpoint of whether it falls within a money, money-barter, barter, or gift-barter economy. We use these terms to designate the distinctions mentioned below. *External trade* refers to transactions with people belonging to groups outside or alien to the tribe, such as stores, farmers, and individuals of other tribes. *Internal trade* is largely local, but it may be interlocal when it occurs across the boundaries of the reserve, but between members of the tribe. *Gift barter* is reciprocal gift exchange. There is no exact economic equivalence. Mutuality, goodwill, and reciprocity are the primary considerations, but it is not the same as a gift, for a gift implies no return gift, but merely one-sided donations, such as presents to children. Out-and-out gift is *upha* (from *ba fa*) and, while such gifts imply indirect mutuality, there is no expectation of a return gift. For our present purposes and in the table given below, they are left out of consideration; it would, for instance, be impracticable to distinguish between feeding one's household and giving them presents. From gift barter must be distinguished *pure barter*, in which the aim is an interchange of goods of equivalent value

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CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Mate selection and marriage exchanges as reflections of the social structure—social and psychological aspects of nuptial rites—the handling of the themes of sex and concubinage, of barrenness and premature death in the marriage situation.

FROM mummeries and masks we turn to marriage and *mueyusalo* (bride-price). The secrecy of the *digwa* contrasts strangely with the publicity of marriage ceremonial; but they are both cultural devices for dealing with cultural problems. The hidden forces in nature and man are intractable and can be brought under control only by rephrasing them as mysteries, the fear of which is overcome by man-made initiations and cults. Marriage is also an initiation, but its complicated ceremonial is concerned chiefly with laying the concrete foundations of the social structure. This is a gigantic and delicate task, almost beyond the capacity of the culture. Fortunately, we can see more clearly than in the case of the *digwa* how this task has been accomplished, but unfortunately we shall have space merely to glance at the larger features instead of examining closely the exquisite workmanship and superlative ornamentation.

It is not easy to appreciate the immense implications of marriage among the Lovedu. For one thing, the concomitant cattle exchanges transform it into something wholly unlike the contract between two individuals of different sex among us. The fact that a Lovedu woman may, just like a man, marry a wife, warns us that we are in a world entirely different from our own. The elaborate ceremonial reflects the enormous importance of marriage and of the network of links that are forged by the cattle that pass. The bonds that are created in this manner can be put to all manner of uses. They form the basis of the *mueyusalo* ring of exchanges. They hold together the political system, incorporating as they do foreign elements in the tribe, and casting the net of relationship over the whole country. Marriage and *mueyusalo* provide the pattern even for dealing with homicide: the murder is not avenged; by handing over cattle or by giving his daughter, the murderer and his relatives become enmeshed in the network of exchanges; he is transformed from criminal to kinsman and a potential blood feud is turned into the reciprocal relations between the people of the bride and those of the groom. A man threatened with starvation when his crops have failed and his cattle have died can, by linking himself to the *mueyusalo* ring of another, save both himself and his family.

But the most startling proof of the importance of Lovedu marriage lies therein that the tribunals of the *khwe*—in other words, the organization that corresponds to our legal system—are mainly concerned with marriage and *mueyusalo* tangles; the *raison d'être* of the *khwe* and its law appear to be the preservation of the marriage system. The whole genius of *khwe* law and of *khwe* judicial proceedings is the genius of resolving tensions within the gigantic superstructure built upon marriage and its

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581 associated institutions. In these circumstances, it is patently absurd for
●182 us to orientate ourselves as if marriage affects only personal relationships
692 between two individuals. To regard marriage as primarily a sexual partnership or even as an institution for promoting the procreation and rearing of children is to misunderstand completely its great role in the social organization.

581 As the main function of marriage is to create and perpetuate alliances
582 between groups of people, sexual or temperamental compatibility between the prospective spouses is not regarded as an ideal. Emphasis on romantic love, and pre-marital sexual experimentation, with a view to testing out compatibility, would be incongruous with the prevailing type of marriage. Mate selection in its ideal form is socially regulated, and the ideal form is the basic pattern of all marriages. The social organisation determines whom one shall marry, and the parents, not the individuals concerned, set the machinery of the organization into motion. The ideal marriage is marriage of a man with his mothers' brother's daughter or of a woman with her father's sister's son. This does not mean that all cross-cousins are preferred mates. It is, for instance, considered irregular for a man to marry his father's sister's daughter; that cases of such marriages are found should not surprise us. There are irregularities in every sphere of culture, and the rules of mate selection are particularly liable to be upset because of the complex interrelations that arise in the social system. The fundamental rule is that a man must marry, not the daughter of any brother of his mother, but the daughter of that brother who has used his mother's marriage cattle to obtain a wife for himself. His mother and his mother's brother are cattle-linked sister and brother because, when she married, the cattle that came in were handed to the brother for obtaining a wife: the cattle of the sister are said to 'build a hut for her brother'. We may thus say that a man must marry a daughter of his cattle-linked maternal uncle, and we may call her his 'cattle-linked cross-cousin'.

But the Lovedu phrase the matter rather differently and more significantly. They say that the sister has 'built the house of her brother' (the cattle-linked brother), that therefore she 'has a gate' by which she may enter his house, this gate being 'the gate which the cattle seek', and that it is her right to demand from the 'house built by her cattle' a daughter who must come to her as her daughter-in-law to stamp and cook for her. Note that the right is not phrased as the right of her son to obtain his wife from that house; note further that the right is in respect of the house—that is, of the wife of the cattle-linked brother, not in respect of the brother. That wife is the *muroyi* (returner) of the sister, the person who is obliged to return her daughter to the place whence the cattle came; and it does not matter if in the house of the sister there is no son to marry this daughter. The *muroyi* must send her daughter if requested, and, if cattle are offered, to be the daughter-in-law of her husband's cattle-linked sister, whether that sister has a son or not; for it is the sister's right to be served and helped, especially in her old age, by the daughter of the house which she has established. The ideal is that a girl should not be married to her father's sister's husband or, in

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The immortality of Lovedu spirits is of practical importance in their working religion only for two or three generations back; beyond this they are hardly remembered. The spirits that cause most trouble are one's grandparents, and in religious practices these tend to be the most important. Both sides of the family, that of one's father and that of one's mother, are equally important; both cause trouble and both must be placated; and this is an accurate reflection of the social structure, of relationship reckoned bilaterally, and of the cattle links. The configuration of the ancestral world is no different from that of the ordinary world. It is therefore not surprising that all four lines of grandparents are recognized. Even when a spirit in the line of the father's father is being placated, the line of the father's mother may also be mentioned: thus we have heard an officiator in a *phasa* ceremony calling, not only upon his father's younger brother, the spirit troubling its granddaughter, but also upon his father, father's father, elder brother, mother, and elder sister. Dedicated goats to male ancestors tend to, but do not always, run in the male line. As in social or political arrangements, the male line may recede before the female; it may even, as far as ancestors are concerned, become almost completely obliterated. In the Matsui family, for instance, the father's father's line is neglected, except for *ba phasa*, when they cause illness, but the father's mother's line is all important. It is to the latter that the beast Mamujaji is dedicated and it is to this beast that the new corn is given every year. This emphasis reflects the links with the queen which the family wishes to emphasize, for Mamujaji, the ancestor of the father's mother, was mother of Mujaji I.

The coherence of the social and the ancestral worlds is seen even in regard to the implications of the *mayuulo* system. Biological relationship not socially recognized is of no importance in religion, and not only can the biological father of an illegitimate child or his relatives never cause illness, for the 'gods follow the cattle' (*medimo e tsela dikhomu*), but the queen's ancestors cause illness in children of any of her wives, whoever their father may be, and it is the queen who is often required to *phasa* for them. In the gathering together in worship of all relatives the social system is similarly reflected. When after many deaths or much illness in a family the dice order a *mukhoro*, a religious gathering of all relatives, not only the lineage but relatives on both sides (*mulogo*), including those by marriage, meet. Each brings a basket of corn as a contribution towards the beer for the occasion, but a relative who is on bad terms with the others will, of course, simply stay away.

Not only the scheme of institutionalized social relations, but the nature of these relations in ordinary life is reflected in religion. The fact that the gods were known in life is largely responsible for many of the outstanding characteristics of Lovedu worship. We must not expect a behaviour pattern of humble worshipper to omnipotent god. Awe and trepidation characterize the attitude to the mysterical secrets of great *digoma*, but they constitute a category poles apart from the ancestors and *dithugula*. People pray to ancestors as man to man, scolding them or reminding them of their duties to their children. The following prayer, uttered when Pheduli was brought home, is typical: 'We say, here is your corn, Pheduli.

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*mudimo wrm*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me ox liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious
758 (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's
788 daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite unexpectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of the girl, *phasa* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognized as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phasa*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Hu phasa* in these circumstances recognizes psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mabudu* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not

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other way of life can oust it from its general pre-eminent position. The 291
man or woman who is in need of a pot or other article in the busy agricultural season vainly places an order with a craftsman, and 'He who takes a journey in spring must transact all his affairs' (i.e. not only where he goes, but also on the way), for he will not be able to pass by again during that season.

Agriculture provides the immediate security of the people, but in turn 291
it relies upon the life-giving rain, the power to make which has been 643
projected upon the queen. The queen is thus the foundation stone of the 162
security of the cultural structure. Her rain-making powers safeguard not only agriculture against the caprices of nature, but the whole country against the attacks of its enemies. The queen is more than that: the method of supplicating for rain has merged with the mechanisms of the social structure and has constructed the bonds with the districts, thus, despite political decentralization, securing the unity of the tribe. And, finally, the elevation of a woman to this exalted position has strengthened the status of women and their important role in the society and has emphasized the virtue of feminine qualities. But the queen is not conceived to be intimately linked with everything in the culture: her position in the *khoro* of the men is weakly institutionalized, she has no immediate contact with the European administration to the interferences of which her powers are doubly vulnerable, and the welfare of the cattle elsewhere, as among the Maĵala and Xananwa, ritually brought into relation with the chief, is outside her province.

As rain-maker, the queen controls half the great cosmic forces. Magic 643
may be invoked, the gods propitiated, in the interests and for the ends of 789
individuals, but ultimately these interests and ends and the destiny of the society depend upon the mediation and will of the queen. Man's sense of security in the face of personal misfortunes can be re-established by magic or religion, but the orderliness of cosmic laws is guaranteed only by the relationship of the queen with the supernatural. These laws are inscrutable, but the procedures for arousing pity in the heart of a human queen or for appeasing her anger are intelligible; and thus man can have confidence in undertaking his tasks. Moreover, he need not and must not resort to magic in his major economic activities, for he can and must rely upon the queen. Since the final justification of the pivotal position of the queen is her divinity, garden magic is conceived to be disruptive, like witchcraft: it competes with the power of the queen. One consequence of this conception is that success or failure in subsistence activities is regarded as immediately dependent upon industry, the application of practical knowledge and suitable materials, and that he who uses garden magic is a thief or a witch.

In most neighbouring tribes there is some public treatment of the 291
seeds before they are sown, or the hoes and ploughs are smeared with 789
medicine obtained from the chief: among highveld Sotho such as the Xananwa and Moletshe, there is even a special hut for storing the sacred seed, a few grains of which are handed to each householder at sowing time, and in this hut, which is associated with the *gwai* drums and with fertility in man, girls reaching puberty are isolated and newly married

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It need hardly be said that the reciprocities are not precisely calculated equivalences, nor a series of exactly balanced obligations. People do not consciously think of the long-run result of their behaviour, and they know that social duty done is not always sure of its reward. 'Hard as the ear chops, it cannot eat the honey it extracts', they say to warn those who expect that their efforts will inevitably be rewarded.

The traits, motivations, and attitudes of the Lovedu become more and more intelligible in the context of the culture as a whole. Whether they are so delicately integrated that we can speak of the culture as an articulated whole, is not a question we shall try to answer. The tribal boundaries are certainly not the boundaries of the culture, which both in its forms and in its attitudes very gradually merges into the culture of a larger area, the limits of which cannot be exactly determined. In view of the increasingly great variations as one goes further and further from the nucleus, the degree of integration can be regarded relatively only to the area one chooses. Lack of integration is often more apparent than real. With regard both to recently introduced elements and to old elements which in their forms or purposes lag behind the changes of the whole culture, the process of integration is proceeding apace, but can never be complete. Thus the cult of possession is shedding those elements that are incongruous with the culture. There are also apparent inconsistencies in the divergent forms allowed in the districts and in principles of behaviour which are contradictory. Thus, for instance, revenge is permitted in the magico-witchcraft sphere, but is outlawed in the legal sphere. We may compare this contradiction to our approval of killing an enemy in war, which is conceived to be in the interests of national security, and our condemnation of killing a fellow man in peace, which is a crime against the security of life. Cultures often segregate contradictory aspects of social experience into logic-tight compartments, and there is no conflict as long as the contradictions can either be kept distinct or be reconciled. If they are embodied in the cultural system, no pressure is brought to compare them, and there is no lack of integration either in the mind of the individual or in the culture.

Men feel insecure chiefly in the face of disease and death, dissension, drought, and the disruptive danger of European intervention. The Lovedu attribute their fears to witchcraft, aggressiveness and quarrelsomeness, wrong burials, and the 'spoiling' of the country by the white man. We shall deal briefly only with two of these sources of insecurity: disease, which is one of the most constant preoccupations of the Lovedu mind, and the European, whose meddling has changed the shape and meaning of life and has upset the standards of right and wrong.

There is abundant reason for the perpetual anxiety about health, for disease is rife and even minor illnesses provide the occasion for the entry of the witch. Read against the background of their imperfect knowledge of anatomy and of the causation of disease, experience warns men that almost anything, from a simple scratch to the dreaded 'coughing disease', may cause death; in every case, not germs and poisons, but witches and sorcerers, may enter the body and take advantage of the weakness of the patient. Disease is combated, and susceptibility to disease is guarded against, at

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177 planted with sweet sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of
291 stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its
134 utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

177 A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money
457 subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with
[152] Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The
182 suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes
[154] attributed to Nyasaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894-6. The psychological determinants of change are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutri-
146 tion. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops
182 has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doctored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European justice are compensated by magic (*bu sikila*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digwa* and the *musijejani* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimised by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
769 a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cognates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member of the kindred (*ewalge*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to *vafumani* (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*mafukula*) and, by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes parent-in-law (*ramakkula*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and relatives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiating from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies, but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked
641 with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, convert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of subjects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
● 182

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say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is 693
she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the 772
cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally 182
to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the
kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu [692]
political pattern follows that of the centralised states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation.

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final 773
causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some [821]
of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical.
A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and 773
man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north 776
when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, [842]
who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors.

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do 772
not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, 821
whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them,

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Conclusion

Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djadzane ke ba khwane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

An important principle in the social structure is preferential marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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476 571 461 calculation, no supervision. The adjustments in the situation rely upon no pre-organization; there is practically no leadership or direction; and yet an effective interaction is attained. The total pattern is a part of the social system; it is not as if two or more people have casually encountered one another and have by trial and error to discover how to co-operate effectively in performing the task. Christians, whose standards of organization, performance, and efficiency are derived from those of the white man, attempt to submit the workers to discipline. They sometimes constitute themselves as foremen, they attempt to apply the available energy systematically, they have a system of rewards and penalties. The result is, not co-operation, but service; there are few, if any, songs and the occasion is no longer a gala social event.

[184]

The workers at a *lejema* usually adjourn after one and a half or two hours to refresh themselves at about 11 a.m., when a pot of beer, euphemistically called 'the knife-sharpener', is brought to the field. The interval is of indefinite duration and is so much out of harmony with modern ideas, that 'the knife-sharpener' is often regarded with disfavour; instead of sharpening, it blunts the edge of activity in the modern situation, in which the *lejema*-giver thinks of himself as an employer and the workers are concerned to avoid being exploited. Neither employer nor employee is equipped by his background of culture and training to achieve success in these new roles; and the result is that tensions arise. Fortunately, however, the *lejema* is still overwhelmingly a collective social event. There is as yet no need to buoy up labour with dignity and moral worth; it is sufficient to submerge it in the sociability of beer. For the real nature of the *lejema* appears when the workers go to the home of the *lejema*-giver. The situation there instantly dispels any preconception [574] we may have of special rewards for the workers. There are visitors, dubbed *nahobedi* (solicitants) and as such are distinguished from the *nashumi* (workers). In our society they would be called 'gate-crashers' or 'beggars', but they are not in needy circumstances and do not ask for favours; they are entitled to join in. Individually they not only imbibe calabash for calabash with the workers, but far outnumber them, not unusually by as much as four or five to one.

[735] To judge the situation correctly, we must remember that begging, one of the traits of the Lovedu we might regard as most irritating, is not socially disapproved. He who has and does not give is the offender, not he who asks for what he needs. The case is different, however, when the beggar is a loafer and sponger, roaming about in search of beer without doing any work; and if, as is not unlikely, he is disliked, his presence during the exhilaration caused by the beer is liable to cause a breach of the peace and he might be turned away. Generally speaking, *nashumi* are not given special beer; the beer is not a reward for their services, but a feast transforming work into recreation and reflecting the emphasis upon liberality. To-day the *nahobedi* are sometimes looked upon as parasitic beggars, and measures are taken to reconstitute the *lejema* so as to make it a more economical method of co-operation. Fundamentally, all the arduous work is still done by *lejema*, though every one knows that, for, say, 4*s*. worth of salt, more workers could be obtained and better

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work accomplished than if one had beer made at the cost of one. worth of corn, not to mention the time, labour, and firewood that is consumed in preparing the beer. The motive is, however, not economic but social. *Majoma* are used, not for long and difficult tasks only, but also for light work, which a man can easily do himself without help. The aim in these cases is not so much to complete the work quickly—time is rarely a matter of importance—as to be credited with generous impulses and to have a pleasant social event. Christians, with their more Europeanized outlook, averse from the waste entailed, and fearing excommunication by the Church, which prohibits beer, nevertheless find it hard not to conform to this custom.

Another form of co-operation is the *khilchi* (*jchi*, a hoe). Uncommon to-day in its original form, it has its essentials preserved in ploughing partnerships, the so-called 'stock fair' in towns and particularly in the collective agricultural work of young girls. The co-operating group, defined by convenience and proximity of domicile, is largely a local one and consists mainly of close relatives, both on the mother's and on the father's side. The group is still comparatively stable, as it was in the old days, when it had its basis in common interests and common needs. Its members collectively reaped or weeded or hoed one another's fields, completing one field and then going to the next, and each arranged about his own food. Kin or neighbours had their lands closer together and less split up than to-day; they started their various tasks at much the same time; there was safety in concentration, and economy in co-operation. The great distinction between *khilchi* and *lojoma* was and still is that no beer is provided; but, as in the *lojoma*, the *khilchi* partnership lessened the monotony of arduous work and mobilized energies and incentives. As the group was smaller and more closely knit, relied more tangibly upon reciprocity and had more elements of continuity, the stimulus of beer was not necessary to hold it together. Each partner remained an individualist, for the crops were not shared; but each realized the value of mutual helpfulness and the necessity of minimizing the self in relation to the ends of others.

To-day the conditions of the operation of the *khilchi* no longer exist in their old form. Fields have become split up; the old dangers are no more; the plough has vastly decreased man's dependence upon the help of his kin or his neighbour. Though it was perhaps the most potent agent of destruction of the old *khilchi*, the plough has become the centre of the new. The household, which is the economic unit, hardly ever has ploughs, animals, and workers all available at the same time; only 30 per cent. of such units possess ploughs and only 15 per cent. have cattle or donkeys. Thus cultivation calls for some form of co-operation, and the form which was familiar was the *khilchi*. There are new elements in the situation, but their co-ordination was effected by drawing upon pre-existing patterns of co-operation. Typically the *khilchi* in ploughing consists of four partners, representing four economic units: one supplies the animals, a second the plough, the third some of the workers, and the fourth the herdboy, who looks after the cattle during the year and might wield the whip or plant behind the plough. The emphasis

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231 young goat, 'the payment of the herding', to-day, even if the goats have
465 not prospered, because herdboys are no longer willing to work for nothing. Moreover, the ploughs of cattle is nowadays asked to help the owner with his ploughing and he often (illegally, by traditional standards) charges herding and grazing fees. This charge is levied on the model of European farmers and is exacted even in areas within the reserve, where grazing fees are unknown. *Ho fise* differs from *ho dicja* (to cause to graze), an arrangement whereby one man allows another's cattle to run with his own, usually because he has no herdboy; for this no consideration passes.

461 Service, just like the various forms of co-operation, thus hardly ever implies subservience. Where it does, as in the old *ho pafa* or in the various modern forms of service, its incidents are regarded as derogatory, because they are incongruent with the emphasis on reciprocity. Even
567 *vathulya* (slavery), which arises from captivity and was practically unknown, implies no real bondage. There is to-day still one 'slave', an old Shangana-Tonga woman captured, not by the Lovedu, but by the Shangana-Tonga, who sent her as tribute for rain to Mujaji. The institution of slavery is unknown among the Lovedu; so she, just like other wives of the queen, was handed over to one of the subjects, who accepted her as a daughter. As we have mentioned, there is a tendency to adopt European patterns of labour, both in the more or less solitary and in the co-operative activities.

166 The most important change is the migration to towns and farms in
464 search of cash wages. The cash amount that enters the tribe, as compared with the total income of an average family, is small, not more than 7 per cent. The effects of the migration itself are proportionately small. It is not so much the absence in town of the men nor even the ideas that they bring back with them that are of the first importance. More men, not less, are idle to-day, and more crops, not less, are reaped than in the old days. Moreover, what the men have learnt in the towns is on the whole so different from the practice at home that it has to be laid aside. The greatest changes are not the direct introductions by these men, but the indirect reactions to the rule and the economy of the white man. Many of these reactions are unintelligible in relation to local conditions; they have spread from the highveld. We are concerned at present only with changes in the outlook towards economic arrangements. At first sight they appear to be very great, but the longer one looks the more superficial they appear and the firmer the old foundations stand out. The Christians are a notable exception, not because they migrate more to the towns (on the whole the difference is negligible), but because, orientating themselves from an anti-tribal angle, they have eagerly accepted whatever differentiates them from their heathen brothers. They are competitive and money-conscious; they exploit their brothers.

For purposes of comparison, we may briefly consider two areas: A, with a population of 822, and B, with a population of 610. The census in A was taken in April, 1936, of B in April, 1937, the seasons 1936 and 1937 not being significantly different. A is 40 per cent. Christian and on the whole Christian standards of living prevail; B is 16 per cent. Christian

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services to a chief, residents must also build his village and mend his huts. These privileges and obligations are not merely theoretical; they are very much in evidence and can be observed to-day in the districts as much as, if not more than, at the capital. The first edible termites found in the district must, in the case of some of the more important heads, be brought to the district head; these ants are ritually associated with rain-making and are put into the rain pots which these heads have.

The national 'schools' are sometimes held independently by district heads; in 'hitting' the first fruits (*ku hawa*) and in turning the first soil, the precedence of the queen is hardly recognized. The head at Dojo and the senior male line of the royal family have theoretical precedence in *ku hawa* and, in contrast to many neighbouring tribes, there is little stress upon having the queen's field hoed first; in practice to-day her field is never ploughed first. Mazundala, it is said, in the old days paid an ox to anticipate the queen's hoeing and thus avoided threatening starvation; but dispensations of this nature, while recognizing a theoretical rule, throw into relief the much greater autonomy of the district here than elsewhere. The district head is solely responsible for *ku uyo*, the rite that drives away destructive birds and monkeys when crops are ripe; to him the death of every resident is reported (the report being transmitted to the queen only when a relative of hers dies) and the resulting 'holiday' is held only in the district. Each district head has his own drums through which he controls dancing (*gwhe*), religious observances, and some of the 'schools'. The girls' puberty rite (*Mzube*) is entirely district-controlled.

The individuality of some districts is seen in esoteric customs; elsewhere by taboo, succession ceremonial, and a distinctive community life. At Khinbeni people may construct on the edge of the village a rain-shelter (*kwande*) in which fire is made; in neighbouring areas this is taboo. Work on the day following the new moon is said to have been taboo in the old days at Matsui, though the rule is never observed to-day; in neighbouring areas there never was such a holiday. The Thwala in one district have a special dance with a special ritual. As regards succession, the queen usually merely confirms, though she maintains touch through an elaborate ceremony: she is notified of the death of the head, sends the 'mother' of the district to take part in the ceremony of installation and, in the case of heads of the royal group, the *swidzimi* appear. The ceremonial, however, more intimately concerns the district: there is a local 'holiday' after the death, the *gwhe* dance is taboo for a year, girls undergo puberty initiation elsewhere, beer is made by the district to 'open the drums', and each head of a family sends a goat or 10s., 'the eye of the chief', to acknowledge their new head. The life of the district is often distinctive. Matsui is said to be wasteful and, according to one of their praises, people there, instead of stamping, for which they are too lazy, 'burn their finger-nails roasting green mealies'. Everything is rather slack and happy-go-lucky, beer drinks are apt to be unruly, the district head is at loggerheads with his uncles, and his subjects talk disparagingly of 'this district-head business of going about and drinking beer'. Bacchanalian orgies after the harvest, slack morals, and other irregularities at Matsui contrast strikingly with conditions at Bagoni, an adjacent district. At Bagoni there is a tradition

639 of thrift, strict control of beer-drinks, interest in national affairs, of
639 pride and independence. Of course, a great deal depends upon the personality of the district head, but traditions in the district are not unimportant.

636 Districts are not always left to go their own way. In the last resort, as
643 in legal matters, the authority of the capital may be invoked, and it may be invoked even against a whole district. Just as a district may collectively take action against a threat to its well-being, as occurred in the small-pox epidemic in 1938, when one district assembled and collected funds to have the witch who was causing the deaths smelt out, so it may be held collectively responsible by the capital for failure to cultivate the chief's field. This is the more striking because there is no kraal responsibility and the so-called 'spoor law' (whereby a kraal head, unwilling or unable to explain why the track of stolen cattle leads to but does not leave his kraal is held responsible, whoever the thief in his kraal might be) is not known. We have seen a district fined, never a kraal. The queen has theoretically to confirm the expulsion of a subject; in cases referred to a diviner, the 'ears' or official witness should be, but is not always, appointed at the queen's court. In practice, however, the queen seldom interposes her authority. For years now no one knows who is head at Dithejjne, the balance swinging unevenly between three claimants. At Maforebani, Muteme, who persistently refused to do homage (*ho lana*) to the queen with beer, was deposed; but that there were other considerations at issue appears from the fact that immediately afterwards he was installed at Ukhosha. When Thagu at Khimarela in 1936 expelled his paternal uncle's son for whom he was depositing, nothing was done. At Raleelaga when the head died, the messenger (*dewa*) took over, ruled for years without confirmation from the capital and in 1938 was recognised (because his son became valuable as driver of the councillor's newly acquired motor car), the real heir being quietly overlooked. Not long ago the nobles at a tribal gathering carried their point that only royal relatives should be appointed as district heads on the farms that were being purchased, but the rule remained a dead letter and of the ten heads appointed in three years eight are foreigners.

642 In its visible structure, the political organization may appear unimpressive and in its dynamics chaotic. Its efficiency certainly is and always was—for it is not culture contact that is responsible for the irregularities—of an order different from ours. Efficiency is relative to the purposes of the culture. The aim has never been power or empire, but holding subjects together on the model of the social organization. The slight regimentation of the 'schools' subserves no political or military purpose, and court life is not concerned with displays, nor is it characterised by differentiated officials and courtiers controlling a great central organization. Unlike the Shangana-Tongs, the Lovedu cannot deal with large gatherings of men such as collected on Coronation Day in 1937. The genius of the society is in organizing relationships between people, and as long as the reciprocity and compromise and the sentiments built up by interdependencies are reasonably maintained, it does not much matter that irregularities occur here and there. The influence of the

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177 duplicity and ingratitude, suspicion, and attempts to take advantage of
797 kindness. These were construed as barbaric traits that had to be uprooted. There appeared, in addition, to be an unusually large number of anti-Christian practices: the tribal justice, proceeding upon no fixed principles, seemed corrupt; there were periodical smellings-out of witches; people believed in the divinity of the queen. Dancing and drumming were obnoxious, not merely because they were 'heathenish din', but also because of their association with the idolatry of the *digwa* and the 'schools', the sexual laxity at the *goko* dances and possession by spirits. [533] There were also mendicant minstrels who played the xylophone (*dibile*) and sang for their food and lodging, whose songs did not always express Christian sentiments. One, for instance, not long ago, used to sing, 'Christians are cheats who put us to sleep before we eat [referring to grace], so as to kill us unawares', and another's song rang more crudely: 'The husbandless woman climbs to the roof of the hut; she urinates and the rats fall down in a faint'.

Early Church policy laid down what should be outlawed on mission-owned farms; wife-purchase, shrines, *digwa*, rain-making, witchcraft, divination, 'strengthenings with medicine', the consecration of weapons, and other repugnant customs. It stamped as particularly reprehensible theft, sexual offences, opposition to the Church, and, later, migration to seek employment in the sinful towns. The sanctions with which it can enforce obedience upon a self-governed estate include refusal of such privileges as baptism and confirmation, public denunciation in church, various penalties, such as road-making and catechism classes, and even expulsion from the mission station. Natives believe that the whole system is served by a network of espionage, and the intrinsic difficulties of the situation have been immensely increased by the fact that financially the mission station largely relies upon the contributions in fees and work of its tenants. On one occasion a self-constituted committee of disaffected tenants in Johannesburg, who were in arrears, accused the mission of capitalistic exploitation and of robbing the Natives of their country, and drastic action was necessary.

177 The Christian attack upon the marriage pattern and especially polygyny
795 has led to many subtle reactions. Devout Christians of the old order still
● 184 refuse to accept cattle, but surreptitiously pocket money payments which by the nature of the case can be used to subserve personal, not social, ends. The Church no longer sets its face against *mayvualo*, but seeks to turn it into a kind of dowry, and Christians call it 'thanks'. The Christian's freedom of choice of a mate weakens the reciprocities and emphasizes independence and materialism at the price of the patterns of co-operation and long-range mutuality. A Christian often marries a non-relative, but cannot easily escape the complex net thrown over the whole social structure by the cattle exchanges. He may have to face the opposition of those relatives whose displeasure may cause illness to him or his family. If he marries a second wife, his cross-cousin, he is excommunicated, and he will be unable, even on his death-bed, to secure the final consolation and blessing of the Church unless he sets aside his pagan wife. Polygyny, the inheritance of wives, and beer are so deeply rooted in

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the culture that they constitute the gravest difficulties of the mission as well as the most formidable obstacles to embracing Christianity. Christians are required to build a house before marriage: this again tears them out of the context of parental influences. Wedding feasts and bridal gifts introduce the pattern of the highveld Sotho and of the towns, but without serious disruptive effects.

Christian marriage sets up community of property and strikes at the economic independence of women; it emphasizes patriliny, but, in compensation, introduces a conception of marital companionship. Families are larger, because the old spacing of children has broken down: monogamy, proscription of the institution of 'lovers' (*ruglovu*), the opposition to anything pagan, the diminished control of the old women are some of the reasons. There is more illegitimacy because the marriage of girls is later, examination for virginity is considered un-Christian, the disciplinary influences of the initiation 'schools' and of parental authority have weakened, and there is no training in the rules of incomplete sexual intercourse. Among some of the other results, it may be said that Christians are less complaisant about the infidelity of their spouses and that the care of a brother's widow occasions serious conflicts.

The iconoclastic effect of Christianity may be illustrated in a few other spheres of culture. Christians often object to performing the services to the chief expected of every tribesman. At the capital they plough one of the queen's fields, but have largely withdrawn themselves or have been excluded from the political and legal organization. They do not submit themselves to procedures involving appeal to the smeller-out, regard as repugnant the duties of messengers in 'blood' cases and, by extension, those of all court messengers, and, since the regular court sessions are held on Sunday, they cannot attend them, nor indeed are they welcomed as members of the *khoro*. At Medingen the districts are not recognized and the majority of offences come before the council of elders or the missionary. Christians disregard traditional holidays and taboos, such as those after deaths and the first rains or when lightning strikes down to earth. They defiantly plough over sacred places to show the absurdity of superstitious fears. They neither kill twins nor observe the rules as to burial in wet places. They oppose the 'schools', avoid the dances and ignore the firstfruits rites.

It is un-Christian to become possessed or to have the 'dirt'-removing rite after death. Even important royal kinsmen who become Christians must be buried in the Christian cemetery, not where they will be contaminated by heathenish associations. The bearers are Christians, and pagan relatives follow the hearse in the rear, segregated from the Christians, for they do not know the hymns that are sung. The corpse is made to face west, towards the setting sun, not north, whence the Lovedu came. When the queen's brother, who became a Christian on his death-bed, was buried, the only concession permitted to custom was the placing of an ox skin upon the coffin; no wonder that his spirit did not long lie at rest and that subsequent drought was attributed to his complaints. Not only are pagans and Christians separated in the

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177 procession to the grave, but, after burial, relatives on each side have
795 their separate rites.
184 All this is but a reflection of the attempt to make the segregation as complete as possible. Even the visible evidence of different styles of building, of dressing, and of living together was in the past more boldly thrown into relief by the geometrical villages, with their square houses fronted by flower gardens and straight streets crossing one another at right angles and ornamented with orange trees. But the Christians' efforts to differentiate themselves from pagans are limited by two main factors. Neither the Bible nor their limited experience of the world has suggested too many different ways of living and behaving. In large spheres of culture they know no more than is supplied by the traditional background; and limited resources often make impracticable the adoption of different standards and attitudes.

Christians tend to defer in everything, not to the tribal, but to the church authorities. Local problems and church matters, as well as relations with the European, are advised upon and guided by the church and its officials. Christians set themselves up as interpreters of and intermediaries with the European; they tend to assume command upon occasions of European festivities or of intervention, except that of official business with the chief or the councillors. They crowd round inquisitively when agricultural officials arrive, while pagans avoid them; they prepare the programme or draw up the illuminated address when there is a celebration, such as the Coronation in 1937 or an agricultural show. And they work out these plans and addresses in consultation, not with the tribal authorities, but with the evangelist. It is not unnatural, for they complain that the tribal authorities will never learn and never listen to their advice or accept their suggestions. All this occasions friction and divided allegiance, it weakens the authority of the queen, and it antagonizes the pagans.

In recent years there has been more co-operation. The old influential Christians have died and the educated young pagans have learnt to manage things for themselves. Agricultural officials, despite active resistance from pagans and co-operation from Christians, realize that their work is incomplete without sustained efforts to secure the interest of the pagans. Christians are vouchsafed no information from the capital and their opportunities of leadership and interference become limited. Jealousies among Christians have led to disunity and they have lost control of the postal arrangements. The secretarial duties of the chief are undertaken jointly by a Christian and several pagans. And young men who in the past found their major opportunities in identifying themselves with the Christians are beginning to find it more profitable to side with the pagans. This is but a reflection of more universal trends: the importance of the church has receded before the rapid expansion of the activities of the administration, industry, and commerce; these activities are no longer in active co-operation with Christianity, and differences in religious outlook between pagans and Christians tend to be over-shadowed by the feeling of common hostility to and distrust of the European. How far the new tendencies will lead to constructive

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co-operation and to bringing Christians into more realistic touch with the total tribal environment are questions too large for consideration here.

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But Christianity has not destroyed only; it has also built up. Christians wholeheartedly embraced education; pagans, believing that education implies the acceptance of a foreign faith, are torn by conflicting loyalties, and their ardent desire to acquire the three R's expresses itself in the attempts made to set up a tribal school, which will be the agent, not of an alien creed, but of traditional values. Education and the outlook it has engendered have equipped Christians for meeting the impact of Western conquest and culture. Schoolchildren lose much of the lore of the veld and the training of the tribal initiations, but they gain new games, new skills, and new knowledge, implicit in which are assumptions regarding the nature of man and the purpose of existence. The church, through its preachings and schools, has been the channel of more than half the influences of Western ethics and culture in their positive effects. Its future lies in its control of education, for its religious mission has become submerged in a mass of technical and routine duties, entailing the preparation of pupils for examinations and the filling up of forms, with consequent loss of personal contacts and pastoral care. Its religious influence is evident in grace at meals, prayers for oneself, church services, Biblical Christian names, feasts, sacraments, and periodical visits of the women of one settlement to commune with and advise those of another. But on the whole the purely religious has been eclipsed by the educational effects. The two are inextricably interwoven; and their separation might well mean that Christianity will have no message for modern man and will be regarded as linked with the repressive, not the progressive, forces of Western civilization.

The valuable adjustments brought about by Christianity are the adjustments towards the modern world: receptivity to Western standards, less reluctance to co-operate with Europeans, and aspirations to seek self-realization amid the opportunities offered by them. Christians are less sceptical than pagans of European health services and of the innovations of the agricultural demonstrator; and they are better equipped and, until recently, were more eager to accept such Government posts as those of interpreters, policemen, and forest rangers. Only Christians can be teachers. Christians are driven to action by the idea of progress; they seek their future and achievement in change; and they attribute the disabilities under which the tribe suffers to the ignorance of their pagan rulers. Not much of what they have learnt intellectually has merged integrally with their lives, but they are less frustrated than the pagans.

Their outlook stands in close relation to the great extension of economic needs necessitated by Christianity, such as church and school fees, books and occasionally newspapers, better clothes and more European household articles, brick houses, wooden coffins, and burial societies. Their contributions, which help to support the widespread organization and institutions of the Church, constitute one of the main resistances to conversion; but the necessity to meet the new demands has made them keener agriculturalists than are the pagans. You sometimes hear a pagan derisively call out to Christian workers, not the friendly greeting '*Vashumi*'

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177 (workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian
795 reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians
184 are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement, occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities, Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion, develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.

177 There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the
795 tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft
184 which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence
578 of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of
754 the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers. Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven underground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain, albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witchcraft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witchcraft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

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The repercussions of the Christian outlook in the tribe as a whole may be referred to briefly. The tendencies are changing because of the recent re-absorption of Christians into the tribe, but the main results to-day are still those coming from the segregated Christians. Christian holidays have to some extent become part of the life of the tribe. Sunday is, as far as agriculture and building operations are concerned, a day of rest, but, for this reason, it is set aside specially for public business, such as tribal gatherings and *khɔrɔ* trials; and one result is that Christians, even if their moralizing and attempts to improve law and procedure were better tolerated, are excluded from participation. People occasionally have 'beer of Christmas' or 'New Year'. Twin murders can no longer be reported to the queen, as there is danger of implicating her, and Christian women, more interested in the pregnancy, legitimate or otherwise, of their friends, threaten to take action if they suspect a murder. But the effect is unsuspectedly complicated: a pagan mother who under pressure allows her twins to live may be refused assistance by her husband's mother, and often reacts by underfeeding them in order to starve them to death; and much greater secrecy is maintained. In 1923, after a few convictions in the European courts, the queen forbade the killing of twins and ordered births to be reported to the mission station; but the rule became a dead letter as soon as it could be safely circumvented.

Real or pretended sensitiveness among pagans to Christian values has had some effects. Not only do pagans ascribe their misfortunes to disregard of duties fostered by the example of the Christians, but they advance Christian values as excuses for not fulfilling their own obligations. They may condemn the Christian intrusion as causing drought or disobedience, but they may justify their own doubtful behaviour upon principles of Christian ethics. In 1937, for instance, Mashishimali refused to accept a *gɔsha* dance on the ground that his wife's brother, who lived in the village, was a Christian, but the real reason was self-interest and unwillingness to kill a beast and to burden himself with feeding the dancers. For a similar reason, an old woman, nominally a Christian, refused to allow her son to accommodate the dancers, but the reason she advanced was the pagan associations of the drums. Slackness in obeying the queen is ascribed to the example of the Christians, who break taboos with impunity and escape their obligations as messengers of the *khɔrɔ* by declaring that the work is un-Christian.

At one time Christians could terrify pagans by predicting eclipses and locust invasions, visitations which they ascribed to the obstinacy of the pagans in refusing to accept the gospel; this weapon is useless to-day, but the Christian hell causes some uneasiness of conscience and repressed fear, especially evident in dreams and during illness. There are death-bed conversions, and the evangelist is sometimes anxiously called to interpret alarming dreams. Masilu, a budding doctor still learning the bones, which had been discarded by a Christian relative, suffered from a persistent illness. While bed-ridden he dreamt that he had ascended a great ladder half-way to heaven and came to a luxuriant country. There he saw two roads, but he was stopped by the guardian of the gate to which one of these roads led, and told to take the left-hand road going to the

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177 184 195 west. He suspected that that road led to hell. The evangelist, called in for consultation, prayed for his soul, explaining that the dream clearly warned the pagan sinner to mend his way of life if he wished to be admitted to the road that led to salvation. Masilu was half-persuaded, but when his wife scorned the imposture and he had regained health, he let the matter slide. But sometimes conversion takes place in such circumstances, especially as the view is held that many people, after a dream of this nature, suddenly die. We may also associate with Christian ethics such phenomena as the growth of a sex-guilt complex, the wearing of blouses to cover the breasts, and the repression of virginity observances.

The persistence of a belief among Christians that the restrictions imposed upon the tribe may be attributed to backwardness and refusal to give up custom has not been without its effects. Sophisticated pagans share this belief with the Christians, but on the whole the assumption of enlightenment and superiority derives from the conception, fostered by Christianity, of the darkness of the pagan world. There is much that can be advanced in support of their contentions: the location allotted to the tribe, it is urged, would have been larger if the whole tribe, not merely a portion of it, had presented itself to General Joubert when, in the 1890s, after their defeat, he commanded their presence in order to enable him to give them land proportionate to their numbers; and, similarly, the stringency of the dipping laws, the absence of any benefits from the fund of the local tax, the ascendancy of the Shangana-Tonga are laid at the door of the ignorance of the councillors. Christians allege that in other tribes, where there has been enlightenment, disabilities have disappeared. Some pagans, half-accepting the impeachment, blame their leaders; others, and they are in the majority and the most influential, resent the imputation and fiercely resist every suggestion that comes from the Christians. On the whole, however, the obvious advantages of knowledge of the ways of the white man and of the outside world cannot be gainsaid: it is the educated Native who gets the best posts and secures exemption from carrying passes. But where enlightenment is paraded by Christians, it merely occasions more resistance and opposition.

THE CHALLENGE OF WESTERN CONQUEST

177 The influence of Western culture, as a force distinct from Christianity, can be fully interpreted only against a background that extends, as regards time, to the earliest contacts between Bantu and European and, as regards space, over the whole of South Africa. Attitudes and reactions observable in Uulovedu are often intelligible in the light, not of local misfortunes, but of experiences of tribes in other parts of South Africa. We cannot here discuss this question; indeed, the problems arising from the impact of Western culture within the tribe alone are too complex for summary treatment. On the whole, there has only been legislation against utterly repugnant custom and, until recently, the restrictions that have been efficiently enforced were few, and did not strike directly at the integrity of custom. The policy has been one of *laisser-faire*; and no active attempt has been made to graft new culture elements upon the old patterns. The

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101 one might call the Lobedu culture complex, though it is not at all clear what the origin of its differentiating features is. In its most typical form this culture is found among the Lobedu of Modjadji, the Letswalo and the Khaha. To the north-west it merges into the not very different Venda culture complex; to the south, Pedi influences, noticeable on the edge of the Drakensberg, become increasingly apparent among the Mahlo and eventually predominate among the Baha Mamidja on the banks of the Olifants. In the east, the Phalaborwa have developed specialized responses to the challenge of an [184] arid bushveld environment; while to the west along the escarpment, Tokwa influences are so marked that the Sekhopo branch of the Lobedu, who live there, differ more from the Lobedu of Modjadji than do the unrelated Khaha and Letswalo.[1] These gradations are to some extent hidden by the fact that owing to the mixed composition of every tribe differences in custom in any single tribe are often as great as differences from one tribe to another. The nature of this Lowveld cultural pattern, those features peculiar to this area and those held in common with other tribes, will best be shown by a short account in general terms of various aspects of the social and economic organization of these tribes.

361 171 General Aspects of the Lowveld Village. The Lowveld village, nestling among the trees and shrubs of the surrounding bushveld vegetation, which usually provides a natural fence, differs in general aspect from that of the Highveld tribes with its well-smeared, high-walled courtyards. While there is a tendency in the south, among Narene of Segororo and to a lesser extent among Thabina and Maake's Khaha, for villages to straggle in lines along the hill-sides, there is nowhere any sign of the large agglomerations of dwellings so typical of the Tswana town and present in an attenuated form also among Tokwa of the Highveld. The Lowveld village is not large, consisting generally of from two to twenty huts; but there is evidence that when times were more unsettled and the need for protection kept

[1] The Birwa who live partly in the Lowveld, partly in the Highveld, probably belong to the Lobedu culture complex. Though their culture differs in many respects from that of the Lowveld tribes there are also marked similarities, such as ritual suicide of the chief.

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241 of the agriculture of the more mountainous portions of the Lowveld is the use of terraces, or rather contour walls of stone, for there is no levelling of the ground in between, to prevent excessive washing away of soil. With the absence of men in the towns and the introduction of the plough with subsequent preference for valley cultivation, these contour walls are tending to fall into disuse.

462 [171] Division of labour between the sexes is the same here as among Venda and the Highveld tribes of the Northern Transvaal. While care of cattle is the province of men and agricultural work is done by both sexes, cooking and housekeeping is confined to women. Men are responsible for the erection of storage receptacles, renewal of pantry and village enclosures and the lion's share in hut-building, including thatching, for women do only plastering of walls and preparation of the floor. The crafts confined to men are ironwork, work in skin, and all wood-work such as the manufacture of drums, platters, spoons, milk pails, stamping blocks, porridge twirlers, and flat winnowing baskets. Pottery is confined to women, but weaving and basketry (other than the making of winnowing baskets) is done by both sexes.

642 643 Political Organization and Position of the Chief. The most outstanding features of the Lobedu culture complex, which clearly differentiate the Lowveld tribes from their neighbours to the south and west, are ritual suicide of the chief and the possibility of women ruling in their own right.[1] Among the Lobedu the chief reigns for a period of four circumcision schools, each 'school' being separated from the previous one by a period of almost ten years, and then has to drink poison and die. The institution can hardly continue when its supporting background of ritual and belief is crumbling, but it has survived to this day; the immediate predecessors of the present Lobedu and Letswalo rulers died unnatural deaths in the traditional manner, Modjadji II in 1894 and Mamathola in 1905. There is in this area no conscious belief that growth of the crops, welfare of the cattle,

[184] [1] These two features occur together in the most important tribes of the Lowveld such as the Lobedu, Khaha, Narene, Thabina. The only tribes to whom this institution is foreign are the Phalaborwa and Tsubye and the two Venda tribes of Moila and Tswale. Sekhopo and Radwadu, sections of the Balobedu, broke away when the first woman succeeded and themselves have only men rulers.

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643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men,
588 and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
644 or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the
[565] village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
•[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the
[171] Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage,

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mother's brother's daughter, and in contrast to all surrounding Sotho tribes, Pedi to the south and Highveld tribes to the west where it is common, marriage with the father's brother's daughter is not considered possible. Cross-cousin marriage with the father's sister's daughter is known only among the Lobedu, where it is common within the royal clan, Khaha, where it is rare, and Moila's Venda. The prevalence of marriage with the mother's brother's daughter by which a girl is said to be 'born for' a son of a certain house and knows all her life she will marry there, has been a stabilizing influence leading to very much less illegitimacy resulting from the absence in towns of young men than is found in other areas where this type of marriage has broken down. A girl knows she will have to 'cook for' her father's sister, her future mother-in-law (indeed there is a definite moral value attached to this), and even in the absence of her husband-to-be will be married by the family. If, as a young married woman she has a child in the absence of her husband, it is an irregularity without serious social consequences. On the death of a spouse, sororate and levirate are common; marriage with the wife's brother's daughter is found where the wife is barren or dead, and full inheritance of a young wife of one's own father is quite common.

The custom of a woman being 'married' by a woman, so common in the Lowveld, is one often misunderstood by Europeans. Since a girl is 'born for' the son of her father's sister whose cattle made her father's marriage and her own birth possible, her father's sister may, even if she has no son, nevertheless 'marry' the girl, who will come and cook for her and have children by some appointed relative or by private lovers of her own choice. It is possible, though much rarer, for a woman rich in cattle to 'marry' a non-relative.

Though in the Lowveld as elsewhere the person responsible for payment of bride-price in a man's first marriage is his father or guardian and brothers and sisters are usually coupled, the cattle for the girl being used by the boy, it is not customary in the Lowveld, as is the case elsewhere, for any other relative to contribute. Here, when a man has no cattle, instead of begging from various relatives, he will proceed to 'show the knee' to a man rich in cattle, i.e., he will borrow cattle on the understanding that his first daughter will

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754 i.e., telling the medicine, without any set phraseology, what to do, is important. Day wizards are chiefly men and it is said that, owing to the facility of obtaining bad medicine in towns and from foreign tribes to-day, this type of witchcraft has greatly increased.

In everyday life, however, a person is called a witch, whatever methods he has used, and in an accusation of witchcraft there is never any discussion whether the culprit is a day or night wizard. Moreover, there is in the minds of ordinary people considerable confusion about the type of witchcraft associated with each class, and it is possible to live among Lowveld people a long time without coming upon these distinctions. The night wizard is thus in Evans-Pritchard's terminology the witch, the day wizard the sorcerer; and the great distinction between sorcery and legitimate magic lies not in method but in intention.

273 535 SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF BEER AND THE DANCE. It would be a mistake in discussing the main features of Lowveld society to leave out of count the social importance of beer and the use of the dance or *gosha* as a social institution, though neither is confined to these tribes. Beer, apart from its religious value, plays a part in social and economic life. It is continually being carried from one group to another, acting as a bond between people and establishing friendly relations. In the [184] Lowveld, in contrast to the Highveld, it is still of greater importance than money; while people may refuse to attend working parties for money, they will flock to one where beer is served. The *gosha* is a [534] dance in which women do the drumming while men playing reed pipes dance in a circle round the drums. It is, however, much more than a dance. It is an institution for maintaining friendship and reciprocity between groups, a way of showing sympathy on the death of a relative and the means by which subjects approach their chief for rain in time of drought. A *gosha* is often sent by one chief to another in the Northern Transvaal.

5 171 SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN LOBEDU CULTURE AND THAT OF OTHER AREAS. The Lobedu culture complex represents a close blending of two cultures, that of the Lobedu who came south from somewhere in Rhodesia when the empire of Monomotapa was breaking up, bringing

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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1] The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 230 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopœia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most
789 practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical
824 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his
757 faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason
[753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are
[755] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have
192 arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognize the similarity of plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants might receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadwa* of the plateau (*kha naha*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadwa* of stony places (*kha makhwareni*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *muduwo*, *muduwatsi*, *muduwatisbi*, and *muduwolisiga*, all containing the root *duw-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugavi*, *mukwidi*, and *muhahela thudu* are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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good reasons for the different names; the anatomical similarities are known, but the uses and other aspects are more important and determine the name. Anatomical differences, clearly recognized, do not stand in the way of designating very different epiphytic plants which secrete 'birdlime' (*vulebo*) by the one name, *khilebo*. What determines nomenclature are not only striking physical features, such as peculiar leaves and seeds, but also a significant relationship with natural phenomena or, most usually, an important use. The variety of unconnected principles used upsets the symmetry, from our point of view, of the classification. But it must not lead us to think that there has been no close observation of the forms and venation of leaves, the taste and smell of the wood, and so on. The details of the flower, except for colour, general shape and size, are regarded as unimportant for purposes of identification. Yet they can name the poorest specimens and wonder why we want flowers and fruit before we can name a plant. The use of many cross classifications is not a burden to the memory, because the names link the plants to their practical uses.

The subject is much too large for adequate treatment here. Yet a few examples, illustrating the general outlook, might be of value. Because of its broad, flat leaves, *Inulata glomerata* is called *zvɛ̀ ya ɖou* (the ear of an elephant). The flower of *Wormskioldia longipedunculata*, which is small and crimson and peers through the grass, suggests the name *leiɸ la dau* (the eye of a lion). The baobab is *khivuyu*, something inordinately fat and squat; the root *vu-* also occurs in the names of those fat caterpillars that attack mealies, of the hippopotamus, and of the enormous termite queen. Apt as well as picturesque are such names as *khivede kha muri* (the liver of the tree), for all fungi; *leada la khithii* (the egg of the sunbird), for a variety of the groundnut; *Voandezia subterranea*, *moykhakhilemo* (scent of spring) for *Phyllanthus reticulatus*, the flowers of which fragrantly herald the spring, and many others. One might think that those who named the plants were poets. Perhaps they were, because there is no lack of exquisite poetry in the beautiful praise songs that are the real literature of the people.

But their interests are many-sided and they do not scorn to have more mundane names. Here are a few that bear upon economic uses. For weaving (*hu loha*) baskets they use the *muloha* plant, *Acacia ataxacantha*; *mulɛde-muloha-ɸhɔɖɔ*, our *Sida cordifolia*, is pliable (*hu leda*), like other *mulɛde* plants, all of which are of the genus *Triumfetta*, and for that reason specially suitable for weaving beer sieves (*hu loha ɸhɔɖɔ*). *Mukhaɸisa*, our *Indigofera eriocarpa*, is their herdboys' milk-curdler (*hu khaɸisa*, to cause milk to curdle). The sap of *muilantshe*, which we call *Asclepias stellifera*, they use to repel flies (*hu ila ntshe*) from the open wounds of cattle. With the branches of *Vasimana-va-a khaɖa*, a stinging weed which we appropriately dignify with the name *Achyranthus aspera*, youngsters (*vasimana*) playfully fight one another.

Consider also, lest we think that the genius for giving apt names has been lost, the following few recently introduced plants. The pineapple, because of its prickly, xerophytic bracts, gets the same name as the aloes, *khiɸuzi*. The scent of the khaki weed calls to mind hemp, *baja*, and so is

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824 called the small hemp, *khibajabajani*. The large pods of *legamasi*, a
●192 peanut of the *musaimitka* variety, are likened to leggings, for which they use a corruption of the Afrikaans word *kamasters*. *Khithava-mansi* in scientific nomenclature is *Amaranthus spinous* but, for all that, it pricks the 'missus' (*hu thava musisi*). We link the sunflower with the sun, but they call it *munontshakhuhu*, fattener of the fowls, because the unaccountable European, instead of leaving fowls to their own devices, fattens them (*hu nontsha*) with its seeds. It would be tedious to give more of these interesting names. Suffice it to say that, upon whatever principle they are given, they furnish examples of close observation, of humour and poetry, and of practical sense.

824 In the command that the Lovedu have over the material supplied by
461 vegetation, knowledge of the suitability of the plant to be used is by far the most impressive aspect. By contrast, preparation of the material, by seasoning or otherwise, and skilful or artistic manipulation to produce the required result lag far behind. Utility rather than artistic beauty is the main consideration; a carelessly made article, generally speaking, serves its purpose as well as one well executed. There is not much specialization and a high standard of workmanship is not aimed at; most men know what wood to select and how to make a great variety of ordinary household articles. Special skill is needed for making wooden dishes, drums, and milk pails. The most skilled work is perhaps the making of baskets (*zwirudwana*), which is done by men. This is not the place to describe the technique of the arts and crafts; all we need insist upon is the widespread knowledge of the virtues and defects of the plants that can be used.

824 Modern conditions have brought about a serious decline in craftman-
178 ship and in familiarity with the vegetation. Schoolboys no longer have the extensive opportunities of learning veld-lore which herding provided. Herding is to them hardly an institutionalized induction into nature study; instead of being a part of life itself, it assumes the aspect of distasteful labour. The introduction of European articles also lessens the interest in the qualities of the vegetation. Yet these influences are in their infancy. They have made some impression upon the material elements of the culture, but they have tended to impoverish rather than to replace the old. You see petrol tins side by side with water pots, ugly sacks ousting the picturesque granaries, patched pieces of boxwood replacing reed doors, cast-off European clothes instead of graceful coverings of skin, machine-made blankets beside hand-woven grass mats, and axes and knives, no longer from the smithy, but only from the stores.

178 More serious is the threat to the traditional outlook. Christianity
313 stresses the virtue of being different from the pagan, but the status of Europeanized Natives is precarious both in and outside the tribe, and there is no co-ordinated view of life that can successfully combat the subtle economic onslaught of European culture. And, since 1938, the legislative prohibition of cutting down trees, except after permission having been obtained and a fee paid, threatens a change of which the results cannot be foreseen. Many trees, and among them some essential for the crafts, may not be cut down at all. The inconvenience of walking

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does the initiation. There are no special burial rites associated with the cult. There is, however, a vague belief that injury to a snake in the village may in some cases harm a possessed person, an interesting belief in view of the fact that there is so little trace in Lovedu religion of the Zulu idea that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in snakes.

There is a special relationship between a possessed person and the doctor who initiated him: every year when the medicine needs renewal, beer or *morula* cider is prepared, the doctor, who comes with a number of disciples and attendants, is called and there is a great dance of the possessed often lasting several days. This is 'dancing for medicine' (*hu vincla tshidi*). Some possessed people have to be specially doctored before drinking the first *morula* cider and the *morula* season is always a time of *lelɔpɔ* gatherings; others are required to contribute corn at harvest time for a large *lelɔpɔ* dance at the home of the doctor. These gatherings, at which a goat may be slaughtered in addition to the cider provided, add greatly to the prestige of the doctor. There is sometimes considerable jealousy between *malɔpɔ* doctors, who, with those initiated by them, may form rival schools. Some doctors refuse to allow their followers to dance with those initiated by other doctors without special permission. At one seance, at which there had been some unpleasantness, the doctor smeared some powder into incisions on the neck, tongue, crown, and sides of the heads of her disciples. Then, taking some medicated water in her mouth, she squirted (*hu phasa*), saying, 'I "place" you. Don't you dance any more. I don't like dancing every day without my special permission. Any *lelɔpɔ* who dances where you are dancing will break her leg or be badly hurt.' The remainder of the water was given them to drink.

An interesting feature of the cult of possession is that many people when the spirit is upon them speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thɔvɔlɔ or Kharanga. Investigation into this matter, however, shows that this is not as startling a phenomenon as it might appear. When possessed, a person for the most part sits silent unless he is a doctor. If he speaks at all, this is in monosyllables, for all his wants and messages are conveyed in song. *Lelɔpɔ* songs are stereotyped and known to many because the uninitiated have to join in the refrain when rattling the accompaniment. In these songs there is usually a number of foreign words, though many consist purely of meaningless sounds, such as '*We le wee eva o wee wee wee wana wee*'. Often peculiarities in the pronunciation of vowels are interpreted as Thɔvɔlɔ. When the refrain begun (*hu suma*) by the possessed person has been taken up by the chorus, he continues with the song or interpolates his own words, usually Sotho with a few foreign words interspersed, till he wishes to stop. In this way he makes known his wishes. It quite frequently happens that no one understands the gibberish of the possessed person, and doctors generally have an attendant who interprets what they wish to convey. There are, however, numerous well-known words in general use by people when their spirit is upon them—for instance, *mufoto* or *movoto* for *lefɔla* (snuff), *bula* or *mvula* for *meetse* (water), *va ga mbaya* for *va ga ntiya* (they may beat me), *kaya* for *hae* (home). But many possessed people speak pure Sotho, and it is recognized that a newly initiated person may not

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794 533 192 know Thɔvɔlɔ. The Lovedu themselves are not critical, and the usual reply when one expresses any doubt about the genuineness of the possessed or the possibility of fraud is, 'If they were not really possessed how could they speak a strange tongue?'

794 It is not our purpose to discuss the psychology of possession among the Lovedu. We should, however, point out that it is in no way associated with abnormalities of character or with crises in the life of the individual. Its symptoms are not of a nervous nature, such as indicate *ukuthwasa* among Nguni; there are, except when the spirit descends upon them, no twitchings, uncontrollable hiccups are unknown; members of the cult are not hysterical or mentally unbalanced nor can they be distinguished in their daily activities from others. There is no change in the personality of the individual when his spirit is upon him, although some of them sing in a low voice when possessed by a man and others dance in a peculiar way. Nor is there any difference to be seen between one possessing spirit and another in the same individual: when his second spirit comes upon a possessed person, it often continues the conversation where the first spirit left off, and the only indication of its arrival may be its own announcement in a song or perhaps gulping movements and a gentle falling back of the patient. Finally, of interest psychologically was the farewell dance of all *malɔpɔ* just before the *vyali* initiation for girls in September, 1938. Their songs and dances were taboo during the period of the 'school' as they were not allowed to compete with those of the *vyali* which had not yet ended in October, 1939. We must not conclude from this or from the fact that Christians do not become *malɔpɔ* that possession is imposture. There are wide avenues for fraud, but most *malɔpɔ* are genuine victims of mass-suggestion. The cult, though open to men, is confined largely to women. It is not associated with gifts of prophecy or the finding of lost objects, and there are no revelations concerning the Beyond.

The bearing of the possessed when not dancing is quiet and dignified and detached in contrast to the diabolical manifestations of the possessed in Europe in the Middle Ages. It appears to be neither a paranoic nor a compensatory phenomenon. We dare not relate trance experience with neuroses or psychoses, for we need to orientate ourselves, not from our own, but from a wider relativistic psychology or psychopathology; the mental reflects the cultural configuration and the disposition of drives in the mind must be viewed relatively to the disposition of forces in the culture. The whole cult among the Lovedu is remarkably stereotyped; behaviour under the influence of the spirit, the songs, the things demanded by spirits, conform to a type. Even the possessing spirits themselves are stereotyped, being almost always grandparents.

It is our impression that if any one in the least degree suggestible were made to dance without sustenance for several days in the noise and excitement of seances, he would be liable to fall down exhausted and respond in the traditional manner to the attentions of the women. But not all initiations are successful. In one case witnessed by us, the young woman quite obviously did not want to become possessed: she danced in a half-hearted manner and, under the pretext of tending her baby, kept

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123 sweating humanity. After an exhausting walk of ten miles or more over difficult country, in order to witness a ceremony, it is discouraging to be refused admittance to the performance or to find it postponed until the European leaves; but occasional success amply repays perseverance. In the timeless Lovedu society, even if the investigator is welcomed, he may have to wait hours for a performance to begin; but the time need never be wholly wasted. Personal observation brings to light bewildering variations in the culture. There is no such thing as rigid conformity, and rules are made for man, not man for rules. Until the observer's own cultural conditioning is re-conditioned by intimate touch with the society, he cannot hope to penetrate its meaning.

In this book we are concerned to describe custom and life as they are to-day, after fifty years of European contact. Every custom, every ceremony, every case in it, has been personally seen except in those instances, always clear from the context, in which the event, such as the death of a Lovedu chief, did not occur during the period of investigation. We have written about everyday things as they are enacted in the tribe to-day, not as they were in the past. For obvious reasons, names mentioned in illustrative cases are all fictitious, save only where they are essential for the subject matter, as in the chapters on tribal history, social groupings, and political organization.

At the outset of our investigation we planned a rough division of work. One of us, E. J. Krige, concentrated upon magic and religion, family life, and women's activities; the other, J. D. Krige, upon laws and political organization, history, and man's activities. But our method of studying human situations as and where we found them, and of recording things as and when they occurred, precluded any rigid division, and each obtained information upon all aspects of culture. Each of us independently studied many institutions, such as marriage, economic life, and medical practices, and the diversity of our information and impressions—often reflections of our personal differences of outlook—provided useful clues to further observation and interpretation, besides showing that in field work the temperament of the investigator is a vital factor. In the preparation of this book E. J. Krige is responsible for Chapters II, V, VII, VIII, XII to XV, and J. D. Krige for Chapters I, III, IV, VI, IX to XI, XVI, XVII and the maps; but each has carefully gone through the work of the other and the whole is the result of the fullest co-operation between us. It does not seem necessary to mention in detail which of us took the photographs reproduced.

197 As regards the language of the Lovedu, we found that, difficult as it was to acquire, a working knowledge was absolutely essential, because implicit in it is a vast background of associations which can never be recaptured in translation. Khilovedu is now practically a dialect of Sotho, yet it cannot be adequately written in Sotho orthography. It approximates to Venda in much of its vocabulary, falls midway between Sotho and Venda in grammatical structure, and is Sothoized in phonology, 104- but many of its sounds are unknown in Sotho. Generally speaking, 194 we have adopted the orthography recommended by the International Institute with some modifications. For dental *d* and *t* we have used *đ* and *ŧ*

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as in Venda, and now commonly used in Northern Sotho, where these sounds also occur, but, as in Sotho, the semi-flapped alveolar lateral fricative, a phoneme of *d*, has not been distinguished from ordinary *d*; and we have deemed it unnecessary to have a special letter for the sound of English *sh*, or *ts* or *c* for the sound *ch* in English 'church', which we write *tsh*. Many variations are evident in Khilovedu in its movement towards Sotho, the language taught in the schools: there are differences in vocabulary and sounds used by women and young children, on the one hand, and by those who go to town, on the other, and by the young as compared with the old. The old sound of English *z* in *azure* becomes in the mouth of the younger generation the English *j* as in 'John'; *z* as in 'prize' alternates with *dz*, which is more common among the young people; and an old prefixal form, *lu*, is generally now *le*, except among the oldest people. We have used, *j*, *dz* more often than *z*, and *le* not *lu*, in accordance with modern trends. The *u* tends to become the closed *o*, and it is often very difficult to distinguish between these sounds; but here again we have kept as close as possible to the most prevalent pronunciation and have adopted *mu*, not *mo*, as the noun prefix.

We desire to thank the International Institute for publication and for the grants which enabled us to undertake this work, the Rev. W. and Mrs. Krause for hospitality while we were on their mission station, and numerous Lovedu friends, who must remain anonymous, for their co-operation. We desire also to express our gratitude to Dr. A. I. Richards for her invaluable assistance in seeing the book through the Press, and to Miss D. G. Brackett, the Secretary of the International Institute, for additional help in this connexion. But it is to Mrs. A. W. Hoernlé that we are most deeply indebted. When one of us was a student of economics and the other practising at the Johannesburg Bar, she, as lecturer at the University of the Witwatersrand, awakened our interest in social anthropology, made us realize its paramount importance as the basis of policies and national welfare in this southern sub-continent of Africa, and gave us that invaluable background, both of knowledge and ideals, from which our work has since then been oriented. Later, as adviser and friend, she was to us the source of unfailing encouragement, stimulating suggestion, and inspired guidance. For these roles there is no one better equipped than she by knowledge and experience of the Bantu. It is due to her that we have devoted ourselves, not to the professions with which we originally began our careers, but to social anthropology and to the ideal of putting it in the service of the practical problems of black and white in Africa.

E. Jensen Krige.
J. D. Krige.

Pretoria.
November, 1939.

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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On [883] moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khoro* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels [786] and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however, 244 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in 221 much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides the seasons into three: *khilemo*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *letavula*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *maria*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

244 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February, 221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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food as often as not being brought to them there. Sometimes the women take with them cobs of mealies preserved by being cooked and dried in the summer months, which they have softened by boiling again before use. In stony places and along steep hillsides, where ploughing is impossible, hoeing is to-day still done by hand. Here one can generally see mealie meal spread out to dry near at hand, out of reach of the fowls and goats that would play havoc with it at home, where there is no one to watch it. For it is chiefly the women that hoe while the men plough. Bushes or branches that have grown out from tree stumps in the fields are cut in readiness for planting, and a typical feature of this time of the year is the small fires in the fields every day towards sunset, when dry mealie stalks that have been collected in heaps are burned. Relishes have been reduced to a minimum, blackjacks (*Bidens pilosa*), *theebe* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) and *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*) being the mainstay, and cooking is done only once a day. There are no nuts or mealies to roast or eat casually, and in years of scarcity this is the time when the pinch of hunger is felt. At night people retire early to bed, tired from the hard work of planting and, later, weeding during the day. Dancing is rare; there is no time for social activities, all energy being directed towards getting the crops planted. Beer parties there are, chiefly work parties for weeding, but they are not as frequent now as in winter. As yet few cases of malaria will have come to light; it is rather the season of dysentery and of cuts and bruises received in hoeing. As the season advances, the first termites make their appearance to relieve the monotony of relish of blackjack leaves, the grass grows longer and weeding becomes imperative.

As a relief to the dullness of the planting season comes the *morula* season, which marks the first two months of 'summer' (February and March) and which from the point of view of seasonal activities can be looked upon as a distinctive period. Everything is green; the grass stands high and weeding is the order of the day, for rain is plentiful. Masses of golden *morula* fruits are falling to the ground. Green mealies from the first-planted fields are beginning to be eaten, spinach of male pumpkin flowers and, later, leaves, make porridge cakes more interesting; and there are sugar-cane and dishes of unripe monkey nuts. People have looked forward eagerly to this time. They are tired of their work and, though much weeding and mounding of *njugo* beans has still to be done, the exultation grows as the cider begins to appear. To those whose granaries are empty, the *morula* season brings a blessed relief from the pangs of hunger, and they drink it as if it were the elixir of life. Much of the day is spent in the fields where the cider is prepared, and from under the trees there is a mighty hubbub of voices. At nightfall, when they return as from a bacchanalian festival, there are opportunities for romantic intrigues, the result rather of exhilaration than of the reputed aphrodisiac effects of the cider. Soon the air is rent by songs and drumming of the possessed, who at this season receive medicine to eat with the *morula* and other green foods of summer. And as the *morula* season draws to a close, the green foods of summer become more plentiful and the beginning of reaping activities ushers in the rich abundance of late summer.

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Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thuduntoli*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*hu rula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *muukhoma* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gɔsha*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *madulahae* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and *mahoru* ants, for even blackjacks are scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when European vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, specially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. Those, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes.

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of three different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

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CHAPTER III

BASES OF SUBSISTENCE

The agricultural complex of activities—culture-change adjustments, and problems of malnutrition, education, and division of labour in agriculture—the place in the society, and present-day problems, of animal husbandry—modern threats to the interest in the vegetation as a basis of subsistence.

241 231 222 824 262 THE Lovedu are great agriculturalists and poor pastoralists. They have a vast knowledge of the vegetation, which constitutes the best example of a science among them. It is a science closely related to their everyday lives and upon which they rely, even more than upon their cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls, for their subsistence. They eat the fruits and roots of the plants, depend for their relishes upon leaves and soft stems, and in dozens of other ways nourish themselves upon the natural products of the soil. Not agriculture and animal husbandry alone, but these, together with wild fruits, woods, and other products of nature, are the bases of subsistence.

These bases are all fundamental, but they have different value in different aspects of the culture. Agriculture is most important as a source of the substantial foods; natural fruits provide relishes and variety, and as a means of nutrition are much more prominent than domestic animals. Cattle and goats are primarily not food at all; their great role lies in supporting the social structure. In considering the sources of the primary needs of man, we should get a wholly distorted picture if we omitted the natural vegetation, the use of which as food, in economic pursuits, and in medicine is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu culture. Tillage and animal husbandry presume an extensive practical knowledge of soils, crops, and grasses; but this body of knowledge takes second place beside the imposing science at the basis of handicrafts, natural foods—indeed, the whole medical, nutritional, and economic structure of the society.

000 Nature is not merely a physical fact; it is a living reality, an integral part of the culture. Environment is not something apart from man and his needs; it is the medium in which he lives and breathes. And it is 824 their direct reliance on nature that makes the Lovedu so strikingly different from us, just as their everyday knowledge of the names, qualities, and uses of trees, bushes, and all kinds of plants so greatly overshadows the corresponding knowledge of ordinary men among us. We, who live in a world in which nature satisfies our primary needs in a roundabout manner, cannot easily realize how different conditions are in a world where the satisfaction is direct. We are often inclined to picture primitive man as engrossed in ritual pageant unrelated to, and unserviceable for, the major ends of human existence. It is very necessary to correct this view. It is often thought that sex, magic, and witchcraft absorb most of the time, activities, and interests of primitive man. But, at all events among the Lovedu, more time and energy is spent, more interest centred,

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for mealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Ṭonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Ṭonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Muvidividi (*Ekebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muvidisa-vyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *muvilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Ṭonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Rɔka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhɔpɔ, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigɔa, the Ɗgɔna and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *tiṭigwani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [824]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which
is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*hu dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khɔrɔ*, an open [361]
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dona*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khɔrɔ*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called *maduni* and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khɔrɔ* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khɔrɔ* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khɔrɔ*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khɔrɔ*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khɔrɔ* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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417 fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Raselaka complains that
● 231 herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous
[512] to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11 o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday, especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle in Raselaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Loveduland give hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent. of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but
[262] also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

361 You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khɔrɔ* to the huts, you hear Raselaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the royal kraal, they would surround the *khɔrɔ*, but here there are too few for that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden,
251 while at the back is the *marala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies are stored after reaping, till dry enough for decobbing. But they are empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly
[273] made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins,
[262] the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-pots, while a heap of golden, plumlike *morula* fruits with a cloud of midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

252 As you look along the space between the two rows of huts, a pleasant and busy scene meets the eyes. It is ten o'clock and cooking operations are at their height. Some are cooking outside in the courtyard; others prefer to cook in the kitchen hut. An old woman is spreading out her newly lifted monkey nuts, together with a few cobs of mealies which had fallen to the ground, to be sun-dried in her courtyard. Some freshly stamped mealie meal on mats and in baskets is also set out in the sun.
251 On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance. This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and preserved for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other purposes; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

351 Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to 512
fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe [784]
for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of 252
three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *hu thovola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for [231] ●
feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mabudu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the maize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *vuthithi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *vuswa*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*hu seḑa*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge [273]
of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for 871
their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seize hold 857
of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in [854]
no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mothers or to catch *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swaziae*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Raselaka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Raselaka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*hu suma*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Raselaka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the last dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lɔsha* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaau*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khɔrɔ* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Pɛkɛla, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khirula* beer to their *tsɛzi* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*hu pɛbɛla*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mushiji khi le; gi y'ɔ sheva ga nama*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10s. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsɛzi*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

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164 Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which 221 are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things [262] cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thuduntoli*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ku rula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green [251] mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty [252] cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *muukhoma* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and 244 sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, 221 which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first 461 finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or [273] repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption 535 and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gosha*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. 231 Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on 857 the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

221 In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's 461 seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *madulahae* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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CHAPTER III

BASES OF SUBSISTENCE

The agricultural complex of activities—culture-change adjustments, and problems of malnutrition, education, and division of labour in agriculture—the place in the society, and present-day problems, of animal husbandry—modern threats to the interest in the vegetation as a basis of subsistence.

241 231 222 824 [262] THE Lovedu are great agriculturalists and poor pastoralists. They have a vast knowledge of the vegetation, which constitutes the best example of a science among them. It is a science closely related to their everyday lives and upon which they rely, even more than upon their cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls, for their subsistence. They eat the fruits and roots of the plants, depend for their relishes upon leaves and soft stems, and in dozens of other ways nourish themselves upon the natural products of the soil. Not agriculture and animal husbandry alone, but these, together with wild fruits, woods, and other products of nature, are the bases of subsistence.

These bases are all fundamental, but they have different value in different aspects of the culture. Agriculture is most important as a source of the substantial foods; natural fruits provide relishes and variety, and as a means of nutrition are much more prominent than domestic animals. Cattle and goats are primarily not food at all; their great role lies in supporting the social structure. In considering the sources of the primary needs of man, we should get a wholly distorted picture if we omitted the natural vegetation, the use of which as food, in economic pursuits, and in medicine is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu culture. Tillage and animal husbandry presume an extensive practical knowledge of soils, crops, and grasses; but this body of knowledge takes second place beside the imposing science at the basis of handicrafts, natural foods—indeed, the whole medical, nutritional, and economic structure of the society.

000 Nature is not merely a physical fact; it is a living reality, an integral part of the culture. Environment is not something apart from man and his needs; it is the medium in which he lives and breathes. And it is their direct reliance on nature that makes the Lovedu so strikingly [824] different from us, just as their everyday knowledge of the names, qualities, and uses of trees, bushes, and all kinds of plants so greatly overshadows the corresponding knowledge of ordinary men among us. We, who live in a world in which nature satisfies our primary needs in a roundabout manner, cannot easily realize how different conditions are in a world where the satisfaction is direct. We are often inclined to picture primitive man as engrossed in ritual pageant unrelated to, and unserviceable for, the major ends of human existence. It is very necessary to correct this view. It is often thought that sex, magic, and witchcraft absorb most of the time, activities, and interests of primitive man. But, at all events among the Lovedu, more time and energy is spent, more interest centred,

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annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such expedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *munyicalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

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with an emotion which, though wholly unlike our humanitarian attitude, finds expression in exaggerated praises. These can be understood only in relation to their immense importance in the social organization. 231

Lovedu cattle are a blend, it is said, of four different strains: the large, humped Lovedu with backward-curving horns, the small, sturdy long-horned Rhodesian, the small Swazi with incurving horns, and the recent rather nondescript European breeds. In the present environment the mixture has led to inferior scrub cattle, resistent to tick-borne diseases and hardened by the stony hills. There are more cattle to-day than formerly and the distribution is far more equal, but no one believes that dipping has contributed to this result; on the contrary, dipping is regarded as a device to keep down their numbers, to subject the Native to irritating interference, behind which there are sinister motives. Recent attempts by the Administration to improve the breed by introducing thoroughbred Afrikander bulls failed because of these suspicions; the bulls were neglected and no camp was provided for them, and eventually they had to be removed. Cattle of individual owners are listed on so-called cattle lists, which primarily serve as a check upon the efficiency of the dipping; but the lists do not reflect real ownership, for they contain the cattle in a man's kraal, most of which may be merely in his care (*ku fisa*). These lists have considerably altered the incidents of the *ku fisa* contract and other aspects of Native life: they are often illegitimately used as evidence of ownership; orders of Native courts involving payments of cattle are sometimes nullified by the refusal of the owner of the list to authorize the transfer of cattle from his list to that of another; dipping and grazing fees imposed in some parts induce men, on the one hand, to distribute their cattle among different owners so as to keep down the number on any single list and, on the other, to make a charge, unauthorized by custom, for caring for the cattle of others. In short, European intervention has produced as serious changes in pastoral as in agricultural activities. Yet fundamentally the changes have left untouched the real significance and role of cattle in the society. 231 177 232

Cattle are not subject to as many taboos as elsewhere in Southern Africa. Women do not usually herd cattle, but the reason given is that not long ago the dangers from raids and wild animals necessitated herding by armed men; it was regarded as a purely practical measure. Girls or women may herd when the boys are in the circumcision school, and sometimes to-day young girls who have no brothers are seen looking after the cattle. What women may do or may not do varies almost from one kraal to another. Sometimes women of any age may go into the kraals; sometimes the doctor has protected the kraal in such a way that certain classes of women (not necessarily young women) are excluded. There is a fairly uniform fear that the blood of women or a woman who has had an abortion might cause the cattle harm. But the measures to combat these dangers vary very considerably. Kraals are doctored rather than cattle; and they are protected against various dangers, one of them being the danger of women. But elaborate magical practices, elsewhere associated with increasing the fertility of the cattle or safeguarding them 231 784 789

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231 against misfortune and disease, are not necessary when a new kraal is
784 built or when the medicated pegs are hammered around the fence as a
789 protection against witches. Some confine their doctoring to the kraals; others, in addition, give the cattle medicine. Bulls are never magically rendered more virile, nor are cows made more attractive by such means. There are to-day hardly any special cattle doctors, and very few cattle diseases are known or subjected to treatment. This is not the result of the breakdown of the cattle cult; it is evidence of the weakness of the cult among the Lovedu. If one were to detail all the magical practices that are to be found, the volume of which would be doubly formidable owing to their diversity, an overwhelming impression might be given; but in true perspective, regarding them against the total background they are almost too insignificant to be noticed.

231 Far more important from every point of view is the adjustment that
232 Natives are making to modern conditions. On this point we can offer
177 merely a few very general suggestions. Foremost is the problem of better co-operation between the Natives and the Administration. The objections to dipping are a symptom of misunderstanding one another's point of view. The Natives regard the restrictions as a punitive and arbitrary imposition. It is useless merely to urge that, by destroying the ticks that cause cattle diseases, dipping promotes both the increase and the welfare of the cattle. No one believes what is regarded as demonstrably false. Any one can see that cattle often die when they come back from the dip; that the rate of calving has decreased, that there are now no milch cows, that stock have degenerated, and so on. These evils are attributed to dipping, not to the hard driving to the dip, poor grazing, and inadequate care. What is more, it is believed that Europeans do not dip and that tribes that are sufficiently cunning escape the dipping regulations. Not a few advance the theory that dipping is a punishment for attachment to and preservation of old customs—surely an ironical comment upon the execution of a policy that aims at segregation and development on the lines of racial genius. The psychological aspects of these problems are no less important than their other aspects; and they are far more difficult and require delicate handling. It is easy to envisage the immediate effects, for instance, of limitation of stock, such as the starvation that will result from insufficient cultivation and the overburdening of the women with agricultural work; but when it is realized that the cattle are barely sufficient to maintain the *munywalo* exchanges upon which the social organization rests, one cannot venture to predict what the ultimate effect of limitation will be.

231 Goats are the animals *par excellence* of ritual and religious importance.
431 They also feature prominently in exchanges which promote social interrelations, such as marriage exchanges and the goodwill gifts between relatives-in-law. Second only to beer in re-establishing relations that have become strained, they are used very largely in the procedure of reconciliation, of righting wrongs by begging pardon, and in the payment of judgement debts. When a distinguished guest visits you, you honour him by killing a goat for him; when you bring beer to your *vaghulu*, the people to whom the daughters of your lineage are married, or even to a

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for mealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Muvidividi (*Ehebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muvidisa-eyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *muvilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the 357
family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a 736
derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munywalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

Rather like the *mulada* was the *muruiwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other 735
animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was 178
given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ṭuḷa* (or *hu ṭigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or 437
woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu ṭigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'.

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services 464
or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. 426
But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilebe*
arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or
cattle of others. The standard payment is 10*s*. per acre ploughed. The [465]
advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined 855
custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the 431
mother's brother, cares for (*hu lela*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maḷedi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration 231 ●
passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufisiwa*, uses the 465
cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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231 465 young goat, 'the payment of the herding', to-day, even if the goats have not prospered, because herdboys are no longer willing to work for nothing. Moreover, the *mufiswa* of cattle is nowadays asked to help the owner with his ploughing and he often (illegally, by traditional standards) charges herding and grazing fees. This charge is levied on the model of European farmers and is exacted even in areas within the reserve, where grazing fees are unknown. *Hu fisa* differs from *hu disija* (to cause to graze), an arrangement whereby one man allows another's cattle to run with his own, usually because he has no herdboy; for this no consideration passes.

461 Service, just like the various forms of co-operation, thus hardly ever implies subservience. Where it does, as in the old *hu ṭuḷa* or in the various modern forms of service, its incidents are regarded as derogatory, because they are incongruent with the emphasis on reciprocity. Even 567 *vuthobya* (slavery), which arises from captivity and was practically unknown, implies no real bondage. There is to-day still one 'slave', an old Shangana-Ṭonga woman captured, not by the Lovedu, but by the Shangana-Ṭonga, who sent her as tribute for rain to Mujaji. The institution of slavery is unknown among the Lovedu; so she, just like other wives of the queen, was handed over to one of the nobles, who accepted her as a daughter. As we have mentioned, there is a tendency to adopt European patterns of labour, both in the more or less solitary and in the co-operative activities.

166 464 The most important change is the migration to towns and farms in search of cash wages. The cash amount that enters the tribe, as compared with the total income of an average family, is small, not more than 7 per cent. The effects of the migration itself are proportionately small. It is not so much the absence in town of the men nor even the ideas that they bring back with them that are of the first importance. More men, not less, are idle to-day, and more crops, not less, are reaped than in the old days. Moreover, what the men have learnt in the towns is on the whole so different from the practice at home that it has to be laid aside. The greatest changes are not the direct introductions by these men, but the indirect reactions to the rule and the economy of the white man. Many of these reactions are unintelligible in relation to local conditions; they have spread from the highveld. We are concerned at present only with changes in the outlook towards economic arrangements. At first sight they appear to be very great, but the longer one looks the more superficial they appear and the firmer the old foundations stand out. The Christians are a notable exception, not because they migrate more to the towns (on [184] the whole the difference is negligible), but because, orientating themselves from an anti-tribal angle, they have eagerly accepted whatever differentiates them from their heathen brothers. They are competitive and money-conscious; they exploit their brothers.

For purposes of comparison, we may briefly consider two areas: A, with a population of 822, and B, with a population of 610. The census in A was taken in April, 1936, of B in April, 1937, the seasons 1936 and 1937 not being significantly different. A is 40 per cent. Christian and on the whole Christian standards of living prevail; B is 16 per cent. Christian

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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177 695 The handling of this evidence is woefully unskilful, but important distinctions must be made. Where the writing takes the place of the notches that used to be cut on sticks to indicate the cattle that had passed, it tends to be accepted if there is other supporting evidence; statements in a letter of the amount of money sent with the letter are generally given credence; but sentiments expressed in letters and written accounts of the circumstances of a case are usually completely ignored or dismissed as unimportant. In one case where a husband wrote that he had definitely deserted his wife, the court ignored the letter on the ground that, unless the husband gave his evidence in person, he might well reverse his attitude and appeal to the Native Commissioner. The subject of the development in the handling of written evidence is a large one; but to what we have said we would merely add that the recording of evidence in writing has been attempted, since 1932, in only fifteen cases all told. The attempt has miserably failed. The usual record reads approximately as follows: 'Andrew Malopo *v.* £19. 5 Jim Malate 2/8/32', and to that cryptic statement nothing is added by way of such embellishment as the nature of the case, whether the date refers to the day of trial or retrial or payment, whether in fact there has been payment, and so on. Native Commissioners have sometimes tendered advice about how cases should be decided and recorded, but it is beyond their province, and the results have been precisely nil.

177 642 Political institutions have suffered no fundamental change. External relations are maintained through the wives the queen still receives from, and the rain she still gives to, foreign chiefs; the suppression of military exploits and cattle raids has not affected the Lovedu. Relations with European authorities have modified initiative and control over large spheres of policy, for the tribal authorities receive instructions rather than discuss suggestions, though consultation is nowadays a recognized preliminary to the introduction of an innovation. The tribal gathering (*khivij*) never was important in Ulovedu; now it discusses perhaps more tribal matters than in the past, as well as European proposals and demands, but it has little power. The councillors, presenting European matters, sometimes give a distorted version, finding it difficult to justify either the measure proposed or their inability to bring about modifications or to circumvent it; and very often they do not mention important points at all. The widespread tendency to justify a desired action by saddling the European with responsibility for it reappears again and again. The people may be told by the councillors (who have a car) to mend the road, because, they say, an official who broke the spring of his car upon it has complained to the Native Commissioner; the administrative admonition to maintain better control over young boys going to work without their parents' consent was presented to the tribal meeting as a warning that boys not carrying tax receipts would be arrested if found at beer parties. (By traditional standards, now maintained with difficulty, beer parties are only for adults.) The justification or circumvention is upon the pattern that is known, and that pattern, despite the intervention of the European, remains intact.

177 231 656 Measures taken to protect national (South African) interests, such as

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *hu fisa*, the care of cattle by others.

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness.

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass.

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tonga introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant, the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 361
quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 171
larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [592]
two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the cob and beer-making activities.

TRIBAL ECONOMY. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 241
agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 231
adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [262]
are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 241
a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop, men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pumpkins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
trees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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THE LOVEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. KRIGE

The World View of the Lovedu

101 THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

144 Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to
177 have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga
563 immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this
642 group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

231 Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the
241 South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pur-
231 suits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and re-alignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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other wives. When the mother's brother's daughter is one of the younger wives in a polygynous household she may be completely overshadowed by the first wife. The eldest son of the first wife occupies a position of importance in the family. He is said to stand in the shoes (literally 'footprints') of his father and after the latter's death has a right to be *suma'd*, i.e., given a portion of any animal killed by any of his brothers long after they have dispersed and live in separate homesteads. There are instances, especially in the case of district heads and where the chief house has no male heir, in which the eldest son of the first wife married tries to usurp the position. But though he may appear for a time to be succeeding as seemed to be the case in more than one instance in the 1930's when first we went into the field, I have not come across any cases in which he has succeeded in the long run.

Each wife has her own fields which it is her duty to cultivate for the needs of her 'house'. On her death her sons have first right to inherit her fields unless their father wants to use them himself or arrange for their cultivation to provide food for the younger children; but they may not be used for the benefit of any other 'house'. A daughter may be given her deceased mother's field to cultivate while she is still in her parental home, but she cannot inherit it. A wife is expected to feed herself, her children, her husband and her mother-in-law from her fields. Each time she cooks she sends food to her husband and to his mother. What is left must be returned to her 'house' unless the husband himself gives it to the herd-boys or other children as a group. In the case of special dishes eaten in-between meals, such as cakes of sesamum or ground peanuts, a little will be sent to each of the other women of the homestead with whom the wife is on good terms. In a large homestead this may be confined to the wives of one man. Beer brought to any one 'house' is usually drunk by all in the village and neighbourhood.

In addition to having her own granaries and cooking utensils every wife has a right to raise livestock. She may keep chickens; she may acquire goats by the exchange of her produce; she may get pigs by feeding other people's pigs in return for a pigling. She may even acquire cattle if she is a doctor. In contrast to the Zulu, where the 'house' like that of the Lobedu is

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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with an emotion which, though wholly unlike our humanitarian attitude, finds expression in exaggerated praises. These can be understood only in relation to their immense importance in the social organization. 231

Lovedu cattle are a blend, it is said, of four different strains: the large, humped Lovedu with backward-curving horns, the small, sturdy long-horned Rhodesian, the small Swazi with incurving horns, and the recent, rather nondescript European breeds. In the present environment the mixture has led to inferior scrub cattle, resistent to tick-borne diseases and hardened by the stony hills. There are more cattle to-day than formerly and the distribution is far more equal, but no one believes that dipping has contributed to this result; on the contrary, dipping is regarded as a device to keep down their numbers, to subject the Native to irritating interference, behind which there are sinister motives. Recent attempts by the Administration to improve the breed by introducing thoroughbred Afrikander bulls failed because of these suspicions; the bulls were neglected and no camp was provided for them, and eventually they had to be removed. Cattle of individual owners are listed on so-called cattle lists, which primarily serve as a check upon the efficiency of the dipping; but the lists do not reflect real ownership, for they contain the cattle in a man's kraal, most of which may be merely in his care (*hu fisa*). These lists have considerably altered the incidents of the *hu fisa* contract and other aspects of Native life: they are often illegitimately used as evidence of ownership; orders of Native courts involving payments of cattle are sometimes nullified by the refusal of the owner of the list to authorize the transfer of cattle from his list to that of another; dipping and grazing fees imposed in some parts induce men, on the one hand, to distribute their cattle among different owners so as to keep down the number on any single list and, on the other, to make a charge, unauthorized by custom, for caring for the cattle of others. In short, European intervention has produced as serious changes in pastoral as in agricultural activities. Yet fundamentally the changes have left untouched the real significance and role of cattle in the society. 231 177 232

Cattle are not subject to as many taboos as elsewhere in Southern Africa. Women do not usually herd cattle, but the reason given is that not long ago the dangers from raids and wild animals necessitated herding by armed men; it was regarded as a purely practical measure. Girls or women may herd when the boys are in the circumcision school, and sometimes to-day young girls who have no brothers are seen looking after the cattle. What women may do or may not do varies almost from one kraal to another. Sometimes women of any age may go into the kraals; sometimes the doctor has protected the kraal in such a way that certain classes of women (not necessarily young women) are excluded. There is a fairly uniform fear that the blood of women or a woman who has had an abortion might cause the cattle harm. But the measures to combat these dangers vary very considerably. Kraals are doctored rather than cattle; and they are protected against various dangers, one of them being the danger of women. But elaborate magical practices, elsewhere associated with increasing the fertility of the cattle or safeguarding them 231 784 789

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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231 against misfortune and disease, are not necessary when a new kraal is
784 built or when the medicated pegs are hammered around the fence as a
789 protection against witches. Some confine their doctoring to the kraals; others, in addition, give the cattle medicine. Bulls are never magically rendered more virile, nor are cows made more attractive by such means. There are to-day hardly any special cattle doctors, and very few cattle diseases are known or subjected to treatment. This is not the result of the breakdown of the cattle cult; it is evidence of the weakness of the cult among the Lovedu. If one were to detail all the magical practices that are to be found, the volume of which would be doubly formidable owing to their diversity, an overwhelming impression might be given; but in true perspective, regarding them against the total background they are almost too insignificant to be noticed.

231 Far more important from every point of view is the adjustment that
232 Natives are making to modern conditions. On this point we can offer
177 merely a few very general suggestions. Foremost is the problem of better co-operation between the Natives and the Administration. The objections to dipping are a symptom of misunderstanding one another's point of view. The Natives regard the restrictions as a punitive and arbitrary imposition. It is useless merely to urge that, by destroying the ticks that cause cattle diseases, dipping promotes both the increase and the welfare of the cattle. No one believes what is regarded as demonstrably false. Any one can see that cattle often die when they come back from the dip; that the rate of calving has decreased, that there are now no milch cows, that stock have degenerated, and so on. These evils are attributed to dipping, not to the hard driving to the dip, poor grazing, and inadequate care. What is more, it is believed that Europeans do not dip and that tribes that are sufficiently cunning escape the dipping regulations. Not a few advance the theory that dipping is a punishment for attachment to and preservation of old customs—surely an ironical comment upon the execution of a policy that aims at segregation and development on the lines of racial genius. The psychological aspects of these problems are no less important than their other aspects; and they are far more difficult and require delicate handling. It is easy to envisage the immediate effects, for instance, of limitation of stock, such as the starvation that will result from insufficient cultivation and the overburdening of the women with agricultural work; but when it is realized that the cattle are barely sufficient to maintain the *munywalo* exchanges upon which the social organization rests, one cannot venture to predict what the ultimate effect of limitation will be.

231 Goats are the animals *par excellence* of ritual and religious importance.
431 They also feature prominently in exchanges which promote social inter-relations, such as marriage exchanges and the goodwill gifts between relatives-in-law. Second only to beer in re-establishing relations that have become strained, they are used very largely in the procedure of reconciliation, of righting wrongs by begging pardon, and in the payment of judgement debts. When a distinguished guest visits you, you honour him by killing a goat for him; when you bring beer to your *vaguhulu*, the people to whom the daughters of your lineage are married, or even to a

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

32. Therefore the praise-song of chief Možaži says: "Možaži—when the sun sets—trader in the hut;[37] I sleep on the road,[38] I am a widow,[39] I have no one who watches me. I am the elephant-knife on the hip in the sheath;[40] she eats meat,[41] the trader in the house." 173 643

33. The second chief was Masala-Navô. She was given this name by the dead (queen), when she was raised to the throne. She governed also like the other chiefs. Her praise-song says: "Mmasala-Navô,[42] speak good (words). When you are speaking bad (words), the tribe will split. It was the chief Khethubudi of Mashonaland who said: "I do not like the people.—Finally I got an ulcer on my back and said: 'People, scratch me."[43]—The hawk, at which they look with fear, they look at me with hearts full of hatred."[44]

34. This queen had milk-cows. They were called "the selected" of the chief-kraal. They were milked by a head-man who had been chosen to milk them. When they were milked, and the carrier of the milk was carrying it to bring it home—when it happened that he met people, they had to kneel down until he had passed. This was a custom to honour the food of the chief. When a person was standing when the milk passed near him, it was a great crime. These cows were not kept in one kraal together with the cattle of the village, but they remained separated. 173 234 643

35. Furthermore chief Mmasala-Navô hated the believers (in Christ). A Christian was not allowed to enter the chief's kraal. When a Christian had a case to be settled in the chief's Court, he had to sit outside the village under a tree; he sent his words through the messenger of the chief. 173 797

36. Chief Khesêthwane who governs to-day, and who is also called Možaži, is the third female chief. She produces rainfall. She allows the Christians to enter the official meeting-place and her village. She is fond of education. A church has been built near the meeting-place of 175 797

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[37] It is not necessary that she goes round to "sell" the rain. People are coming to her to buy in her hut.

[38] Like a prostitute (?)—she was not married but is said to have had many lovers.

[39] Because she had no husband.

[40] Praise of her blood-thirstiness.

[41] She killed her chief counsellor always after a short service.

[42] "She who remains with them."

[43] That chief thought that he was able to live without needing other people, until he became ill and was unable to help himself. Then he was obliged to call for assistance.

[44] Praise of the cruelty of the Queen.

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density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Roka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhɔpɔ, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigɔa, the Dgɔna and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On [883] moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khoro* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels [786] and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however, 241 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in 221 much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides the seasons into three: *khilewo*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *letawula*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *maria*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

241 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February, 221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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food as often as not being brought to them there. Sometimes the women take with them cobs of mealies preserved by being cooked and dried in the summer months, which they have softened by boiling again before use. In stony places and along steep hillsides, where ploughing is impossible, hoeing is to-day still done by hand. Here one can generally see mealie meal spread out to dry near at hand, out of reach of the fowls and goats that would play havoc with it at home, where there is no one to watch it. For it is chiefly the women that hoe while the men plough. Bushes or branches that have grown out from tree stumps in the fields are cut in readiness for planting, and a typical feature of this time of the year is the small fires in the fields every day towards sunset, when dry mealie stalks that have been collected in heaps are burned. Relishes have been reduced to a minimum, blackjacks (*Bidens pilosa*), *thathe* (*Amaranthus Thumbergi*) and *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*) being the mainstay, and cooking is done only once a day. There are no nuts or mealies to roast or eat casually, and in years of scarcity this is the time when the pinch of hunger is felt. At night people retire early to bed, tired from the hard work of planting and, later, weeding during the day. Dancing is rare; there is no time for social activities, all energy being directed towards getting the crops planted. Beer parties there are, chiefly work parties for weeding, but they are not as frequent now as in winter. As yet few cases of malaria will have come to light; it is rather the season of dysentery and of cuts and bruises received in hoeing. As the season advances, the first termites make their appearance to relieve the monotony of relish of blackjack leaves, the grass grows longer and weeding becomes imperative.

As a relief to the dullness of the planting season comes the *morula* season, which marks the first two months of 'summer' (February and March) and which from the point of view of seasonal activities can be looked upon as a distinctive period. Everything is green; the grass stands high and weeding is the order of the day, for rain is plentiful. Masses of golden *morula* fruits are falling to the ground. Green mealies from the first-planted fields are beginning to be eaten, spinach of male pumpkin flowers and, later, leaves, make porridge cakes more interesting; and there are sugar-cane and dishes of unripe monkey nuts. People have looked forward eagerly to this time. They are tired of their work and, though much weeding and mounding of *sijugo* beans has still to be done, the exultation grows as the cider begins to appear. To those whose granaries are empty, the *morula* season brings a blessed relief from the pangs of hunger, and they drink it as if it were the elixir of life. Much of the day is spent in the fields where the cider is prepared, and from under the trees there is a mighty hubbub of voices. At nightfall, when they return as from a bacchanalian festival, there are opportunities for romantic intrigues, the result rather of exhilaration than of the reputed aphrodisiac effects of the cider. Soon the air is rent by songs and drumming of the possessed, who at this season receive medicine to eat with the *morula* and other green foods of summer. And as the *morula* season draws to a close, the green foods of summer become more plentiful and the beginning of reaping activities ushers in the rich abundance of late summer.

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Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudanzhi*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ku vula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *mushkwa* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *guba*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *mudzhakwa* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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CHAPTER III

BASES OF SUBSISTENCE

The agricultural complex of activities—culture-change adjustments, and problems of malnutrition, education, and division of labour in agriculture—the place in the society, and present-day problems, of animal husbandry—modern threats to the interest in the vegetation as a basis of subsistence.

241 231 222 824 [262] THE Lovedu are great agriculturalists and poor pastoralists. They have a vast knowledge of the vegetation, which constitutes the best example of a science among them. It is a science closely related to their everyday lives and upon which they rely, even more than upon their cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls, for their subsistence. They eat the fruits and roots of the plants, depend for their relishes upon leaves and soft stems, and in dozens of other ways nourish themselves upon the natural products of the soil. Not agriculture and animal husbandry alone, but these, together with wild fruits, woods, and other products of nature, are the bases of subsistence.

These bases are all fundamental, but they have different value in different aspects of the culture. Agriculture is most important as a source of the substantial foods; natural fruits provide relishes and variety, and as a means of nutrition are much more prominent than domestic animals. Cattle and goats are primarily not food at all; their great role lies in supporting the social structure. In considering the sources of the primary needs of man, we should get a wholly distorted picture if we omitted the natural vegetation, the use of which as food, in economic pursuits, and in medicine is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu culture. Tillage and animal husbandry presume an extensive practical knowledge of soils, crops, and grasses; but this body of knowledge takes second place beside the imposing science at the basis of handicrafts, natural foods—indeed, the whole medical, nutritional, and economic structure of the society.

008 Nature is not merely a physical fact; it is a living reality, an integral part of the culture. Environment is not something apart from man and his needs; it is the medium in which he lives and breathes. And it is their direct reliance on nature that makes the Lovedu so strikingly [824] different from us, just as their everyday knowledge of the names, qualities, and uses of trees, bushes, and all kinds of plants so greatly overshadows the corresponding knowledge of ordinary men among us. We, who live in a world in which nature satisfies our primary needs in a roundabout manner, cannot easily realize how different conditions are in a world where the satisfaction is direct. We are often inclined to picture primitive man as engrossed in ritual pageant unrelated to, and unserviceable for, the major ends of human existence. It is very necessary to correct this view. It is often thought that sex, magic, and witchcraft absorb most of the time, activities, and interests of primitive man. But, at all events among the Lovedu, more time and energy is spent, more interest centred,

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on getting food, shelter, and the material comforts—in short, on a pragmatic adjustment to nature by the application of empirical knowledge—than on any other aspect of their culture.

The agricultural complex of activities is the end to which the major portion of the people's resources in land, labour, power, capital, and economic energies are directed. For success, practical knowledge of the environment is of the first importance. A feeling of security is attained in agricultural activities, not so much by magical as by empirical means. Skill, experience, close observation, hard work—these are the primary requisites. The struggle to make the soil yield up its fruit is not conceived to be waged or determined by mysterious forces. This does not mean that a European will be impressed by their methods of tillage. Their conditions of life, their technology, their control over nature are different from ours. The manner in which people invest their energies and draw out their rewards does not conform to our ideas of efficiency. We deplore the poor tillage, wonder at the wastefulness during periods of plenty, inveigh against thoughtless improvidence. Lack of intelligence, we say, is the reason for their lack of systematic planning against recurrent famine. But we forget, among other things, that practices based on shifting cultivation, though unsuitable in the new, crowded environment, are still alive; that the problems of storage against the ravages of termites and weevils have not been solved and, with the materials at the disposal of the Native, cannot be solved even by our experts; and that, in the absence of organised exchange and marketing facilities, there is no incentive to produce more than for the annual needs of the household plus the surplus for beer-making necessary to maintain social relations and one's reputation for generosity. Practices which ramify into the cultural structure cannot be changed, costly new materials for combating pests cannot be acquired, nor can a whole superstructure of economic distribution be built up at a moment's notice. While the old values that gave men confidence and sustained the society continue to survive as they do, it is they which will regulate the application of knowledge and resources. A man may wish to increase his food supply, but not at the price of giving up too many of the things valued in the society; a surplus beyond a certain limit means nothing and suggestions for an improvement in methods may thus fall on deaf ears.

We can here refer only cursorily to a few aspects of Lovedu agriculture. There are, firstly, the various crops. In modern times, mealies are considered the most important and are the staple crop on the hills, where they also have the first claim on the best soils. It is eleusine, however, the oldest of the Lovedu grains, that is given to the gods. But no one, so say the old men, must neglect kaffir corn (*Sorghum caffrorum*) and millet (*Pennisetum typhoides*), for upon them greater reliance can be placed in times of drought. In the valleys, despite their vulnerability to the ravages of birds, more of these latter two crops are planted than mealies, largely because they do not answer on the hills. Cereals are cultivated by both men and women; and, in addition, every woman plants also *njugo* beans (*Voandzeia subterranea*), peanuts (*Arachis hypogea*), pumpkins, native beans (*Vigna sinensis*) and *mung* beans

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241 (*Phaseolus aureus*). Several varieties of sugar-cane (sweet sorghums) are planted on the boundaries of fields or between the other crops.

Njugo beans are ancient groundnuts which require a good deal of attention by way of mounding, restrictive taboos and careful pulling up, although they are very welcome as a change of diet. In this respect they [77] resemble peanuts, which were popularized by the Shangana-Tonga not so long ago. These nuts sometimes answer well where other crops have failed; in certain years they may flourish while the cereals wither in the sun. Then you may hear people say, but it is only by way of joking among the Lovedu, that the Shangana-Tonga witches have called the cereals to undergo circumcision (*hu cba*). Some people in the valleys are half-inclined to believe the claims that the Shangana-Tonga make for their witches, because it is undoubtedly uncanny that, when the nuts succeed the cereals fail, and vice versa. But usually the claim is ascribed to the desire of these outcast people to assert their importance—the Lovedu know nothing of inferiority complexes, but they are shrewd judges of human nature.

Sesamum used to be popular in the valleys and is said to be an old crop of the Roka. But peanuts have ousted this wholesome, albeit very troublesome, crop. You will be told that the reason lies in the growing laziness of people; this is a reason given for the neglect of many other old crops, but in truth we have here merely a shift in the application of the available resources. A delightful commentary on some of the values of the society, though we must warn the reader not to judge them from our standpoint, is the name *lewonya-oadimo*, 'sesamum of the gods'. It is [78] a wild variety, unsuitable for human consumption, but good enough for the gods. It is not given to the gods, yet it reminds one of the sprouted eleusine merely mixed with water that is offered to the gods with the words, 'This is not water. Truly it is beer.'

261 There are other crops and the variety furnishes a well-balanced diet. But that is not considered to be the virtue of variety. A food is good if it fills. That is why they prefer their hard cakes of porridge to our watery oatmeal. They are inured to that feeling of fullness since the day of their birth, when Grandmother rammed porridge down their throats. But there is comfortable fullness and uncomfortable fullness—that after a good porridge meal and that after eating too much *njugo* bean. The stomach is not insensible to certain distinctions, though they are not our distinctions. Filling is not the only virtue of a food. Some foods relieve the monotony of the round of porridge and blackjacks, and some are [147] tasty dishes or rare delicacies. But no one thinks of the virtues of a balanced diet, for nutritive and protective qualities of foods are not recognized. The old diet, simple though it might be from our point of view, was sufficiently varied to maintain people in good health; but it is not realized that, precisely because it was so simple, even a small change might eliminate essential ingredients. That change has not yet come among the Lovedu, but it is near at hand. Subsidiary crops are becoming less popular. You still see cowpeas, mung beans, water melons, even *lerot*, sweet potatoes, and native beans. Yet, on the whole, what is most impressive is the growing reliance upon cereals and pumpkins, and the

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neglect of many of the old crops. The balance may be restored by European vegetables, such as tomatoes, cabbage, onions, and carrots. They are planted in irrigated gardens; these, however, are not numerous and could never supply the needs of the whole population. The parsimonious peasant, well-filled with porridge, is hardly likely to spend much time on what are looked upon as luxuries rather than as necessities.

People know that to have many crops in the same field places a great strain on the soil and lowers the productivity of each crop. Yet as a measure of economy, dictated by conditions, every one to-day plants side by side as many different crops as possible. Eleusine is an exception and mealies are spared the worst mixtures, though it is rare indeed that in between the mealies you will not find pumpkins and nuts. Millet and kaffir corn, however, stand alongside sweet sorghums—in the old days planted only on the boundaries of fields—beans and groundnuts, pumpkins, and calabashes. There is no more virgin soil on which the old incipient ideas of rotation of crops can be practised. If by chance new soil is turned, its rich content of ash will no longer be placed at the service of eleusine, as was the old rule; mealies, which followed eleusine as a second crop, are now so much more important that the old priority of eleusine gives way to a mixed crop of mealies and eleusine, though mealies alone are preferred. When mealies, after two or three years, begin to answer badly, millet is planted, in accordance with the old rotation. To-day there is some idea that beans revitalize the soil.

But we must not exaggerate the scientific value of these principles. Rotation was essentially a method of draining from the soil, with more and more hardy crops, the last ounce of energy; a crop was not thought to recondition the soil. On soil that is too poor or unsuitable for any of the cereals, groundnuts are often successful; but usually it is left to lie fallow for many years. In the old days it might have been wholly abandoned; but to-day lands that have lain fallow for thirty years and more are being recultivated, at least if they are not along the steep or stony slopes of hills where ploughing is difficult. The shifting cultivation of the past is no longer possible; there are less men available for clearing, which, moreover, has for long been discouraged by the tribe itself and to-day is forbidden by Governmental regulation. Plough culture also has introduced new practices. These and other changes have had far-reaching results. Time and space for single-crop gardens are lacking. It is convenient and the most economic utilization of the available resources to put into the soil behind the plough a mixture of all kinds of seeds. Some of them will be smothered by the others and that will be a calamity if the staple crops suffer unduly; for that reason the problem now is to determine, with reference to soil and weather conditions, which crops will significantly lessen the productivity of those to which priority is accorded. Everything that requires to be planted separately is as far as possible left aside. Crops specially planted by women tend to fall behind in the race. Women do most of the hoeing to-day, and their labour, valuable as it is on the steep slopes and among the stones, cannot keep pace with the plough. Moreover, men make the modern gardens by the sides of streams, and the mung beans, groundnuts, and native potatoes, which the women

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241 planted, disappear before the advance of European vegetables. This is
178 as yet not a great change, because there are very few of these gardens, and it is far beyond present resources to construct irrigation furrows.

The balance is also upset by other tendencies. Agriculture is still a vital interest, but others are beginning to compete with it, and the various cultural devices by which interests were massed behind the various stages of agriculture are no longer as effective as formerly. Mobilization of energies by the seasonal calendar and their concentration at the strategic points of time and place are only partially effective. The unfolding of nature, the increasing signs of the coming spring, the more and more auspicious banking up of the thunder-clouds used to be like the culmination of intensive propaganda playing upon the emotions of the people. As the first rains fell and the scent of the veld rose to men's nostrils, they seemed to liberate internal secretions which drove men to action; and the example of the first workers in the fields made the impulse irresistible. But to-day, though much of this is in evidence and one still sees an impulsive restlessness canalized into productive activity, the reactions are, according to Native accounts, much weaker. Neither internal secretions, if such there are, nor suggestion in a tense situation have their old overpowering effect.

[461] Translation of the impulses aroused into useful action is to some extent inhibited by enervating listlessness, at least among a proportion of the people. They are people puzzled by the changes around them or caught in the vicious circle of malnutrition and weakened incentives. They seek solutions in smaller exertions, lotus-like inactivity, and excessive beer-drinking; and in the hierarchy of ideals, these values are beginning to become unduly prominent. It would be disastrous if they created a cultural pattern, as the tendency suggests, in which agricultural work is mere drudgery and people concentrate upon easy crops, thus over-simplifying a wholesome simplicity in food and, as a cumulative result,
[146 not fulfilling, but draining the joys of life. Even to-day, weakened by
164 unbalanced nutrition, many more people succumb to tuberculosis,
754] bilharzia, tape-worm, even dysentery and malaria; as disease spreads and shakes the sense of security, sorcery and witchcraft become more common interpretations, and men must rely upon magic to restore their confidence. It is in agricultural practices that some of the greatest changes have occurred in the society. But, as will be seen, the changes are not of a simple nature.

These are the tendencies; but we must remember that the foundations of the society are deeply laid and the tensions are evident only in the upper superstructure. The people have a remarkable capacity for making adjustments, at least when no profound social arrangements are affected. They have adopted new crops, changed from hoe to plough cultivation, and adjusted themselves from unlimited to limited land. Unfortunately, they do not as yet have faith in manure. They have seen, they say, that manure raises an excess of weeds and that for *njugo* beans it is useless, even dangerous. One cannot appeal to the value of medicine, because only witches 'doctor' their fields, not indeed to fertilize them, but to steal the crops of their neighbours. Garden magic is never

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legitimate, for men rely upon their labours and place their faith in the rain, the making of which is the prerogative of the queen. 241 178

Failure of one's crops is attributed, not to witchcraft, but in a bad year to the heat of the sun and in normal seasons to indolence or bad soil. In the last resort, however, when every one suffers equally, or when there is a major drought, the calamity is regarded as a punishment by the gods, who 'hold the arms of the queen', or by the queen herself, who is displeased in her heart. Diseases and pests are not magical visitations. Though called 'the witch of the mealies' because it saps their strength, witchweed (*Wormskioldia longipedunculata*) is neither sent by witches nor combated by supernatural means. Destructive insects and parasites, such as stalkborers, weevils, and caterpillars, are regarded, not as being 'sent', but as perfectly natural results of untimely planting or unseasonal rain. Birds, monkeys, rats, and mice are, generally speaking, combated by the practical means at the disposal of man, such as trapping or scaring. Numerous other precautions are taken: one does not plant millet unless one's neighbours do likewise, because when there are many fields, all, not merely one, will be at the mercy of predatory birds; people favour bird-proof corns, though they are harder to thresh; late-maturing crops, whatever their productivity, are discarded in favour of those ripening early, because they cannot be reaped before the cattle start their unrestricted grazing; and a much-favoured peanut, which is also easy to reap, is liable to sprout unless special precautions are taken. In short, the problems of agriculture are tackled in a practical manner. 241 [731]

This does not mean that a practical demonstration of the superiority of new methods will always have the desired effect. Agricultural demonstrators have made very little impression. It is often thought that this is due to the improvidence, lack of ambition, and innate conservatism of the 'savage'. A farmer will tell you that, after years of experience on his farm, his Native labourers go home to practise their primitive, wasteful methods. The trouble is not savage incapacity, but the incongruity of our ways, our technology, and our ideals with theirs. The demonstrator is like a teacher speaking a foreign language and working with material and concepts which do not exist in the society. He often is wholly ignorant of the background of belief. His education makes him unduly scornful of savage superstitions, instead of using them to advantage. In agriculture, among the Lovedu, there is one practice we might call superstition. It is *hu upa*, a method of safeguarding crops with medicine against the depredations of birds and monkeys. It is quite harmless, absorbs little of the time or energy of the few children who scatter the medicine, and does not preclude the use of other, more empirical methods. There is no need to waste eloquence upon eradicating a practice which strengthens the interest of the children in agriculture, causes no slackening in their scaring activities from the platforms erected in the fields, and, in the last resort, is an effective psychological device; for it equalizes the struggle of man against nature and maintains at the requisite intensity the confidence which enables him to strive hopefully against his difficulties. 241 177 [789]

Practical knowledge is undoubtedly the weapon with which demonstrators should combat progressive degeneration in agriculture; but it is

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241 177 not practical knowledge applied from our point of view; it must be from their point of view. Instruction must be articulated with their practices and techniques; it must take into account their arrangements and their rhythm of life. The knowledge imparted must be applicable to their conditions and be linked with the instruments at their disposal. For the dietician to extol the virtues of a new crop, for the doctor to show that bacteria more readily enter where resistance is lowered by deficiencies in food, even for the agricultural demonstrator using his superior implements to demonstrate the practicability of the crop—all this is very nearly fruitless. These things will have their value when they can be fitted into the Native's world of thought and technology. In the meanwhile, the execution of our plans, sound though they be in theory, is merely causing irritation and resistance.

241 476 178 All the old Lovedu cultivation was on the hills or along their slopes and, generally speaking, close relatives, not necessarily relatives through males, had all or some of their fields in large blocks (*demo*). Unlike the Tswana custom, these blocks stood in no relation to the social organization; the land was not pointed out by the chief and its size was not predetermined, but depended upon the energy of the individual cultivators. The *demo* was a matter of convenience and utility: the concentration facilitated co-operation in clearing the fields, economized the labour necessary for protecting the gardens, and made mutual assistance in hoeing and weeding much easier. No doubt the arrangements also mobilized incentives and added to the joys of life. There is to-day nothing left of these blocks. The old ones have inevitably fallen into the hands of more and more scattered people and no new ones can be created because large blocks of land are no longer available. The tendency towards dispersal and fragmentation was still further emphasized when Shangana-Ṭonga cultivation proved the fertility of the valleys. To-day a man must take land where he can find it, and though the Lovedu still live on the hills, they have their lands scattered all over the country. Indeed, since it is easier to plough on level ground, the hills are liable to be neglected, though wisdom dictates that it is best to have fields in two different environments. The result is that a man's fields are widely separated, sometimes being as far as ten miles apart.

241 462 The old division of labour in agriculture between the sexes was not uneven; both men and women hoed, weeded, and reaped. Only men cleared the forest, but against that only women cultivated certain crops, such as groundnuts. The old pattern is still more or less maintained, at least in principle. But cultivation by the plough has changed matters. Men look upon hoeing as the work of women, although the old ideal so much survives that they despise the Shangana-Ṭonga because their menfolk neither hoed nor weeded in the past. To-day hoeing and weeding among the Lovedu fall largely upon the women, and ploughing almost exclusively upon the men. This is not a fair division of labour; it might be fairer if the other activities of men, such as hunting and public life, had not become greatly attenuated. For the women are always busy, and their work is more monotonous than that of the men, who, despite the labour migration to the towns, have much more leisure than women.

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More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do.

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new alinements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions; it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet.

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is

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241 annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according
[311] to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material
241 factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient
464 as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such ex-
241 pedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the
476 essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

231 Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd
[422] and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *munywalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the
[262 Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food
782] only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or
[554] even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

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work accomplished than if one had beer made at the cost of 10s. worth of corn, not to mention the time, labour, and firewood that is consumed in preparing the beer. The motive is, however, not economic but social. *Majema* are used, not for long and difficult tasks only, but also for light work, which a man can easily do himself without help. The aim in these cases is not so much to complete the work quickly—time is rarely a matter of importance—as to be credited with generous impulses and to have a pleasant social event. Christians, with their more Europeanized outlook, averse from the waste entailed, and fearing excommunication by the Church, which prohibits beer, nevertheless find it hard not to conform to this custom.

Another form of co-operation is the *khilebe* (*jebe*, a hoe). Uncommon to-day in its original form, it has its essentials preserved in ploughing partnerships, the so-called 'stock fair' in towns and particularly in the collective agricultural work of young girls. The co-operating group, defined by convenience and proximity of domicile, is largely a local one and consists mainly of close relatives, both on the mother's and on the father's side. The group is still comparatively stable, as it was in the old days, when it had its basis in common interests and common needs. Its members collectively reaped or weeded or hoed one another's fields, completing one field and then going to the next, and each arranged about his own food. Kin or neighbours had their lands closer together and less split up than to-day; they started their various tasks at much the same time; there was safety in concentration, and economy in co-operation. The great distinction between *khilebe* and *lejema* was and still is that no beer is provided; but, as in the *lejema*, the *khilebe* partnership lessened the monotony of arduous work and mobilized energies and incentives. As the group was smaller and more closely khit, relied more tangibly upon reciprocity and had more elements of continuity, the stimulus of beer was not necessary to hold it together. Each partner remained an individualist, for the crops were not shared; but each realized the value of mutual helpfulness and the necessity of minimizing the self in relation to the ends of others.

To-day the conditions of the operation of the *khilebe* no longer exist in their old form. Fields have become split up; the old dangers are no more; the plough has vastly decreased man's dependence upon the help of his kin or his neighbour. Though it was perhaps the most potent agent of destruction of the old *khilebe*, the plough has become the centre of the new. The household, which is the economic unit, hardly ever has ploughs, animals, and workers all available at the same time; only 30 per cent. of such units possess ploughs and only 15 per cent. have cattle or donkeys. Thus cultivation calls for some form of co-operation, and the form which was familiar was the *khilebe*. There are new elements in the situation, but their co-ordination was effected by drawing upon pre-existing patterns of co-operation. Typically the *khilebe* in ploughing consists of four partners, representing four economic units: one supplies the animals, a second the plough, the third some of the workers, and the fourth the herdboy, who looks after the cattle during the year and might wield the whip or plant behind the plough. The emphasis

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476 is upon the sharing of tools rather than upon that sharing of services
571 which characterized the old *khilcbc*. But in the old institution hoes were
241 borrowed from one another and the differentiation of to-day was not unknown, though it took a different form. The organization implies a person-to-person adjustment rather than institutionalized leadership, except that he who provides the animals sometimes tends to dictate whose lands have first to be ploughed. No payment passes, however unequal the contributions or needs of the partners, and sometimes an old widow is a partner who can contribute nothing at all. The essence of the whole institution is a complete disregard of the exact equivalences of the contributions or of the services.

476 This form of co-operation, in which mutual helpfulness and reciprocity
571 and not economic advantage are stressed, finds expression in many activities. Among Christians there are potters who club together; usually they are kin who live in the same settlement. The only work they share is the excavation of the clay; each works quite independently of the other, though advice is exchanged. Men often build *ga khilcbc* instead of *ga lejema*, but in this case the association is a very loose one, consisting merely of the available friends or relatives in or near the village; and though some small gift is given by the owner of the hut built, the main feature of the co-operation is a sense of mutuality and reciprocity. The conception of mutual helpfulness recedes before that of profit when, as is becoming more common, the person for whom the work is done pays a reward in money. Curious anomalies occur, because sometimes less, sometimes more, consideration is given to the exact money equivalence of the services rendered. Where a man considers that he is paying wages for services, he usually models his behaviour upon his conception of the European employer and the whole pattern of reciprocity falls to the ground. But this model is very unpopular, though for the employer it has distinct advantages; as he contracts for the labour, he can requisition it when he wants it and can control its execution. He is no longer an equal partner, but a foreman.

One development of the *khilcbc* which is seen in townships is the 'stock fair'. It is practicable only where each of the partners periodically receives cash wages. Every month one of the partners, taken in rotation, is entitled to a fixed amount from each of the others, the purpose being to make available to every one in turn a fairly large sum of money. Though the partners wear some distinctive dress, the association is very unstable and many as a result suffer loss. The 'stock fair', far though it be removed from the *khilcbc*, is thus based on a generalization from past experience in which social ends are attained by the application of rule-of-thumb principles, with little resort to trial and error and little dependence on organizing ability or on individual leadership.

357 With the various forms of co-operation, we may briefly contrast solitary occupations and services. It is somewhat unusual for any one alone to undertake a large task, and among heathens it is rarer still for an
357 individual to hire out his services. There is no real domestic service;
736 even in the royal household, *vulada* is very different from service in our sense of the term. The *mulada*, usually an orphan, is the ward of his

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paid in salt and the other commodities mentioned. But the practice is, except for payment in meat, largely confined to Christians. As far as it exists, it completely alters the old long-run reciprocity pattern. There is no social feast. Collective replaces co-operative activity; for personal profit, not sociability, is the prime motive; the social gala is converted into a labour situation, and the interests of employer and employee begin to diverge. Room for roundabout recipocity is narrowed; instead of the indefinite mutuality upon which a man who helps others to-day may rely in the future, he receives an immediate and individual reward; faith in long-range equivalence of services and obligations gives way to a desire for direct personal satisfaction.

To the new situation, in which the *lejema*-giver corrects and directs and the worker obeys and submits, imperfect adjustments have been made. Direction, hitherto unknown in the economic relations of equals, degenerates to exploitation; the answer to unwilling submission is resentment; and the employer is regarded as a renegade and cheat. He is known to buy a bag of salt for 7*s*.—and to distribute it so that each worker receives only one-sixth of the accepted value (1*s*.) of a day's work. The conflict, in which the worker retaliates by calling the employer 'unscrupulous', is only beginning. It may resolve itself by new adjustments, even though an aggravating feature is the fact that it is the Christian who is the budding capitalist and the pagan who is the dependent labourer. From the point of view of progress in agriculture, the danger is that employers are usually progressive, and progress thus comes to stand for anti-social methods. This hampers the work of agricultural demonstrators. It is clear that lasting solutions, even of apparently simple agricultural problems, not to speak of the complicated problems of administration or of wider spheres of culture contact, can be attained only by studying both the forms of the old institutions and psychological reactions among the people to the changes.

Turning to exchanges in the society—that is, purchases and sales, whether cash or kind is transferred—we may consider external and internal trade from the standpoint of whether it falls within a money, money-barter, barter, or gift-barter economy. We use these terms to designate the distinctions mentioned below. *External trade* refers to transactions with people belonging to groups outside or alien to the tribe, such as stores, farmers, and individuals of other tribes. *Internal trade* is largely local, but it may be interlocal when it occurs across the boundaries of the reserve, but between members of the tribe. *Gift barter* is reciprocal gift exchange. There is no exact economic equivalence. Mutuality, goodwill, and reciprocity are the primary considerations, but it is not the same as a gift, for a gift implies no return gift, but merely one-sided donations, such as presents to children. Out-and-out gift is *mpho* (from *hu fa*) and, while such gifts imply indirect mutuality, there is no expectation of a return gift. For our present purposes and in the table given below, they are left out of consideration; it would, for instance, be impracticable to distinguish between feeding one's household and giving them presents. From gift barter must be distinguished *pure barter*, in which the aim is an interchange of goods of equivalent value

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Ancestral caprices and complaints and rites to appease them—the universe of the ancestors a replica of the everyday world—relations of magic, morality, and religion—possession by spirits as a religion and socio-psychological phenomenon.

NATURE spirits and hero-gods have no place in the Lovedu scheme of things. There is, however, Khuzwane, the creator, who made all things, including men, and left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when these rocks were new and soft. But no one knows what has happened to him and no one ever thinks of him. The gods of the Lovedu are their ancestors, deceased fathers and mothers who guard one in death as they did in life. Each family has its own ancestors, and religious observances are thus peculiarly a family concern.

Ancestors have various attributes. They are one's protectors and no harm can befall one unless they, the ancestors, are neglectful. Witches, powerful as they are, can neither enter the village nor cause sickness without their connivance; hence the procedure in divination, even in the clearest case of witchcraft, of inquiring whether the spirits should be appeased. Disease cannot enter nor epidemics break out if only the ancestors are watchful enough and well-disposed. Again and again one finds this idea expressed in prayers; 'Protect us from epidemics [winds]', they say; while the queen in a prayer at her harvest ceremony put it even more positively: 'As regards life, we have been very well, but now we are being killed by that epidemic which you have allowed to come', referring to smallpox. There can be no success without the co-operation of the ancestors. Medicine cannot help nor doctors heal if the ancestors are not with one. This idea, reminiscent of our 'By the will of God', is expressed in the phrase, 'We do not say our doctor, [will heal]; we say our doctor and the ancestors'. It appears also in a prayer we heard on behalf of an absent son working in town, when a goat, dedicated to his grandmother (father's mother), who had made him ill two years before, was being given the new corn: 'Here is the child; here he is, mother. We ask that you let him be happy and cool (give him health). Tell all the other spirits [certain names mentioned], and we who remain, *we say our thing with the gods.*'

The phrase '*vadimo lalane*' (spirits, sleep) which rounds off so many prayers, and the constant fear of waking up (*hu dzosa*) the ancestors, causing them to stand (*hu ɛma*) and cause trouble, appear at first as a peculiar contradiction, as though people do not wish their gods to be watchful. The term *lala* is, however, idiomatic, expressing peace, things being as they should be, as in the phrase, '*Ha va mulao; shago la lala*' (There was order; the country slept), implying that the rains were good and all was well; while *hu dzosa* in this sense means stirring to anger rather than waking up from sleep.

The ancestors are responsible for the fertility of the crops. True, nothing could grow without rain, for which the queen is responsible and

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769 which royal ancestors only can withhold; differences in the harvest
241 between one area and another are often attributed to fights between the
782 witches of the two areas, and even variations in yield between one man's field and his neighbour's may be due to witchcraft. Yet one finds in prayers many a request for a good harvest, even though there are no special ceremonies devoted to this end. A man pouring a libation for a sick child said among other things, 'Give us corn; when we plough let us also reap. Why are you stinting us?' And it is significant that the only regular religious observance is the harvest offering of beer made of each year's new corn in villages where there are shrines or dedicated animals. When any one dies, there is thought to be danger that the fertility of the
[764] crops will depart with him or her. Hence, when a gourd of seeds of every kind is placed in the grave together with a firebrand and calabash of water for the journey, some of the seeds are scattered over the body with the words, 'Do not depart with all the corn and seeds,' and very often the grain belonging to the deceased is treated with medicine in order that it may remain fertile.

769 Above all, the ancestors complain, a fact which lies at the basis of
782 Lovedu religion, for by far the greater proportion of religious rites are those performed in response to ancestral complaints. One might at first think it strange that the gods, in life just ordinary, well-disposed people, should in death be so liable to bring trouble upon their kin. Sometimes it is thought to be a sign of love: when Masilu's grandmother had made him ill because she wanted a goat dedicated to her, his mother said, 'No wonder his *gogo* seized him. She was always so fond of him.' But chiefly it is the nature of ancestors to complain; as the Lovedu phrase it, 'When people sleep (i.e. are dead), they ought to complain' (*Hɛ vathu va khi lala fase va swanɛdɛ hu velɛala*). When there is illness, they are, as it is phrased, 'seen in the divining bones'; it is they who sometimes 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult childbirth, and sometimes, but far less than among the Nguni, their complaints cause dreams. Our close friend
[787] Walter, coming to seek work in Johannesburg, dreamt disturbing dreams of his dead father, who appeared to say that he was needed at home. He thereupon returned home and, when he arrived, his mother took him to a doctor, whose bones declared that the dead father was annoyed at not having been told of the journey to town and had to be appeased (*hu phasa*). Walter was well educated, but he had failed in his last examination and felt doubly frustrated. He had great ambitions of reforming the political system of the tribe, from which his education had divorced him, and in town he was dissatisfied that nothing was open to him but the unskilled work of his uneducated compatriots.

769 An ancestor may complain about the way he has been buried, and if he
782 has died far from home, may demand to be 'brought back home' in a
778 ceremony in which, besides the dedication of a beast or goat, a goat is killed and eaten, its bones being buried as though it were a person. But this 'bringing home', involving the making of a shrine, applies only to those dying at a distance and does not resemble the 'bringing home' of the Zulu, among whom it is part of death ceremonial. At times the gods complain of neglect. But in the majority of cases no definite reason for

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In the actual working religion of the Lovedu the commonest and most 788
conspicuous rite is *hu phasa*, consisting of a prayer and the pouring on to earth or *thugula* of a mixture of ground, sprouted grain and water, a mixture colloquially referred to as *mutazwa lesclo* (the rinser of the winnowing basket). More rarely *hu phasa* is merely spitting out water in the courtyard to the accompaniment of such prayer. There is no formulated distinction in principle between the two forms; the Lovedu say that the dice decide which is to be used. We found water squirted in illness caused by complaints of the living; in some cases of difficult birth; where in the initiation of a possessed woman the spirit was begged to manifest itself; and in one exceptional instance water was squirted on the face of a corpse addressed in prayer before it was buried (usually the [764]
corpse is merely addressed when the grains are put into the grave). The efficacy of *hu phasa*, which is also used magically to render witchcraft ineffectual, appears to lie in its 'cooling' effect. *Hu phasa* is performed in connexion with a large number of cases of illness and bad luck and is the recognized approach in asking for blessings on a journey or an undertaking. Hardly a week passes without some one in the neighbourhood having to *phasa*, and generally the prayer in these cases takes the form of a 'scolding' (*hu rohana*), in which the spirits are asked why they are causing illness and told to be satisfied. One does not *phasa* without also using charms in the mixture to make the spirits forget, and the officiator may be male or female, whomsoever the dice have indicated. Rites of thanksgiving, except for the customary harvest beer, are almost unknown. We came upon such a rite only once when the bachelor brother of Madiwji returned home after an absence in town of thirty years and she performed *hu phasa* in the presence of the family, saying, 'Spirits of Mambeuli, this is one of your fowls. We thought he was lost; now he is back. Keep him as you have kept the rest of us. If he goes away, let him soon remember and long for his home.'

The only regular offering is the annual harvest beer given to dedicated 782
animals and shrines, though even this may be neglected: the village may 778
be moved without the shrine, or the dedicated animal die without being replaced. We ourselves witnessed the setting up of a shrine and dedicated sheep after twenty years' neglect in the chief house of Sedena. Much 241
more formal than ordinary rites of *hu phasa* is the harvest offering, which 782
may take place any time between July and November, for there is here no rule that the queen should take precedence. The officiator is a woman where possible, the *khadi*, who is specially called to come, and real beer, called *muphaba* and made of eleusine, is prepared for the ceremony. If eleusine is not available, red kaffir corn (*makhaha*) may be used, but no other grain is acceptable to the spirits. In its preparation, which is in the hands of old women or girls below the age of puberty, care must be taken that the eleusine is stamped, not ground on the grindstone, and that none of it is tasted before the gods have been given some. Ordinary beer is tasted to see if it is ready, but *muphaba* is smelt or tested by stirring with a twirler. Though the married women of the village play no part in the religious rites on such occasions, it is the duty of the chief wife in whose courtyard the ceremony will take place to smear with dung the place

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241 782 where they will pour and to carry the beer in the *khirudwana* basket used in honour of the gods. The occasion is one of joy. The women have already in all likelihood sung *lesugu* songs special to the occasion amid joyous trillings while preparing the beer and, since in addition to the special beer of the gods much ordinary beer will have been prepared, a wide circle of relatives, including those of the wives, will have been invited.

When the queen held her *thugula* ceremony in August, 1938, Ḍiḍi was despatched at eight o'clock in the morning to fetch home Magovo, the cow dedicated to the queen's mother, for the harvest giving should take place fairly early in the day, though in practice the rule is often observed in the breach and we have seen ceremonies take place after midday. As it is not easy to drive home one cow of a herd, all were driven and put into the *khɔrɔ* where every one had gathered. When Magovo's hind legs had been tied, the chief wife of Mulogwane, deceased brother of the chief to whose family the queen is *khadi*, appeared carrying in a basket a calabash of beer and the queen's mother's beads (*mudala*, the well-known 'beads of the water'). Pouring some of the beer in a wooden platter, she handed it to the queen, who, holding the beads in her hands, placed it before Magovo with the words, 'Here is beer, Magovo of Muhale (one of the earliest kings), beer of the new corn. We say, Stop this epidemic (winds) to which you have exposed us. Here, too, are your beads. We see neither people (subjects) nor riches; we see only that poverty which you have left for us.' The cow sipped a little of the beer, whereupon all prostrated themselves in greeting (*hu bɔsha*), while one or two women rent the air with their joyous trillings. Sometimes (but it was omitted on this occasion) the beads are placed round the neck of the cow and left there for the whole day.

The dedicated cow having been untied, all now repaired to the courtyard of the chief wife of Mulogwane, where they sat round the shrine, the queen and sons and daughters near by, wives further away, while the small children were made to kneel on the lower side of the shrine, hands together and palms up. Pouring out beer on the mound, the queen said a prayer similar to the previous one, adding that the gods must tell one another and not leave any one out. Then, drinking a little herself, she placed the calabash on the ground for the next person to take up and drink. Each one in turn placed the gourd on the ground for the next to take up, till all the relatives had drunk, when it was returned to the queen. She drank once more, saying, 'He who gives to the gods must not remain hungry,' and laid the calabash upside down on the mound. The small children lapped up the beer from the ground, and trilling and *hu bɔsha* marked the end of the ceremony.

241 782 533 535 Now pots of beer for the crowd that had gathered were brought out and general drinking began. After a while the men took out the drums and began dancing an old dance, the *matagwa*. Thereafter the women began the sacred *lesugu* songs, to which men and women danced in a ring in the courtyard of the chief wife. The queen herself beat the big drum. It was now near sunset. Suddenly a wail like the bleating of a sheep was heard; another, then another, in the direction of the bush behind the

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village. It was the *zwiḑajani*, ancestral spirits come to join in the joy and revelry of the living. They opened the next song and joined in the singing of the women, all in the whistling language which people make out by its tone. Later more beer was brought out and when the *zwiḑajani* began a new song no one took any notice. 'If you are drinking beer, what are we to drink', came the wails of the *zwiḑajani* and a pot of beer was brought to the bush by councillors. Dancing and singing continued till the small hours of the morning, when the sounds of the *zwiḑajani* disappeared in the direction of Maulwi, the burial grove of the dead queens, and the revellers, happy and drunk from beer of the *thugula*, retired to bed. The spirits visit only important members of the royal group and a few other families, but beyond this there are no differences between the harvest giving of the queen and that of other people.

Ritual killings of all kinds are insignificant by contrast with the beer offering. There are, first, killings specially for the ancestors, but they are so rare that many people have never seen them. Secondly, there are occasions when the killings, clearly ritual, are not thought of as an offering or sacrifice, because nothing is given to the ancestors. And, thirdly, there are killings, not associated with ancestors or religion, in which small pieces of meat may nevertheless be set aside to 'tell' (*hu suma*) the gods of some event or to propitiate them. *Hu suma* is a conception somewhat different from our 'offer' or 'give'; it has two connotations as used in ordinary life: it is either merely to inform a superior or, by extension of this idea, to send him a share of something good one has, such as a leg of an animal slaughtered or a calabash of the beer one has brewed. In approaching the gods, sometimes one and sometimes the other conception is uppermost.

The killing which most clearly contains the conception of an offering and the primary purpose of which is propitiation of the gods is the slaughter of a black sheep for rain at the grave of a royal ancestor: the victim is immolated, small pieces of meat cut from all parts of it are set aside for the gods, and all the bones are collected and buried in the grave, together with the stomach contents. Equally stressed, however, is the eating of the meat without salt by the assembled crowd. At the installation of a district head, a beast, referred to as a *thugula*, is killed and, in so far as it is killed in a special manner and morsels of meat set aside for the gods to be cooked and later eaten without salt by children below the age of puberty, it is the vicarious submission of a gift to the ancestors. But the major portion of meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones collected, for a hind leg is sent to the queen. So little is the 'goat of killing' in marriage ceremonial regarded as an offering or sacrifice that we sought for it in vain in the context of a killing for the ancestors. Yet pieces of meat are laid on the shrine and a prayer offered, though the rest of the meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones kept. Still further removed from an offering is the goat killed on a death to provide a skin for covering the body: its meat is eaten without salt, and all who partake of it must sleep in the hut of the deceased, but nothing is given to the ancestors and no prayer is offered. On the other hand, though the *lelɔpo* doctor, when killing a goat to treat a patient, sets aside pieces of meat

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1937	
789 821 November 12th	A rain-doctor sent to make rain at Mtimkulu's village, a petty Shangana-Tonga chief to the north, who had sent messengers to *lowa* a few days before.
November 14th	A thunderstorm, with very little rain, but a very strong wind, broke in the afternoon.
November 15th	Holiday observed to 'turn back' the rain which has been scattered by the wind.
November 23rd	Rain fell with much lightning, which struck at Khiobeni, one of the districts.
November 25th	There was a thunderstorm in which lightning struck at Khidommamathka, a sub-area of the capital. The place was treated with medicine and in the evening soft rain fell, but not enough for ploughing.
December 2nd	Real set-in rain fell till the 3rd.
December 4th	Hoeing began.
December 8th	First termites brought, but given to dogs, as carried by girls above the age of puberty.
December 12th	First termites given to rain charms.
December 13th	Holiday.
1938	
January	Period of drought.
January 23rd	Mukupi, an important woman district head, came to speak to the queen, as there had been no rain for three weeks. The sun beat down fiercely and the crops were beginning to shrivel up. Several other district heads came to *lowa* with money.
February 11th	People were consulting doctors about the drought. Bones declared a sacrifice necessary. Councillors approached queen and messenger sent for a black sheep.
February 17th	Kheshidwa, the rain-doctor, called.
February 19th	District head at Muduveni (several farms, but an old area of tribe) came with £1 10s. to *lowa*.
March 1st–4th	*Lepshathele* dance for rain by the Thovolo.
February 22nd	Sacrifice at Maulwi. Some rain fell, but not very much.
March 2nd	Kheshidwa called to put right a grave. This was done on the 4th.
March 7th	Levaga, a district head from the north, came to *lowa* with £2.
April 2nd	Rain fell.

241 821 Some beliefs associated with the cultivation of *njago* beans are relevant to our present subject. Among the Lovedu this crop is not planted until the mealies, among which it grows, are 1 ft. high, but this is regarded as a practical measure to prevent injury to the mealies rather than as dictated by the belief, firmly rooted and still put into practice by tribes to the south and south-east of Uulovedu, that *njago* beans planted too early impede the rain. Only some Lovedu have this belief and no one, as far as we know, acts upon it; nor do the Lovedu pull up the young plants when there is no rain, which the Phalaborwa do, as one Lovedu suggested, because the beans look like hailstones. The Lovedu also say, but again

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as if it were a foreign conception, that no *njugo* beans should be planted during the year following the death of a chief. The association of rain and *njugo* beans seem to belong to a culture complex coming from the south. 241 821

The insistence nowadays is upon studying culture change as if it were a phenomenon important only in its relation to European contacts, but there has always been and there still is culture change of a different and, as far as the Lovedu are concerned, more vital nature. Even in the rain cult there have been changes. In the reign of Mujaji II, when the father of Kheshidwa succeeded Ramafalo as rain-maker, he instituted *ku ruma*, a new ceremony of medicating all hoes with *mafugo* before the hoeing of the queen's field of eleusine, a practice which has fallen into disuse with the recent abandonment of the queen's hillside field for one in the valley which can be ploughed. The breaking of taboos is not necessarily a reflection of the breakdown and decay of custom. Indeed, the technique of the rain cult was based on the assumption that taboos were broken. Breaches account for drought and the counter-vailing efficacy of the queen's measures explains her reputation and the confidence people have in her. Wrong burials are known to prevent rain, but, since people try to avoid the unpleasant publicity involved in getting *mafugo* for the burial of, say, an abortion or in burying it in a wet place, these wrong burials are always taking place. 799 821

Neither European contact nor Christianity has succeeded in breaking down the implicit belief of every member of the tribe in the power of the queen to make rain. True, no Christians take part in ceremonies for rain and some do not believe that such things as wrong burials affect rainfall; but they harmonize the new with the old faith by the rationalization that the queen makes rain with the help of God, for they have all seen and can cite corroborative evidence for the powers of the queen. That the queen herself is honest and genuinely believes not only in her own powers, but also in the outside influences that prevent her from achieving success, can be seen in the reply she gave to the messengers who came on February 19th, 1938, with £1 10s. from a one-time district head in her kingdom to beg for rain. 'Go,' she said, 'and tell the master of Muduveni that we are trying, but things will just not come right' (arrangements were being made for a sacrifice to the ancestors for rain). The money, however, was kept. 643 789

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CHAPTER XVI

TRIBAL TRAITS AND ATTITUDES

Harmonizing the bases of social security with outlets for personal expression—the role of beer—moderation as an ideal and in the spheres of sex and authority—preoccupation with the quest for health—attitudinal reaction to the Western world.

121 We have drawn a rough outline of Lovedu culture and have lightly sketched in some of the forms of its institutions. From this has emerged the shape and structure of the society. The picture is, of course, incomplete, but we may perhaps give it tone by filling into the forms the shades of movement and motivation, and character by adding the colour of traits and attitudes. We have to undertake this task without the many forms which we have not sketched at all and, far more serious, without the wider background of surrounding cultures which would throw our picture into true perspective. To make good these omissions at this stage is impossible; all we can do is to orientate ourselves from a few familiar principles which will guide us in presenting our picture of the traits and interests of the Lovedu. These are the principles of man's wish for security, for achievement and for recreation.

Man must feel free to act without undue fear and uncertainty, and society must so order its arrangements that its members feel safeguarded against threats to their welfare; hence we in European society have our insurance systems which reduce the risks of our ventures, our legal sanctions which ensure the fulfilment of our expectations, and our conception of a righteous providence which consoles us in the face of a ruthless fate. Man's striving towards self-expression and recognition must also be satisfied, and society cannot neglect to demarcate spheres for, and to reward, individual achievement, though this is no simple matter because the opportunities that stimulate must be co-ordinated with the stability and security by which men may calculate the probability of the success of their ventures. Man also craves for recreation, adventure, and change from the monotony of those activities that are necessary to keep body and soul together; and here again the avenues that society provides must be integrated with the requirements of security and self-expression. Each society handles and co-ordinates these themes in a different manner; in one society, for instance, achievement is defined in terms of wealth or of ousting a rival; in another, in terms of wisdom or co-operation with others. The manner in which any particular society defines or handles these themes determines the interests, aims, values, and attitudes of its members; and it is from this point of view that we shall attempt to portray the Lovedu.

241 Lovedu culture is diversified: it is not like a man motivated by a one-track mind, or a fanatic obsessed by a single overpowering mania. But among its many interests, agriculture takes the first place. More time and energy are given to agricultural than to any other activities; no competing interest will move man to neglect ploughing and reaping, and no

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other way of life can oust it from its general pre-eminent position. The man or woman who is in need of a pot or other article in the busy agricultural season vainly places an order with a craftsman, and 'He who takes a journey in spring must transact all his affairs' (i.e. not only where he goes, but also on the way), for he will not be able to pass by again during that season. 241

Agriculture provides the immediate security of the people, but in turn it relies upon the life-giving rain, the power to make which has been projected upon the queen. The queen is thus the foundation stone of the security of the cultural structure. Her rain-making powers safeguard not only agriculture against the caprices of nature, but the whole country against the attacks of its enemies. The queen is more than that: the method of supplicating for rain has merged with the mechanisms of the social structure and has constructed the bonds with the districts, thus, despite political decentralization, securing the unity of the tribe. And, finally, the elevation of a woman to this exalted position has strengthened the status of women and their important role in the society and has emphasized the virtue of feminine qualities. But the queen is not conceived to be intimately linked with everything in the culture: her position in the *khwv* of the men is weakly institutionalized, she has no immediate contact with the European administration to the interferences of which her powers are doubly vulnerable, and the welfare of the cattle elsewhere, as among the Maḓala and Xanaxwa, ritually brought into relation with the chief, is outside her province. 241 643 182

As rain-maker, the queen controls half the great cosmic forces. Magic may be invoked, the gods propitiated, in the interests and for the ends of individuals, but ultimately these interests and ends and the destiny of the society depend upon the mediation and will of the queen. Man's sense of security in the face of personal misfortunes can be re-established by magic or religion, but the orderliness of cosmic laws is guaranteed only by the relationship of the queen with the supernatural. These laws are inscrutable, but the procedures for arousing pity in the heart of a human queen or for appeasing her anger are intelligible; and thus man can have confidence in undertaking his tasks. Moreover, he need not and must not resort to magic in his major economic activities, for he can and must rely upon the queen. Since the final justification of the pivotal position of the queen is her divinity, garden magic is conceived to be disruptive, like witchcraft: it competes with the power of the queen. One consequence of this conception is that success or failure in subsistence activities is regarded as immediately dependent upon industry, the application of practical knowledge and suitable materials, and that he who uses garden magic is a thief or a witch. 643 789

In most neighbouring tribes there is some public treatment of the seeds before they are sown, or the hoes and ploughs are smeared with medicine obtained from the chief: among highveld Sotho such as the Xanaxwa and Mokotshe, there is even a special hut for storing the sacred seed, a few grains of which are handed to each householder at sowing time, and in this hut, which is associated with the *gwai* drums and with fertility in man, girls reaching puberty are isolated and newly married 241 789

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241 789 couples sleep for the first few nights. Among the Lovedu these practices have no counterpart. Given rain, what is necessary to make the crops prosper is work and good soil, not medicine, and as a result one receives the impression of a practical attitude, not only to agriculture, but, by extension, also to most economic activities. But success both in hunting and in pastoral activities to some extent depends upon the use of magic, although by comparison with the Nguni and Tswana the cattle cult is very much attenuated.

461 Thrift and industry are regarded as virtues. It is the hard-working bride who is sought after, while the most eligible bridegrooms are the *dibuglu*, those who by industry have filled their grain pits. But what is valued is not just work; it is work to attain self-sufficiency, that will make one independent, rather than work which places one in a subservient position. Even, as they phrase it, 'In work for the chief, it is only the fool who kills himself'. Hard work must not be thought of in terms of our conceptions, for the outlook of the Lovedu is far less dominated by intensive striving and deep concentration and more by care-free, easy-going standards than ours. Work has dignity, for the maxim, 'It is not the gift-pumpkin [but the produce of one's own garden] that is juicy', is meant, not to deprecate the gift, but to foster pride in the products of one's labour; it is a tenet appropriately urged when the clothes which a youth displays have been acquired, not by his own efforts, but as a present from his parents. Work is accorded recognition: the child who begins herding is said also to begin to deserve the food he gets. Work excuses failures and losses, for as they say, 'The one who loses cattle is the one who herds them', or, more generally, 'The one who breaks is the one who works'. On the other hand, there is scorn of indolence in the proverb, 'The sluggard has no locusts even if they sleep in his courtyard', and a warning in 'He who sits with staring eye-balls [idly] will die, but he who scratches for food [cultivates assiduously] will live'. Considering the craving for beer, it is almost heroic for a man, when refused this elixir of life, to console himself with the thought that 'He who stints me is he who helps me' [because I shall better be able to attend to my work]. But the work that is honoured and considered most congenial is work in situations in which, as in the work party, the reciprocities are fundamental.

643 648 The weakness of the queen as a woman is also her strength and the source of the prestige of the tribe. Her foreign policy is appeasement, not war; for, as they phrase it, 'The queen does not fight'. Reciprocity is the basis of her relations with her district heads, reconciliation the method of settling difficulties. Appeasement, one of the great values in the society, harmonizes with, supports, and is in turn supported by the reliance of the whole social structure upon compromise. This value and the traits corresponding to it interpenetrate every aspect of culture and of life. The hard régime of the initiation 'school' has been softened: there is no need to direct its procedures towards hardening the youth or instilling manly courage, and military discipline and regimentation are of little or no importance. Diplomacy works hand in hand with the 157 methods of the *khoro* and of reconciliation (*ku khumelana*), but it also

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *ku fisa*, the care of cattle by others.

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness.

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass.

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tongas introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant, the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders

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177 planted with sweet sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of
241 stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its
134 utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

177 A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money
437 subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with
[182] Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The
182 suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes attributed to Nyasaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures
[54] with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894-6. The psychological determinants of change are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutri-
146 tion. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops
182 has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 361
quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 171
larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [592]
two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the cob and beer-making activities.

Tribal Economy. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 241
agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 231
adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [362]
are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 241
a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop, men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pumpkins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
trees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

241 of the agriculture of the more mountainous portions of the Lowveld is the use of terraces, or rather contour walls of stone, for there is no levelling of the ground in between, to prevent excessive washing away of soil. With the absence of men in the towns and the introduction of the plough with subsequent preference for valley cultivation, these contour walls are tending to fall into disuse.

462 [171] Division of labour between the sexes is the same here as among Venda and the Highveld tribes of the Northern Transvaal. While care of cattle is the province of men and agricultural work is done by both sexes, cooking and housekeeping is confined to women. Men are responsible for the erection of storage receptacles, renewal of pantry and village enclosures and the lion's share in hut-building, including thatching, for women do only plastering of walls and preparation of the floor. The crafts confined to men are ironwork, work in skin, and all wood-work such as the manufacture of drums, platters, spoons, milk pails, stamping blocks, porridge twirlers, and flat winnowing baskets. Pottery is confined to women, but weaving and basketry (other than the making of winnowing baskets) is done by both sexes.

642 643 Political Organization and Position of the Chief. The most outstanding features of the Lobedu culture complex, which clearly differentiate the Lowveld tribes from their neighbours to the south and west, are ritual suicide of the chief and the possibility of women ruling in their own right.[1] Among the Lobedu the chief reigns for a period of four circumcision schools, each 'school' being separated from the previous one by a period of almost ten years, and then has to drink poison and die. The institution can hardly continue when its supporting background of ritual and belief is crumbling, but it has survived to this day; the immediate predecessors of the present Lobedu and Letswalo rulers died unnatural deaths in the traditional manner, Modjadji II in 1894 and Mamathola in 1905. There is in this area no conscious belief that growth of the crops, welfare of the cattle,

[184] [1] These two features occur together in the most important tribes of the Lowveld such as the Lobedu, Khaha, Narene, Thabina. The only tribes to whom this institution is foreign are the Phalaborwa and Tsubye and the two Venda tribes of Roila and Tswale. Sekhopo and Radwadu, sections of the Balobedu, broke away when the first woman succeeded and themselves have only men rulers.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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THE LOVEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. KRIGE

The World View of the Lovedu

101 THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

144 Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to
177 have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga
563 immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this
642 group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

231 Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the
● 241 South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pur-
231 suits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

[p. 55]

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu husband is expected to play his part in producing food for his family. Every married man, therefore, has a field of his own which he cultivates with the help of his wives. The produce of this field is used for any beer- or work-parties that the man may wish to give and is a kind of bank upon which his wives may draw when they run short. If, however, a man helps one wife from his personal stores he must give all his wives an equal amount irrespective of their needs. When he first marries, the husband works with his wife in their common field. On marrying a second wife he acquires a field of his own (in addition to the one for his new wife) which his wives take it in turn to weed. It is said that if he had no field of his own but were merely to help each wife in turn to cultivate her field there would be endless trouble in maintaining equality between them. One of them for instance might say, 'How is it that when you come and work in my field you just sit but when you go to the field of the mother of So and So even the shade doesn't tempt you!' 595 241 [462]

A father is responsible for helping his sons to marry. But since a man seldom possesses cattle other than those already involved in bride-price exchange and a son uses the cattle of his sister, boys in a 'house' in which there are no girls often have to go out and work or with the help and advice of their father acquire bride-price in other ways. In the old days an orphan usually hired out his services to carry salt or iron ore from far countries in order in this way to acquire marriage hoes or cattle. Expenses in goats and money over and above the cattle given in marriage are met by the boy himself with the help of his father. A father should see to it that his son is provided with a field when he marries but in practice it is very often the mother who concerns herself with this problem. The father has jural control over his sons and is responsible for their debts. 593 583 [464]

The wives in a polygynous household differ in status. The chief wife is the daughter of the mother's brother—the cattle-linked or any uterine mother's brother or mother's half-brother. She will bear the heir and future head of the village. Where there has been no marriage with the mother's brother's daughter it is the first wife, the one married with his father's cattle that is chief wife. A chief wife exercises no control over 595

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neglect of many of the old crops. The balance may be restored by 241
European vegetables, such as tomatoes, cabbage, onions, and carrots. They are planted in irrigated gardens; these, however, are not numerous and could never supply the needs of the whole population. The parsimonious peasant, well-filled with porridge, is hardly likely to spend much time on what are looked upon as luxuries rather than as necessities.

People know that to have many crops in the same field places a great 241
strain on the soil and lowers the productivity of each crop. Yet as a 242
measure of economy, dictated by conditions, every one to-day plants side by side as many different crops as possible. Eleusine is an exception and mealies are spared the worst mixtures, though it is rare indeed that in between the mealies you will not find pumpkins and nuts. Millet and kaffir corn, however, stand alongside sweet sorghums—in the old days planted only on the boundaries of fields—beans and groundnuts, pumpkins, and calabashes. There is no more virgin soil on which the old incipient ideas of rotation of crops can be practised. If by chance new soil is turned, its rich content of ash will no longer be placed at the service of eleusine, as was the old rule; mealies, which followed eleusine as a second crop, are now so much more important that the old priority of eleusine gives way to a mixed crop of mealies and eleusine, though mealies alone are preferred. When mealies, after two or three years, begin to answer badly, millet is planted, in accordance with the old rotation. To-day there is some idea that beans revitalize the soil.

But we must not exaggerate the scientific value of these principles. Rotation was essentially a method of draining from the soil, with more and more hardy crops, the last ounce of energy; a crop was not thought to recondition the soil. On soil that is too poor or unsuitable for any of the cereals, groundnuts are often successful; but usually it is left to lie fallow for many years. In the old days it might have been wholly abandoned; but to-day lands that have lain fallow for thirty years and more are being recultivated, at least if they are not along the steep or stony slopes of hills where ploughing is difficult. The shifting cultivation of the past is no longer 241
possible; there are less men available for clearing, which, moreover, has 178
for long been discouraged by the tribe itself and to-day is forbidden by Governmental regulation. Plough culture also has introduced new practices. These and other changes have had far-reaching results. Time and space for single-crop gardens are lacking. It is convenient and the most economic utilization of the available resources to put into the soil behind the plough a mixture of all kinds of seeds. Some of them will be smothered by the others and that will be a calamity if the staple crops suffer unduly; for that reason the problem now is to determine, with reference to soil and weather conditions, which crops will significantly lessen the productivity of those to which priority is accorded. Everything that requires to be planted separately is as far as possible left aside. Crops specially planted by women tend to fall behind in the race. Women do most of the hoeing to-day, and their labour, valuable as it is on the steep slopes and among the stones, cannot keep pace with the plough. Moreover, men make the modern gardens by the sides of streams, and the *mung* beans, groundnuts, and native potatoes, which the women

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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and *mahoru* ants, for even blackjacks are scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when European vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, specially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. Those, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes.

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of three different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *titigwani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [824]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which
is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*hu dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khɔrɔ*, an open [361]
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dona*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khɔrɔ*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251●
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called *maduni* and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khɔrɔ* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khɔrɔ* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khɔrɔ*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khɔrɔ*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khɔrɔ* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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447 fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Raselaka complains that
231 herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11
[512] o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday, especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle in Raselaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Loveduland give hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent. of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but
[262] also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

361 You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khɔrɔ* to the huts, you hear Raselaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the royal kraal, they would surround the *khɔrɔ*, but here there are too few for that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden,
● 251 while at the back is the *marala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies are stored after reaping, till dry enough for decobbing. But they are empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly
[273] made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins,
[262] the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-pots, while a heap of golden, plumlike *morula* fruits with a cloud of midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

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251 On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance. This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and preserved for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other purposes; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

351 Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudumtoli*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*hu rula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *muukhoma* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gosha*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *madulahae* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

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II. A GLIMPSE OF VILLAGE LIFE

(a) COURTYARD SCENE IN MARCH

(b) STAMPING MEALIES

[facing p. 17]

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cold in winter. The veranda of the sleeping hut is used for storage. Here are pots of all sizes, many with lids glued down with dung, calabashes, sacks of corn on stands, medicinal roots, perhaps an old plough, a small grain basket on an inverted tripod of sticks, and a bag of reed pipes for dancing.

The contrast between sleeping and cooking huts is marked: whereas the former is relatively empty, cool and clean, the kitchen hut is generally rather untidy and, when a fire is burning, full of smoke. This is the domain of the housewife. Here are her cooking utensils—pots, baskets, wooden dishes, dishes of white enamel. At first the smoke deters you from entering, but the woman and her children sitting there appear to be quite at ease, so you summon up courage and go in. You splutter at first and your eyes water, but soon you grow accustomed to the atmosphere. You glance up at the unplastered roof and find it black from the smoke of many years. It is the home of countless cockroaches. Stuck in it are ears of corn and mealie cobs kept for seed, and many other articles, such as a cupping horn, some medicinal roots, some old arrows, and axe and spear of Sotho-worked iron kept as religious objects. On a platform of wood, out of the reach of white termites, are several bags of nuts and mealies, while a handbroom of asparagus fern lying near the hearth in the centre comes in useful from time to time for sweeping all the dirt into the fireplace. In this hut women sit at night; grandmothers sleep here with the children; here children are born and here they are often fed; here people lie when ill and here too they die.

A chair, native-made but after the European fashion, with seat of strips of thong, has been placed for you in a shady spot in the chief wife's courtyard. To be perched so high above ground when every one else sits on the floor is distinctly uncomfortable and out of place, but, in deference to the hospitality of your host in according you the honour of a chair, you feel you must occupy it. Four or five small, pot-bellied urchins with dirty noses range themselves near you to watch more closely the features and clothes of the European. One softly points out your peculiar nose to a companion, another comments on your shoes; altogether they find you and your ways absorbing. One small child holds aloof, screaming with fear when the rest try to force him to come near. With her back to the sun, a woman kneels beside a large pot of boiling water, deftly twirling a wooden twirler between her palms. Every now and then she stops to add a little of the fine white mealie meal beside her by means of a ladle of calabash, for this is the first stage in the making of *ewana*, cakes of thick meal, their staple food. The twirling prevents the formation of lumps. When the mixture becomes too thick for the twirler, a large, flat, wooden spoon is used with both hands. An aged and wrinkled old woman, mother-in-law of the one who is cooking, arrives from her garden with a basket on her head filled with the young leaves and male flowers of the pumpkin and three or four fresh cobs of mealies. The leaves and flowers are for relish for the meal; the cobs of maize she roasts in the fire for her grandchildren. She sits down, feet straight before her, and begins slowly to pull off the rough outer covering from the stalk of each leaf; it is then broken into two or three pieces and placed in a small, wide-mouthed pot.

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from 252
two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in those earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner. While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves roast mealies or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen enters with a large gourd of water on her 576
head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Mukhadi uve*,' calls out her mother. '*Maiowye*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase 563
by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Mukhadi goes into the huts and collects 415
five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used 273
for making light beer (*mahwala*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes 264
are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two- 853
months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by washing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth, she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and gurglings are of no avail till Granny has decided it has had enough. This novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held 854
over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap, special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that at any moment the child may slip out of the woman's hands; but she is skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward occurs. After being air-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline, an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys
arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neighbours could be seen; their own were n-where to be found. Your hostess is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with legs tied together.

The woman of the *mudze* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning 264
to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of slovenliness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food; porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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264 woman has finished dishing up, she very often wipes out the pot with her fingers before setting it aside, for utensils are washed just before they are needed—not after use. To prepare the relish a little water is placed in
● 252 a wide-mouthed cooking dish, the pumpkin leaves and flowers are added and then put on the fire. Within a few minutes the spinach is sufficiently cooked. A handful of salt is put in, the ground monkey nuts are added, the mixture stirred once or twice, when it is ready to be dished up into small black earthen basins.

264 Serving food to guests is a ceremonious affair. The sleeping or reception hut is carefully swept out; the food is placed in it, often before the dust has properly settled, a mat is unrolled and the guests are called to eat. To your surprise, you discover that the host does not dine with honoured guests. A wooden dish of food has been placed in a double basket with a lid. Beside it stands the relish. Mukhadi approaches on her knees with a white enamel basin of water for the guests to wash their hands, then crawls away again, leaving the water to be used again after the meal. Before beginning to eat, the youngest of the visitors claps his hands saying, '*Ndau.*' The rest reply, '*Morena,*' and the meal is begun. Each one, using his fingers, breaks a piece of a mealie meal cake, dips it in the dish of relish and eats it. There is no salt in the porridge, to make up for which the relish is very salt indeed. All eat from one bowl but there is nothing unhygienic in this. When finished you again wash your hands. Light beer, if there is any, may round off the meal.

There is no communal meal and no proper mealtime. Each wife places food for the husband in the reception hut of his chief wife and here he comes to eat any time he wishes. Later the remains will be fetched back to the hut whence it came. Food is not sent from one hut to another, except when special luxury dishes are made, known in general as *madaga* and usually prepared outside of cooking hours. These are always shared. The younger children sit down to eat with the mother in the courtyard, but the herdboys, in a hurry to take out the cattle, seize several cakes, place some relish on them, and walk off. Metiane, aged four, does not want vegetable relish. He has seen meat prepared in the courtyard of his
861 friend Nagambi and so he refuses spinach. When his mother tries to coax him, he merely sets up a dismal howl; but he is neither severely scolded nor beaten as a European child in such a situation might be. Instead they try to pacify him, till at last the mother of Nagambi, seeing the fuss, brings him a small piece of meat, telling him to be quiet.

512 The cooking done, a general migration takes place, and the village, a hive of industry in the morning, becomes almost if not quite deserted. During the agricultural season one seldom finds people at home in the afternoons. They are all out in the fields. One woman, securing the reed door of her kitchen by means of a wooden stamper balanced against it on the outside, takes a hoe and is off to mound her *ziwo* beans. Another is still busy with her weeding. A third, taking a calabash of food with her, goes to join her daughter, who left shortly after sunrise, to make *merula* cider under the trees in their field. It is a process involving considerable labour. Mamadomi is not going to the fields to-day. She wants to smear a fresh coating of dung over her courtyard and to go on with a basket she

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *ku thwola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mahubu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the maize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *swthizhi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *swme*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*ku sefa*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seine hold of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mochiba or to catch *mahowu* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Sussiae*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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4-82 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

●252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263 this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' (*'U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinwyana a jia dikoko a fa vaimana'*). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wela vatha lewai la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled njugo beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khwv*, the three men of the village are sitting by their 521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khwv*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies

[c. Pitsa?]

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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On [885] moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khwa* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels [786] and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

● 252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however, 244 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in 221 much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides the seasons into three: *Ndzilowu*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *lefuwulo*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *mariu*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

244 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February, 221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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164 Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which 221 are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things 262 cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudwetshi*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ku-rula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green 251 mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty 252 cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *mashhomo* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and 241 sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, 221 which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first 461 finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their 273 fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption 535 and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gubu*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. 231 Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on 857 the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

221 In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's 461 *needs* Kentucky, *cropping-time* allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *mudzhakar* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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IV. CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE

(a) WORK-PARTY DE-COBBING MEALIES

(b) WORK-PARTY CARRYING HOME THE MEALIE CROP

[facing p. 33]

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(b) WATER AND VEGETABLES FOR HER HOME

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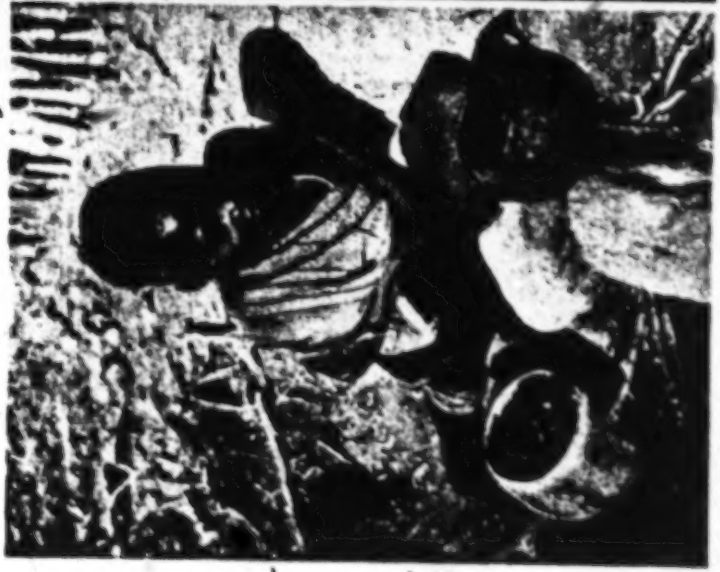

(a) THE WATCHED POT

VI. HOUSEWIVES, YOUNG AND OLD

[Facing p. 97]

261

261 GRATIFICATION AND CONTROL OF HUNGER--ideas about food and ingestion; eating sparingly or to excess; attitudes toward wasting food; special adjustments to hunger or famine; dieting; cultural elaboration of food appetites (e.g., geophagy, gum chewing, epicures); etc. *See also:*

Famine relief 731
Religious fasting 786
Theory of digestion 827
Conception of the hunger drive 838
Food craving during pregnancy 863
Infant feeding 863
Food training of children 863

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *titiguani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [324]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*hu dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khoro*, an open [361]
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau doma*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khoro*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called *madumi* and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khoro* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khoro* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khoro*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khoro*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khoro* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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241 (*Phaseolus aureus*). Several varieties of sugar-cane (sweet sorghums) are planted on the boundaries of fields or between the other crops.

Njugo beans are ancient groundnuts which require a good deal of attention by way of mounding, restrictive taboos and careful pulling up, although they are very welcome as a change of diet. In this respect they [177] resemble peanuts, which were popularized by the Shangana-Tonga not so long ago. These nuts sometimes answer well where other crops have failed; in certain years they may flourish while the cereals wither in the sun. Then you may hear people say, but it is only by way of joking among the Lovedu, that the Shangana-Tonga witches have called the cereals to undergo circumcision (*ku cha*). Some people in the valleys are half-inclined to believe the claims that the Shangana-Tonga make for their witches, because it is undoubtedly uncanny that, when the nuts succeed the cereals fail, and vice versa. But usually the claim is ascribed to the desire of these outcast people to assert their importance—the Lovedu know nothing of inferiority complexes, but they are shrewd judges of human nature.

Sesamum used to be popular in the valleys and is said to be an old crop of the Roka. But peanuts have ousted this wholesome, albeit very troublesome, crop. You will be told that the reason lies in the growing laziness of people; this is a reason given for the neglect of many other old crops, but in truth we have here merely a shift in the application of the available resources. A delightful commentary on some of the values of the society, though we must warn the reader not to judge them from our standpoint, is the name *lowoyo-modimo*, 'sesamum of the gods'. It is [182] a wild variety, unsuitable for human consumption, but good enough for the gods. It is not given to the gods, yet it reminds one of the sprouted eleusine merely mixed with water that is offered to the gods with the words, 'This is not water. Truly it is beer.'

261 There are other crops and the variety furnishes a well-balanced diet. But that is not considered to be the virtue of variety. A food is good if it fills. That is why they prefer their hard cakes of porridge to our watery oatmeal. They are inured to that feeling of fullness since the day of their birth, when Grandmother *rammed porridge* down their throats. But there is comfortable fullness and uncomfortable fullness—that after a good porridge meal and that after eating too much *njugo* bean. The stomach is not insensible to certain distinctions, though they are not our distinctions. Filling is not the only virtue of a food. Some foods relieve the monotony of the round of porridge and blackjacks, and some are [146] tasty dishes or rare delicacies. But no one thinks of the virtues of a balanced diet, for nutritive and protective qualities of foods are not recognized. The old diet, simple though it might be from our point of view, was sufficiently varied to maintain people in good health; but it is not realized that, precisely because it was so simple, even a small change might eliminate essential ingredients. That change has not yet come among the Lovedu, but it is near at hand. Subsidiary crops are becoming less popular. You still see cowpeas, mung beans, water melons, even *lowe*, sweet potatoes, and native beans. Yet, on the whole, what is most impressive is the growing reliance upon cereals and pumpkins, and the

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643 and of important councillors who are her closest relatives: when a chief
789 dies the body is left for some days in the hut, so that, when it is rubbed in a certain way (*hu fɔrɔlwa*), the skin easily comes away. Other ingredients are fat of the scaly ant-eater (*khwara*), a royal animal which, when found, has always to be brought alive to the royal village, and parts of the kudu (*thɔlɔ*). The queen's rain-doctor told us that essential ingredients were sea-water, because it foams and froths (*hu pukula*), feathers of the lightning bird, white and black sea shells, and various roots and [824] barks, chief among which is the stem of the *khadi* (*Adenia gummifera*), a tough forest creeper that contains much water. *Khadi* stems are also used for sprinkling 'cooling' medicines and for tying the bodies of dead people. Whether the queen uses these ingredients, we cannot say. From time to time a black sheep is killed to give strength to the queen's rain medicines; it has to be washed with water which is afterwards poured into the rain pots, but it is said that such a sheep is merely a present-day substitute for a human being, usually a child, whose brains were used. Important district [634] heads related to the chief also have their rain-pots. Every year in about August, at the command of the queen, such a district head collects certain roots and barks, knowledge of which he has received from his father, places them in his rain-pot, mixed with water that has been drawn by girls below the age of puberty, and stirs them up so that rain may be good that year. Rain-pots are great secrets and only after years of friendship were we privileged to see one: it was well hidden in the cleft of a rock and partly buried at the foot of a tree on the upper slopes of a hill where the owner's father had dwelt. The rain-pots of the queen we have not seen, and what regular measures she takes are not known for certain; but, since it is said, when there are good rains, that the queen has firmly laid the foundations (*hu thea*) of the year, it is not unlikely that she also stirs her medicines.

789 Great care has to be taken lest the rain-pots 'weaken' (*hu figthɔla*).
261 They have to be given (*hu luminwa*, to cause to be bitten) the first green foods (*mutshatsha*) every year, kaffir water melon (*legwadzi*) mixed with other green foods being used for the purpose, and at the royal village no one cooks and eats the new summer relishes before this has been done. On this day possessed people or people who have epilepsy also eat medicine with the firstfruits, but ordinary people do not *luma*, and there are none of the public festivities of a semi-military character associated with the eating of the firstfruits among Swazi and Zulu. It is very important too that the first termites (*dimnfuɔ*), which appear usually in December, just after the first good rains, should be given to the rain-pots. Termites are closely associated with rain: they always fly out of their nests just after the rain; in a dry year there are very few; and it is believed that sprinkling the antheap with rain medicine (*mufugo*) makes the ants come in great numbers. Termites for the rain-pots may not be gathered by married women or girls over the age of puberty, and in 1937, when some young girls carried the first termites to the queen, she gave the termites to the dogs, refusing to use ants that had been thus defiled. The giving of the first termites to the rain-pots is called *bulume*. An interesting case arose out of this practice in January, 1938, when certain people in Duthudi

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by 789
the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told 261
that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen 643
can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if 789
they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of 766
rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figthela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 821
'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, 754
spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering 766
(*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why [824]
witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *dzre* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mafugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *ku pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *ku fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts 821
of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, 527
after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khwela*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

1. The Lovedu-tribe took its origin in Mashonaland. Therefore, when a Lovedu salutes, they say :" In truth, Lovedu, in truth Khalaga,[1] person of Ledaka,[2] person who comes from Mashonaland ! " Furthermore they are " the Pigs of Mohale."[3]—They say there is the home of the Lovedu.[4] 173 576

2. They say the king there had two sons. Now one of them[5] was given the rain.[6] Afterwards the elder brother desired the thing of the younger one. He went to ask his younger brother for the rain. But the younger brother refused to give him the rain. The elder brother rose against him with spears.[7] The younger brother escaped southward,[8] he crossed the Limpopo-river of Mashonaland. On the way they separated into two groups. One tended towards the South and settled at Vyadadi[9] namely the Mamabolo-tribe. They are also " Pigs[10] of Madaki."[11] 173

3. Now the Lovedu were looking for a nice country with fertile soil and with ant-hills.[12] They sent the young men in advance to look out for such a country. And indeed—when these passed Vendaland they found the right country having merula-trees and ant-hills in the east of the mountain where there is established " Medingen "[13] to-day—namely at Khumelo.[14] [197]

4. They found that there was living another tribe called that of Kheoga.[15] Those people did not know the fire. They ate all their food *unboiled. They ate it just like the wild animals.*

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[1] Name for the inhabitants of Mashonaland.

[2] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[3] Name of chief.

[4] I was given the following explanation of the word " Lovedu " : *Valovedu khé khe khe Ghadolwa ge khove : mo khe lovakhe vuéli, e lékhe vathu le Akhomu le ridgu.*—Lovedu means : there where things namely persons, cattle, goats and sheep are being brought as offerings. [101]

[5] The younger one.

[6] The instruments and formulae to prepare the rain-medicine.

[7] Chief weapon.

[8] Literally : upwards.

[9] Mountains near Haenertsburg.

[10] Lovedu and Mamabolo praise the same animal : the wild pig.

[11] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[12] Ants = a delicacy. [262]

[13] Mission Station.

[14] Name of mountain.

[15] Another Bantu-tribe.

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density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palma). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Roka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhopo, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. *In the whole Lovedu lowveld the kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigna, the Digona and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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417 fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Raselaka complains that
231 herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11
[512] o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday, especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle in Raselaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Loveduland give hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent. of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but
● [262] also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

361 You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khrrr* to the huts, you hear Raselaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the royal kraal, they would surround the *khrrr*, but here there are too few for that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden,
251 while at the back is the *marala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies are stored after reaping, till dry enough for decobbing. But they are empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly
[273] made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins,
[262] the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-pots, while a heap of golden, plumlike *marala* fruits with a cloud of midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

252 As you look along the space between the two rows of huts, a pleasant and busy scene meets the eyes. It is ten o'clock and cooking operations are at their height. Some are cooking outside in the courtyard; others prefer to cook in the kitchen hut. An old woman is spreading out her newly lifted monkey nuts, together with a few cobs of mealies which had fallen to the ground, to be sun-dried in her courtyard. Some freshly stamped mealie meal on mats and in baskets is also set out in the sun.
251 On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance. This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and preserved for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other purposes; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

361 Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263] this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' (*'U shumile Dwagu wa ku la dinwyana a fia dikoko a fa vaimana'*). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Mubale' (*Boga le wala vathu lenwi la Mujaji a Mubale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled ajago beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khoro*, the three men of the village are sitting by their 521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khoro*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies

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food as often as not being brought to them there. Sometimes the women take with them cobs of mealies preserved by being cooked and dried in the summer months, which they have softened by boiling again before use. In stony places and along steep hillsides, where ploughing is impossible, hoeing is to-day still done by hand. Here one can generally see mealie meal spread out to dry near at hand, out of reach of the fowls and goats that would play havoc with it at hoape, where there is no one to watch it. For it is chiefly the women that hoe while the men plough. Bushes or branches that have grown out from tree stumps in the fields are cut in readiness for planting, and a typical feature of this time of the year is the small fires in the fields every day towards sunset, when dry mealie stalks that have been collected in heaps are burned. Relishes have been reduced to a minimum, blackjacks (*Bidens pilosa*), *thizhe* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) and *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*) being the mainstay, and cooking is done only once a day. There are no nuts or mealies to roast or eat casually, and in years of scarcity this is the time when the pinch of hunger is felt. At night people retire early to bed, tired from the hard work of planting and, later, weeding during the day. Dancing is rare; there is no time for social activities, all energy being directed towards getting the crops planted. Beer parties there are, chiefly work parties for weeding, but they are not as frequent now as in winter. As yet few cases of malaria will have come to light; it is rather the season of dysentery and of cuts and bruises received in hoeing. As the season advances, the first termites make their appearance to relieve the monotony of relish of blackjack leaves, the grass grows longer and weeding becomes imperative.

As a relief to the dullness of the planting season comes the *morula* season, which marks the first two months of 'summer' (February and March) and which from the point of view of seasonal activities can be looked upon as a distinctive period. Everything is green; the grass stands high and weeding is the order of the day, for rain is plentiful. Masses of golden *morula* fruits are falling to the ground. Green mealies from the first-planted fields are beginning to be eaten, spinach of male pumpkin flowers and, later, leaves, make porridge cakes more interesting, and there are sugar-cane and dishes of unripe monkey nuts. People have looked forward eagerly to this time. They are tired of their work and, though much weeding and mounding of spago beans has still to be done, the exultation grows as the cider begins to appear. To those whose granaries are empty, the *morula* season brings a blessed relief from the pangs of hunger, and they drink it as if it were the elixir of life. Much of the day is spent in the fields where the cider is prepared, and from under the trees there is a mighty hubbub of voices. At nightfall, when they return as from a bacchanalian festival, there are opportunities for romantic intrigues, the result rather of exhilaration than of the reputed aphrodisiac effects of the cider. Soon the air is rent by songs and drumming of the possessed, who at this season receive medicine to eat with the *morula* and other green foods of summer. And as the *morula* season draws to a close, the green foods of summer become more plentiful and the beginning of reaping activities ushers in the rich abundance of late summer.

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Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *mavala* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudamudi*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ho vala*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with baskets full of pumpkins, green mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *mashomo* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The *amamum* is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gwhe*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *mudulahar* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer 281
herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at 461
home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period 262
of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried 244
relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and makowe ants, for even blackjacks are scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when European vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, specially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. Those, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes. [77]

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet 178
been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence 166
of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of three different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

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CHAPTER III

BASES OF SUBSISTENCE

The agricultural complex of activities—culture-change adjustments, and problems of malnutrition, education, and division of labour in agriculture—the place in the society, and present-day problems, of animal husbandry—modern threats to the interest in the vegetation as a basis of subsistence.

241 231 222 824 [262] THE Lovedu are great agriculturalists and poor pastoralists. They have a vast knowledge of the vegetation, which constitutes the best example of a science among them. It is a science closely related to their everyday lives and upon which they rely, even more than upon their cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls, for their subsistence. They eat the fruits and roots of the plants, depend for their relishes upon leaves and soft stems, and in dozens of other ways nourish themselves upon the natural products of the soil. Not agriculture and animal husbandry alone, but these, together with wild fruits, woods, and other products of nature, are the bases of subsistence.

These bases are all fundamental, but they have different value in different aspects of the culture. Agriculture is most important as a source of the substantial foods; natural fruits provide relishes and variety, and as a means of nutrition are much more prominent than domestic animals. Cattle and goats are primarily not food at all; their great role lies in supporting the social structure. In considering the sources of the primary needs of man, we should get a wholly distorted picture if we omitted the natural vegetation, the use of which as food, in economic pursuits, and in medicine is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu culture. Tillage and animal husbandry presume an extensive practical knowledge of soils, crops, and grasses; but this body of knowledge takes second place beside the imposing science at the basis of handicrafts, natural foods—indeed, the whole medical, nutritional, and economic structure of the society.

000 Nature is not merely a physical fact; it is a living reality, an integral part of the culture. Environment is not something apart from man and his needs; it is the medium in which he lives and breathes. And it is [824] their direct reliance on nature that makes the Lovedu so strikingly different from us, just as their everyday knowledge of the names, qualities, and uses of trees, bushes, and all kinds of plants so greatly overshadows the corresponding knowledge of ordinary men among us. We, who live in a world in which nature satisfies our primary needs in a roundabout manner, cannot easily realise how different conditions are in a world where the satisfaction is direct. We are often inclined to picture primitive man as engrossed in ritual pageant unrelated to, and unserviceable for, the major ends of human existence. It is very necessary to correct this view. It is often thought that sex, magic, and witchcraft absorb most of the time, activities, and interests of primitive man. But, at all events among the Lovedu, more time and energy is spent, more interest centred,

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291 annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according
[311] to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material
291 factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient
964 as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such ex-
291 pedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the
476 essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

231 Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd
[322] and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of marriage (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the
[242 Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food
782 only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or
[554] even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old woman who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for medicines. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in impounding cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the homes of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangaan-Tonga and eaten to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangaan-Tonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 300 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Muridiridi (*Ekebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muridise-nyahse (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, charred or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first pounded to tenuous and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of muvilo is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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824 protective medicines (*dipiche*) of the village. The fruits are eaten by herdboys, January to March. The first appearance of its flowers (October) indicates the time when chickens must not be hatched or bought, because of the danger of sand fleas (*vudzedzi*). There are, incidentally, many other plants which indicate the approach of the seasons or the correct time for certain activities, e.g. when *mamu* (*Terminalia sericea*) blossoms, edible termites get their wings and children go out to catch them.

Mutini (*Colocasia antiquorum*). Planted at home—in the old days also
● [263] in river gardens—to provide relish from August to November. The leaves take only a few minutes to cook, compared with an hour or more for many other relishes. The bulb is cooked separately, like sweet potatoes.

Muvhyawi (*Lannea edulis*). A soft wood used for milk pails and bowls.
[262] The fruit, which is eaten by children and adults, ripens in November-December. The wood is not suitable for hut rafters, as it is attacked by
[263] weevils, but the bark serves as a rough, unworked string for tying together the poles of such structures as pig pens. Water in which the leaves are crushed is used as an eye lotion.

Muvula (*Parinarium curvalifolium*). The fruit, called *grysappel* (grey
[262 apple) in Afrikaans, is liked and of very great value in times of starvation.
731] It is said to have saved the people in the years 1894-6, when drought, locusts, and cattle disease overwhelmed the country. At such times the fruit is prepared, like *marula*, in the form of a cider (*vuvhe*), which is yellowish and sweet. It also has economic uses.

824 We have in our list over a hundred different kinds of wild edible fruits
262 and berries, many of them, it is true, eaten chiefly by herdboys. But numerous wild fruits are relished by adults, such as wild figs (of which there are seven different kinds), *muukhomo* (*Berchemia discolor*), of which a tasty, if heavy, cake is made, *mudzomba* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), *mapurwa* (*Pseudolachnostylis maprounoides*), *mumbu* (*Syzygium cordatum*), *marhi* (*Amomum mangalense*), and many others. The *marula* is, as we have seen, an important national beverage with valuable anti-scorbutic properties. There are also wild bananas (*mawwa*), long ago brought from the north, but now practically eradicated by animals. Not much reliance is placed upon cultivated fruits, but there are oranges, some pawpaws, and mangoes, planted by the early Christians; these have not subsequently been added to to any extent and they are very much neglected.

For relishes, without which porridge cannot be eaten, people rely largely upon nature. Apart from the leaves of pumpkins and beans, which are available from February to June, they use a great variety of wild spinaches, chief among which are blackjack (*Bidens pilosa*), *mafye* (*Solanum nigrum*), and *tlarhi* (*Amaranthus Thunbergii*). In our list we have forty-five greens or relishes. But not only plants provide relishes. In September and in the winter months, when greens are scarce, *madzwa* (*Macrotermes bellicosus* Smeath.), fatty black male termites, are a great mainstay. The female of the same species (*dzungwa*), which swarms from December to March, the rainy season, are so important in the national diet that they must be ritually 'bitten' (*ku luma*) and sent to the queen from every district. They are roasted, winnowed, and eaten as

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relish, the winnowing being mixed with salt and pressed into a cake used as spinach or eaten alone. Children eat *dimpwa makhwa* (flying ants) and grasshoppers; *matide*, a large red grasshopper and a few other kinds of grasshoppers, as well as swarming locusts, form part of the diet of adults. Indeed, during a famine in the 1890's, Mujaji, it is said, sent locusts, not to plague, but to succour her subjects, the Shangana-Tonga. Honey—not only of the honey bee but also of other insects, such as the *mapa*—adds, though only occasionally, to the variety of the foods directly supplied by nature.

For nutritional purposes, a considerable body of knowledge of the vegetation is necessary. This body of knowledge expands to a veritable science when we consider its application to the arts and crafts. It is used continuously in all daily activities, such as building, fencing, renewing hoe handles, yokes, and storehouses, extracting oil or fat, and so on. In the old days it was not merely woodwork that was important; iron-making was one of the great industries. To-day, though many implements of Native ironwork are still to be found, the industry has disappeared, partly because the sources of the ore have been appropriated by Europeans and partly because of the cheapness of European-made iron objects. The smith was a specialist, but also an agriculturist and a student of the vegetation. In his industry he used, not only special ores, but also special woods. Similarly, for each of the crafts—hut-building, fencing, making stamping blocks, sledges, hoe handles, milk pails, spoons, platters, winnowing baskets, drums, and many others—different qualities in the wood are regarded as important. There are half a dozen different kinds of plants that yield fibre from which string can be made, each involving a somewhat different process. The value of certain grasses for thatching and making mats, baskets, and beer-sieves is ritualized in the taboo on cutting grass before the queen eats the first fruits; *i.e.* thatching grass must be left untouched until it is quite ripe in May and June. The elaborate working up of skin, though now restricted to the purpose of making skin cradles and a few women's skirts, involves considerable skill as well as knowledge of the value of oils and repellents to drive off destructive insects and even dogs. Pottery is still a live industry involving a knowledge of the qualities of clays, and what we call 'herbalism', the use of the medicinal qualities of plants, is not confined to doctors, but is to a large extent common knowledge.

A whole volume could be written on the interest of the average man or woman in the flora alone. He knows a great deal about almost every plant. Even a herdboy, as we found in discussing our list of names of plants, could mention one or two practical uses of more than half of them. Young men could add several medical or magical uses, while old men could bring the names into relation with a bewildering number of ritual, religious, and other occasions, and many had specialized knowledge, according to the nature of their occupations or interests. Speaking generally, and in terms of what is commonly known, we find that of the 300 plants we have listed, 200 have mainly economic uses. They are daily applied to such activities as building huts, thatching, making spoons. Some 20 are specially useful for making string; another 20 for

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356 greens' (*ba le ba hani ba ba murulu*), meaning that children are always of value, unlike relish, which can be used once only.

It is not so much technical skill as usefulness and willingness to help that are the great virtues. There is great tolerance of mediocre achievement and no one is made to suffer humiliation on account of it. Whenever she gets the chance, a small girl will, when her mother is stamping, try to follow suit, often with a play stamper specially made for her, and it is surprising how quickly a child will learn to winnow. Girls of from eight to ten are able to do almost every kind of housework, including the preparation of a meal. Beer-making, which requires considerable skill, is, however, not learnt till after puberty, and heavy work, such as carrying wood, is not done by young children. At the age of ten or eleven, a girl may be given a small portion of her grandmother's field to cultivate for herself. She will plant the crops she likes—lots of sugar-cane and also mealies and groundnuts—and in the disposal of these she acts as she pleases. Girls also learn the art of collecting leaves for relish: which plants can be used, which leaves are the most tasty and at what time of the year they should be picked.

357 Most children are pleased to help a little in the household tasks, for there are not very many outside diversions. They have, however, plenty of time also for play and are gloriously free to romp on moonlight nights long after their parents have retired to bed. As with us, play among the Lovedu is largely directed to the learning of skills useful in later life. A popular pastime of children is dancing, usually among small girls, to the accompaniment of drumming on paraffin tins. At adult dances young girls seize every opportunity in between dances to practise on the drums and, when the dance is in full swing and the men in a ring round the drums are burning their cheeks as they blow their reed pipes, it is not unusual to see five or six small boys of from three to six years old going round on the outside, reed in mouth, imitating every movement of the adults. In the games of girls (those of boys will be discussed later), imitation of adult activities, such as a game resembling initiation mummeries and play-cooking, loom large. Sometimes they build miniature villages, mould small clay pots, and pretend to cook, but often their play takes a more real form. We have seen a group of small girls collect ripe marula fruits to make their own cider in pots borrowed from home. Next day, when it was ready, they all sat down solemnly to drink it, passing round the clay dish with great dignity, as they had seen grown-ups do. A group of small boys hung around in the hope of being invited to join in and they were not disappointed. The cider was perhaps a little dirty (small girls are not particular about washing hands before pressing out the juice), but the boys found it wonderfully good.

358 The education of a boy is received largely through the institution of herding. His first introduction to herding is pleasant enough. At the age of four or five he sets out with one of the bigger boys, who carries food for him, since he is as yet too young to remain long without a meal. Now he has his first taste of goat's milk, the food of herdboys, who do not notice the smell that nauseates adults. The goats are milked into hollows scooped out in rocks, into which juice of various kinds of acid

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fruits, such as *ditshidi*, may be squeezed to cause curds, eaten by means of a certain kinds of grass or leaves. At this stage the boy goes out with his protectiie to herd or stays at home with his nurse just as he pleases. Soon, however, he must begin seriously to herd goats and donkeys near home with other boys of his age. He finds this irksome at first and whenever he can he tries to remain at home with the girls. But his father will tell him that always being in women's company will make him grow up to be a coward; visitors coming to the village will ask, 'Are you herding yet?' and boys older than himself may begin to beat him if he does not accompany them, so that in the end he finds himself going out day after day to herd, whether his own father has goats and cattle or not. In the old days, when cattle raids were feared, full-grown men herded cattle; to-day this is not seen, except sometimes when on a rainy day an adult will go out with the cattle to prevent his children from getting coughs and colds. On wet days rough shelters are made, in which the herdboys sit round a fire. Just as the work of girls in the home as nursemaids and helpers forms an integral part of the whole economic structure of society, so herding is an important and essential activity. This the herdboy knows and feels.

Herding is a form of gang life in which a boy and his age-mates are very strictly controlled by those just older than themselves. It is the only discipline to which he is subjected outside the circumcision lodge, and it is characteristic of the society, that boys and girls both in and out of the formal initiation 'schools' are disciplined, not by adults, but by the group just older than themselves. It is the adults, more especially old people, who sometimes intervene on their behalf, lightening their burden. Much of what they are taught in the 'schools' likewise comes from the next age-set. As an educational principle, this is of considerable value: children learn more easily and more willingly from other children than from adults, and every boy knows that soon he too will enjoy the privilege of authority over those younger than he is. In herding, the smaller boys are made to do most of the unpleasant work. They are left to herd on hot afternoons while those older than themselves indulge in games and amusements; they have to fetch and carry for older boys and are often bullied into fighting one another. Constant fear of being made to fight decided a boy of eight to run away to his mother's brother's place. But there he had also to herd and, instead of escaping the fights he found so distasteful, he was again pitted against and worsted by boys stronger than himself. Every group of herdboys has its leader (*shohar*), usually the strongest of the group. He and the other elder boys have many privileges. The younger boys have to do the fagging and, if they find a tree with ripe fruit, they may neither climb it nor pick fruit till they have called the older boys, who, after eating their fill, will allow them to have their turn. One branch must, however, be left untouched for the leader of the group. When cattle have strayed, the men beat only the bigger boys, knowing that the smaller ones will already have been punished by their seniors. Herdboys have their own standards, not always in accord with that of the rest of society. They steal sugar-cane, nuts, mealies from other people's fields; sometimes they collect honey from hives in the bush

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[881] they sleep by the 'mother' of the lodge (*mafaio*) near the fire. Those a little older set their traps and catch mice, which they roast by the *khimbe* fire; but relish and wild fruit is usually forbidden to them and they may not, though they often do, drink water. Sick boys, elsewhere subjected to hardships and taunts, are nursed and given soft food, not the hard *khiowele* of the novices. The novices who go out to hunt certainly resent the malingering of the lazy ones (*magatho*), who are strong enough, but stay at home on this or that pretext. But the true spirit of the *vudiga* is seen, not so much in the beatings that the shepherds (*madabi*) administer, for they are beaten as much as if not more than, the novices, but in the actions and attitude of the older men. There are *madidi*, one regiment senior to the *madabi*, who are never beaten, but may be fined; and older than they are the old men (*vukhalabye*). They are kindly greybeards, some of them officials of the lodge and some who do no work (*vuvalizipi*). Some of them constantly intercede for the young and weak boys who are threatened with punishment or trials beyond their strength or endurance, or 'stand for' those deserving novices who had been obedient or generous or respectful in their childhood. Above all, these old men, mellow with age and mature in wisdom, conditioned to a culture founded upon compromise and easy relations, not only restrain excesses, but add to the beauty of the performances by chanting their refrain of sayings and proverbs, encouragements and admonitions. It is they, not the shepherds with their whips, that give the tone to the proceedings.

The stage after this period of seclusion is called the 'change' (*ku fedukiwa*). The boys sit by the fire facing the rising, not the setting, sun, as was the case in the previous three months. Of course, we must not expect precision: the 1919 fire ran north-south, not east-west; the ideal always gives way to the practical, for the east-west disposition was rendered difficult, though not impossible, by the slope of the ground. In other respects also it was the spirit not the letter of the law that determined various arrangements. After the 'change' life is somewhat different in the lodge. The boys used to do homage (*loko*) to a *morada* tree near the fire as if it were their ancestor (grandparent). But the tree [776] mysteriously withers and, after the change, is replaced by a pole (*morabada*). No teaching is done from either tree or pole as is the case in other tribes, but it is associated with a whole series of ritual acts. After the 'change' no longer shepherds but women bring the food; boys perform within sight of women; some of the food taboos are raised, but [267] relish, though always brought, is forbidden and still thrown into the refuse heap. Apart from these and many other changes, we must also mention the visit by the novices to the village in order to 'beg for salt'. Then they sing the praises of salt, the seasoning virtues of which they now fully appreciate, having gone without it for so long. But on their return the pole has gone; their grandparent has died.

And now we press on to a day of great doings. The novices go out to [526] 'scratch [as fowls do] for food', only this means a spectacular dance before the women. That night, the last night in the lodge, it is *khilalawani*, the night of standing, though many quietly doze off or escape to rest in the bush near by; there is none of the concentration we expect on

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881 That in the briefest possible outline is the procedure followed in the *vudigo*. To recapture the whole atmosphere, to present the details of a four months' ceremonial full of incident and meaning, is not possible. All we can do is to single out one or two special features of the educational aspect. Let us first dispel the idea that the régime is a rigid one. How can it be when there are toddlers of six or seven years of age nestling up to the 'mother' of the lodge where he sleeps by the fire? The boys are beaten, it is true, and they have to undergo various kinds of punishment, but the old men are there to 'stand for them'; and when the novices are tired, one of these kindly old men or a visitor will *rule* them, take off the weight from their heads, so that they can go to bed early. The little ones do not go out to hunt, they play about in the lodge. If one of them cries, the 'mother' of the lodge will inquire the cause from the *vusho* (the head of the initiates), and if the *vusho* has been negligent, it is he who will be punished. The cold is never severe nor are the boys attacked by worms or ants (for the floor is covered with ash); there is no rule that they must sleep on their backs with head or feet toward the fire, so that they will suffer more from the cold. Boys do not talk as if the *vudigo* is a terrible ordeal; it is the shepherds as much as the initiates who are punished. The food is not nauseating, but what is mentioned as particularly trying is the stench issuing from the healing wounds. The stomach contents of a buck killed in the hunt is sprinkled over their porridge, but they like it and it is used in ordinary life as food. They may not drink water, but the lodge is quite near the river and it is not difficult to steal a drink now and then. Meat is never wholly taboo. They can always trap mice and rats and sometimes they are given meat, though it must not be openly displayed. Sometimes, when they are out hunting, the command '*Zapa*' is given; it is a signal for the boys to make an onslaught upon a sweet sorghum field or on wild fruits. It is said that a clever boy is very seldom beaten. The silence that is enjoined upon them, for theoretically they may communicate only by whistling, is not absolute; they may whisper to one another and only loud speaking is punished. They are not driven into cold pools every day to remove the scab of their wounds. On the contrary, the old men examine the wounds every day; and the doctor who has operated badly may be disgraced, as one was during the 1919 school; he was ignominiously chased away from the lodge. In short, despite the trials and restrictions, the régime is on the whole a mild one.

882 Obscene language does not loom large; it plays no part, not as obscenity,
883 but as ritual, but it is not an imposing part. After the 'change', when women start bringing the food, it is the shepherds who may swear at them. 'Go and eat,' they say; 'your pubes are torn'; or 'The red inside of your private parts, eat'; but they add, 'Do not feel hurt, women. We are not swearing at you. We are praising you.' But wilful swearing is an offence, as we saw in the *syali* (girls' initiation), when even one of the important officials of the school, the attendant of the Bird, swore at a girl who had made a mistake and was promptly fined a goat. When the boys sit eating by the tables, it is at the command 'Let them defecate' (*A vu-la ngo*) that they stop, but in the circumstances it means no more than 'Dismiss'. Indeed, the word *mamdi* (women) and any word associated

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in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the cob and beer-making activities.

Tribal Economy. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop, men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pumpkins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit trees, such as the marula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

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they deprecated his lack of practical sense and wondered whether he was losing his reason. What is significant to the Lovedu is not the origin but the maintenance of the order of nature. Interest in the continuity of natural forces centres, however, not on an abstract system, but on the benefit of man or rather of the Lovedu people. Among these forces the most important are those governing the auspicious movements of clouds and their transformation into rain. But they stand in no relation to the forces that brought the world into existence. Among Lovedu, in contrast for example to Ozanian peoples, there is consequently complete discontinuity between mythological origins, or the forces that operated at the dawn of the world, and present realities or the forces maintaining the existing order. Even the ancestor gods do not bridge this gap, and man's dependence upon them—and hence the force of religious sanctions—derives not from their relationship to the beginnings of things but from kinship principles.

Myths play an insignificant part in Lovedu life. Almost the only myths are legends of the institution of the present political order which give a generalized account of the migration of the royal nuclear group from Rhodesia and of the reigns of the various chiefs. There is no attempt in them to intensify the beliefs or validate the institutional arrangements underlying the sacred kingship. It is not these myths that give warranty to the queen's mystical credentials and to the complex of customs that supports them. Indeed today scant credence is accorded by the younger men to the legendary royal ancestry which traces the descent of the nuclear group to the Karanga of Monomotapa in Southern Rhodesia, for the Lovedu find it difficult to believe that they are related to a people who now appear to them to be inferior, lacking the prestige and aristocratic pretensions of their reputed ancestors. In one version of the myth the Lovedu broke away from Monomotapa under the younger 'chosen' son to whom the previous chief had given the rain-charms. He fled south as a result of his conflict with the eldest brother who had legal precedence. In another, it is a daughter who, having committed incest with her brother, escapes with the rain-charms and her infant son from her outraged father.

The legends are further concerned to explain the settlement of the Lovedu in their present environment: their choice was determined by the abundance of red earth which would soil their hair-cloths and the abundance of marula trees and mounds of edible termites, both of which are valued and ritually significant items in their diet. A later dimension between two claimants to the throne is presented as a conflict between chief son and chosen son, and again the victory of the chosen son vindicates the divine right of the rain-maker against legal precedence, and in that way appears to justify the present flexible system of succession as against the challenge of the Northern Sotho emphasis on primogeniture and certainty. Just as the title to becoming ruler of a new tribe is in one version validated by the incest of brother and sister, so the later and equally momentous change from kings to queens is brought into relation with father-daughter incest.

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*mutupe*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *mutupe* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *mulala* or

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other wives. When the mother's brother's daughter is one of the younger wives in a polygynous household she may be completely overshadowed by the first wife. The eldest son of the first wife occupies a position of importance in the family. He is said to stand in the shoes (literally 'footprints') of his father and after the latter's death has a right to be *sumu'd*, i.e., given a portion of any animal killed by any of his brothers long after they have dispersed and live in separate homesteads. There are instances, especially in the case of district heads and where the chief house has no male heir, in which the eldest son of the first wife married tries to usurp the position. But though he may appear for a time to be succeeding as seemed to be the case in more than one instance in the 1930's when first we went into the field, I have not come across any cases in which he has succeeded in the long run.

Each wife has her own fields which it is her duty to cultivate for the needs of her 'house'. On her death her sons have first right to inherit her fields unless their father wants to use them himself or arrange for their cultivation to provide food for the younger children; but they may not be used for the benefit of any other 'house'. A daughter may be given her deceased mother's field to cultivate while she is still in her parental home, but she cannot inherit it. A wife is expected to feed herself, her children, her husband and her mother-in-law from her fields. Each time she cooks she sends food to her husband and to his mother. What is left must be returned to her 'house' unless the husband himself gives it to the herd-boys or other children as a group. In the case of special dishes eaten in-between meals, such as cakes of sesamum or ground peanuts, a little will be sent to each of the other women of the homestead with whom the wife is on good terms. In a large homestead this may be confined to the wives of one man. Beer brought to any one 'house' is usually drunk by all in the village and neighbourhood.

In addition to having her own granaries and cooking utensils every wife has a right to raise livestock. She may keep chickens; she may acquire goats by the exchange of her produce; she may get pigs by feeding other people's pigs in return for a pigling. She may even acquire cattle if she is a doctor. In contrast to the Zulu, where the 'house' like that of the Lobedu is

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also an economic unit, the Lobedu wife enjoys considerable economic freedom in the disposal of her property. Though she should act in consultation with her husband in the disposal of livestock or large amounts of surplus crops she will often, especially if on bad terms with her husband, act on her own. All these activities, it should however be remembered, are for the advancement of her 'house', which belongs to the husband's lineage. These goods can neither accrue to nor be used by the wife's own relatives. If, for example, she leaves her husband or is divorced she cannot take any of the produce of her fields with her. On the other hand the husband could use such crops or livestock only for the advancement or to feed the children of that 'house,' not for other 'houses'. The only goods a woman may take with her on divorce are cattle or other livestock earned by practising as a doctor because in this case, it is said, she has spirits guiding her which are of her own, not her husband's family.

The Lobedu husband does not in the manner of the Nguni allocate cattle to the 'house' of each wife (milk plays little or no part in the diet). It is said, however, that even if a cow were to be allocated to a house for milking purposes it would not belong to that 'house'. Cattle that come in from the marriage of a daughter are the property of her mother's 'house' and should be used for acquiring a wife for a son of that house. If the son is young and the husband wishes to use his daughter's cattle for a wife for himself, such wife would have to cook for the woman of that house from which the cattle came in the manner of a daughter-in-law. In theory a husband has the right to decide how the cattle of any 'house' are to be used. But he rarely in practice acts against the wishes of the wife. Her right over any woman acquired by the cattle of her daughter gives her great power and makes it difficult for her husband to marry a wife with them himself against her wishes. The bride might run away or her people refuse to let her marry if they hear that the woman the bride will have to 'stamp for' opposes the marriage. That is why so often cattle are handed to the wife's brother in the manner described above.

It is said, '*mooka ha o le ye mongwe*—houses do not eat one another', i.e., the property of one house cannot be used for the advancement of another. Hence bride-price of the girl of one

of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in this way are very pleasant to eat, the Europeans misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five tormented grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she wipes this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done well, Dwapa, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' (*U shumile Dwapa wa ha le dzwayowa a ifi dzhdzo a fa vamanwe*). If his name had been Boya, the praise would have run, 'Boya, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Mukale' (*Boya le mulo vuthe lewel le Mujaji a Mukale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might hear it. Boys are always held by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled ripe beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

In the *khaw*, the three men of the village are sitting by their fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khaw*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the pre-eminent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in those earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner. While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves roast mealies or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen enters with a large gourd of water on her head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Mukhadi* now,' calls out her mother. '*Malowya*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Mukhadi goes into the hut and collects five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used for making light beer (*mabudo*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two-months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by washing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth, she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and gurglings are of no avail till Gwenny has decided it has had enough. This novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap, special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that at any moment the child may slip out of the woman's hands; but she is skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward occurs. After being air-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline, an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neighbours could be seen; their own were nowhere to be found. Your hostess is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with legs tied together.

The woman of the *mudzi* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of slovenliness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food; porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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269 woman has finished dishing up, she very often wipes out the pot with her fingers before setting it aside, fin utensils are washed just before they are needed—not after use. To prepare the relish a little water is placed in
282 a wide-mouthed cooking dish, the pumpkin leaves and flowers are added and then put on the fire. Within a few minutes the spinach is sufficiently cooked. A handful of salt is put in, the ground monkey nuts are added, the mixture stirred once or twice, when it is ready to be dished up into small black earthen basins.

269 Serving food to guests is a ceremonious affair. The sleeping or reception hut is carefully swept out; the food is placed in it, often before the dust has properly settled, a mat is unrolled and the guests are called to eat. To your surprise, you discover that the host does not dine with honoured guests. A wooden dish of food has been placed in a double basket with a lid. Beside it stands the relish. Mukhandi approaches on her knees with a white enamel basin of water for the guests to wash their hands, then crawls away again, leaving the water to be used again after the meal. Before beginning to eat, the youngest of the visitors claps his hands saying, '*Ndau.*' The rest reply, '*Mowna,*' and the meal is begun. Each one, using his fingers, breaks a piece of a maize meal cake, dips it in the dish of relish and eats it. There is no salt in the porridge, to make up for which the relish is very salt indeed. All eat from one bowl but there is nothing unhygienic in this. When finished you again wash your hands. Light beer, if there is any, may round off the meal.

There is no communal meal and no proper mealtime. Each wife places food for the husband in the reception hut of his chief wife and here he comes to eat any time he wishes. Later the remains will be fetched back to the hut whence it came. Food is not sent from one hut to another, except when special luxury dishes are made, known in general as *mudzaga* and usually prepared outside of cooking hours. These are always shared. The younger children sit down to eat with the mother in the courtyard, but the herdboys, in a hurry to take out the cattle, seize several cakes, place some relish on them, and walk off. Mutiane, aged four, does not want vegetable relish. He has seen meat prepared in the courtyard of his
261 friend Nagambi and so he refuses spinach. When his mother tries to coax him, he merely sets up a dismal howl; but he is neither severely scolded nor beaten as a European child in such a situation might be. Instead they try to pacify him, till at last the mother of Nagambi, seeing the fuss, brings him a small piece of meat, telling him to be quiet.

512 The cooking done, a general migration takes place, and the village, a hive of industry in the morning, becomes almost if not quite deserted. During the agricultural season one seldom finds people at home in the afternoons. They are all out in the fields. One woman, securing the reed door of her kitchen by means of a wooden stamper balanced against it on the outside, takes a hoe and is off to unwind her cirapo beans. Another is still busy with her weeding. A third, taking a calabash of food with her, goes to join her daughter, who left shortly after sunrise, to make marula cider under the trees in their field. It is a process involving considerable labour. Mamadzoni is not going to the fields to-day. She wants to smear a fresh coating of dung over her courtyard and to go on with a basket she

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XI. DOMESTIC DUTIES

(a) GRINDING OF REQUIRED GREAT MEAL

(b) STRAINING THE PREPARED BEER BREW

[facing p. 144]

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other wives. When the mother's brother's daughter is one of the younger wives in a polygynous household she may be completely overshadowed by the first wife. The eldest son of the first wife occupies a position of importance in the family. He is said to stand in the shoes (literally 'footprints') of his father and after the latter's death has a right to be *sumu'd*, i.e., given a portion of any animal killed by any of his brothers long after they have dispersed and live in separate homesteads. There are instances, especially in the case of district heads and where the chief house has no male heir, in which the eldest son of the first wife married tries to usurp the position. But though he may appear for a time to be succeeding as seemed to be the case in more than one instance in the 1930's when first we went into the field, I have not come across any cases in which he has succeeded in the long run.

Each wife has her own fields which it is her duty to cultivate for the needs of her 'house'. On her death her sons have first right to inherit her fields unless their father wants to use them himself or arrange for their cultivation to provide food for the younger children; but they may not be used for the benefit of any other 'house'. A daughter may be given her deceased mother's field to cultivate while she is still in her parental home, but she cannot inherit it. A wife is expected to feed herself, her children, her husband and her mother-in-law from her fields. Each time she cooks she sends food to her husband and to his mother. What is left must be returned to her 'house' unless the husband himself gives it to the herd-boys or other children as a group. In the case of special dishes eaten in-between meals, such as cakes of sesamum or ground peanuts, a little will be sent to each of the other women of the homestead with whom the wife is on good terms. In a large homestead this may be confined to the wives of one man. Beer brought to any one 'house' is usually drunk by all in the village and neighbourhood.

In addition to having her own granaries and cooking utensils every wife has a right to raise livestock. She may keep chickens; she may acquire goats by the exchange of her produce; she may get pigs by feeding other people's pigs in return for a pigling. She may even acquire cattle if she is a doctor. In contrast to the Zulu, where the 'house' like that of the Lobedu is

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137 [272] *mmanda* tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malemutsha wee, Malemutsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga* [303] *dzwala ga fifaja, ga wafa wapholowe*' (Malemutsha, Malemutsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a gentling ? returned)—the praise 431 song of a district in Ulokwedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calebash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malemutsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calebashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach [364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiphulelowi*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiphulelowi nowu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhuwye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

621 At last you find yourself before the village of Rasalaka, larger than any 789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lenzhua* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the [417] protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or 824 *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphuba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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food as often as not being brought to them there. Sometimes the women take with them cobs of mealies preserved by being cooked and dried in the summer months, which they have softened by boiling again before use. In stony places and along steep hillsides, where ploughing is impossible, hoeing is to-day still done by hand. Here one can generally see mealie meal spread out to dry near at hand, out of reach of the fowls and goats that would play havoc with it at home, where there is no one to watch it. For it is chiefly the women that hoe while the men plough. Bushes or branches that have grown out from tree stumps in the fields are cut in readiness for planting, and a typical feature of this time of the year is the small fires in the fields every day towards sunset, when dry mealie stalks that have been collected in heaps are burned. Relishes have been reduced to a minimum, blackjacks (*Bidens pilosa*), *tshele* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) and *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*) being the mainstay, and cooking is done only once a day. There are no nuts or mealies to roast or eat casually, and in years of scarcity this is the time when the pinch of hunger is felt. At night people retire early to bed, tired from the hard work of planting and, later, weeding during the day. Dancing is rare; there is no time for social activities, all energy being directed towards getting the crops planted. Beer parties there are, chiefly work parties for weeding, but they are not as frequent now as in winter. As yet few cases of malaria will have come to light; it is rather the season of dysentery and of cuts and bruises received in hoeing. As the season advances, the first termites make their appearance to relieve the monotony of relish of blackjack leaves, the grass grows longer and weeding becomes imperative.

As a relief to the dullness of the planting season comes the *marula* season, which marks the first two months of 'summer' (February and March) and which from the point of view of seasonal activities can be looked upon as a distinctive period. Everything is green; the grass stands high and weeding is the order of the day, for rain is plentiful. Masses of golden *marula* fruits are falling to the ground. Green mealies from the first-planted fields are beginning to be eaten, spinach of male pumpkin flowers and, later, leaves, make porridge cakes more interesting; and there are sugar-cane and dishes of unripe monkey nuts. People have looked forward eagerly to this time. They are tired of their work and, though much weeding and mounding of *ojago* beans has still to be done, the exultation grows as the cider begins to appear. To those whose granaries are empty, the *marula* season brings a blessed relief from the pangs of hunger, and they drink it as if it were the elixir of life. Much of the day is spent in the fields where the cider is prepared, and from under the trees there is a mighty hubbub of voices. At nightfall, when they return as from a bacchanalian festival, there are opportunities for romantic intrigues, the result rather of exhilaration than of the reputed aphrodisiac effects of the cider. Soon the air is rent by songs and drumming of the possessed, who at this season receive medicine to eat with the *marula* and other green foods of summer. And as the *marula* season draws to a close, the green foods of summer become more plentiful and the beginning of reaping activities ushers in the rich abundance of late summer.

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417 fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Rawlaka complains that
231 herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to
be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer
dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous
[512] to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11
o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out
again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and
it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday,
especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that
seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle
in Rawlaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Loveduland give
hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent.
of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but
[263] also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played
an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

361 You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some
of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khraal*
to the huts, you hear Rawlaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be
caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows
facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the
royal kraal, they would surround the *khraal*, but here there are too few for
that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious
doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden,
251 while at the back is the *mawala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches
with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the
large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies
are stored after reaping, till dry enough for dehulling. But they are
empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly
[273] made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and
[262] sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins,
the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-
pots, while a heap of golden, plumlike *mawala* fruits with a cloud of
midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little
cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place
for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

252 As you look along the space between the two rows of huts, a pleasant
and busy scene meets the eyes. It is ten o'clock and cooking operations
are at their height. Some are cooking outside in the courtyard; others
prefer to cook in the kitchen hut. An old woman is spreading out her
newly lifted monkey nuts, together with a few cobs of mealies which
had fallen to the ground, to be sun-dried in her courtyard. Some freshly
stamped mealie meal on mats and in baskets is also set out in the sun.
251 On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance.
This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and pre-
served for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too
much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been
plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other pur-
poses; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

351 Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from 252
two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in those
earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner.
While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves
roast maize or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar
cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is
now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will
stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen comes with a large gourd of water on her 576
head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Makhadi uwe*,' calls out her
mother. '*Makhwayo*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase 563
by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each
group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the
plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Makhadi goes into the huts and collects 715
five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the
remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used 273
for making light beer (*mahadi*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes
are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the 364
sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two- 553
months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by wash-
ing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth,
she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and
gurglings are of no avail till Granny has decided it has had enough. This
novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to
mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held 554
over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap,
special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles
and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that
at any moment the child may slip out of the woman's hands; but she is
skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward
occurs. After being sun-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline,
an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys 384
arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken
so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neigh-
bours could be seen; their own were nowhere to be found. Your hostess
is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native
relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with
legs tied together.

The woman of the *mahe* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning 264
to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she
skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the
platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer
skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a
second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife
is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for
untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of sloven-
liness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food;
porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to 512
fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe [70]
for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of 252
three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *ku thowola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for [23]
feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mahudu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the meize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *vothithi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *vumu*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*ku sefa*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge [73]
of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for 871
their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seize hold 857
of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in [54]
no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mothers or to catch *mahovu* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Suazieae*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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857 of *lepaje* (*Mariscus* sp.) or *lepikejiki* (*Cyperus immensus*), rush-grasses which the arts mine with their antropane. The girls who have been stamping now set out with some friends from a neighbouring village, all armed
[54] with axes, to collect firewood. The girls of this company are age-mates;
[532] they share their labours, confide their love affairs, bathe together, and, in the late afternoon, when they go to the bush, they sit together elongating their *lobio mimwa* (*lea bracca*). Meanwhile the village lies basking and dreaming in the afternoon sun; except for the pecking fowls there is hardly a stir. '*Ua gae*' ('Where is it—beer'), says Raselaka to his son Sekwere, as he returns with some poles on his shoulder for repairing his
574 wife's granary. 'There is beer of *lejowa* [work-party] over at Modzieri's,'
273 in the reply; and the men, accompanied by the visitors, set out for the beer drink, knowing they will be allowed to partake even though they have done no work.

The hum of voices as you near a certain kraal leaves you in no doubt that this must be Modzieri's village. A fair crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the woman who is holding the *lejowa* and a typical beer-drinking scene meets the eye. The centre of the picture is a large pot of beer placed in a rounded depression made for it in the courtyard. Beside it stands a flat winnowing basket containing long-handled calabash cups from which the beer is drunk. Beside the pot sits a man who serves the beer, using a beer-cup as ladle; he gives each cup to a young man of about twenty, who hands it round. The guests have ranged themselves on either side of the beer pot, women on one side, men on the other. As each calabash is emptied, it is brought back by the young man who is doing the waiting, to be filled. There is no hurry. Each one drinks at his leisure and conversation flows freely. Every one knows he will be given in his turn and, if one man is handed a second cup, he will pass it on to any one who has not yet been served, till all have had four or five. It is a pleasant social gathering and all the latest gossip is discussed. Small children toddle about in between the drinkers and may even be given a
651 little of the beer. Ominously Phedulé remarks, 'Madume has seen police
625 near Modingan. There appear to be four of them. What can they be wanting?' 'Oh,' replies Dwagu, 'they are no doubt raiding for tax defaulters!' There is general uneasiness, for about a fifth of the gathering are in arrears. Muhale is six years in arrears and, as he never goes to town to work, he has not once been caught. 'They won't catch me napping in my home to-night,' volunteers Mathukha. 'I shall go into the bush again. Are they Shangana-Tongs or Sotho, those police Madume saw?' a very relevant question, because the Shangana-Tongs, more likely than not recruited from outside the reserve, will not know these hiding places in the forests and caves. Here Pikula describes how his friend Setimela, who had himself always been in default and knew all the best hiding places, had joined the police the previous year. Consequently, at the very next raid the police made a most successful scoop, catching ninety-six defaulters, whom they marched to Duivelskloof.

574 The beer-pot is almost empty and people are merely sitting talking
273 when the host calls Raselaka and his European guest aside into his reception hut, together with a few other intimates. A woman brings in a small

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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Rasiloka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Rasiloka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*ba nama*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Rasiloka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the lees dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lotsa* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaaa*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khwa* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Pikela, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khivula* beer to their *tsezi* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*ba pehela*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mashiji khi le; gi y's shwa ga nama*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10s. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsezi*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *merada* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thabanindi*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ho rula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with baskets of pumpkins, green mealies, roots and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *mashkwena* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads! Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are gathered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and sesamum, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *grabo*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *mahalahar* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old woman who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unmilked feeds in caves. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for medicine. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the things used in impounding cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant colour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangaan-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangaan-Tonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it consumes, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 300 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Mwaldwili (*Ehabergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Mwaldzo-nyulwa (*Trichoderma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Mwalo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *mwalo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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XI. DOMESTIC DUTIES

(a) DISHING UP REQUIRES GREAT SKILL

(b) STRAINING THE PRECIOUS BEER BREW

[facing p. 144]

is very difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things we quite naturally compare, such as objects of craftsmanship, achievements of individuals, or other elements of culture. They do not share our interest in analysing out parts of a culture complex in order to compare them, and they generally regard the complexes—for instance, two different types of dance—as wholes incommensurable with one another. Of course, they do compare things, but as regards economic goods they are chiefly concerned to be favoured equally with others. 'What are you stinting me of?' is a common phrase implying, 'Am I not, equally with others, entitled to share in your generosity?' A child, asking us for sweets, often says, 'Give me *also*', for he is begging for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors, the prayer is quite often phrased in such terms as 'Give us *also*' or 'Let us have health *like others*'. When a son had just been initiated as a doctor, his father prayed simply, 'Let him also be able to heal *nicely*,' and when a son was ill in town, the words, despite the competitiveness of town conditions, were 'We say, let him be "cool", Mother, and in his work let him be like others.' To strive, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with, or greater than that of, others is evidently improper. [81]

Competition is not always eliminated. Doctors are not conceived to be rivals for a limited clientele, but they are said to 'try' one another: cultural definition diverts attention from the objective social situation of a limited number of customers, in which competition is discouraged, to the magical sphere, in which the fantasy of competitive strife is permitted. But the most striking arrangement that limits competition is the socially recognised, albeit not rigidly prescribed, hierarchy which defines men's status according to seniority or rank. 'Robes may be passed on [to strangers], never *royal rank*'; or, again, 'What becomes worn by age is clothes, not noble rank', because a nobleman can never lose caste or position. Younger brothers are taught to defer to their *elder* brothers, and in spite of displacements of district heads, it is hardly conceivable that commoners can oust royal relatives. Where the rivalry is fiercest, as among councillors at the capital, it is part of an institutional conflict and may not be openly displayed.

Dancing and music relieve the monotony of life, there is adventure in illegitimate sex relations and in the outlawed activity of witchcraft, but it is beer which provides the predominant recreation. Both beer and dancing belong to the co-operative, reciprocity pattern, whereas witchcraft is essentially competitive and anti-social. Unlike the Shangana-Tongas, the Lovedu dislike display in dancing, except in the esoteric dancing of initiation and the individualistic dancing of adherents of the alien cult of possession. Dancing, like beer, has other than recreational significance, and it is the manner in which beer has been integrated with diverse aspects of the culture that we may profitably consider. [S35]

Beer is the humanly satisfying element, even the justification of many actions; it is a recognised means of maintaining prestige and hence of achievement; and, as the medium of goodwill exchanges, it also subserves security. No occasion, whether social or ritual or religious or economic, [81] 273

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181 is complete without beer. During some seasons of the year, people are
273 in a perpetual state of exhilaration; some are singing or gossiping near the beer pots; some are expectantly watching their concentrous mature; and the rest are recovering from the last beer drink. Drunkenness is deprecated, but drink induces a state in which behaviour otherwise frowned upon is tolerantly regarded. Beer parties should be 'decorous', for they are occasions when some of the restraints of life may be relaxed and when jealousies and dissensions, normally under control, may rise to the surface. Though ostentation, even self-praise, is allowed in states of exhilaration, beer must be drunk with decorum; it should be lingered over, not bolted in haste.

181 A multitude of values centre round beer. It is a nourishing food, taking
273 the place of meat feasts elsewhere; it is also the food of the gods. Beer is so
574 great an attraction that it would be a lack of balance to keep one's appointments, to attend to other business, or to be worried by the passage of time if a beer party is imminent or in progress. A man's reputation for generosity depends upon his giving a beer party occasionally, although the entertainment is invariably in connexion with some definite purpose, economic, ritual, or religious. Beer is the medium of goodwill exchanges between relatives-in-law and between neighbours; and, as belonging to this context, the tributary beer from the districts to the queen is transformed from a burden to a pleasure. Beer is at the basis of the group of
[571] *eaiejana* (literally, those who eat together), composed largely of kin and neighbours who often co-operate in economic activities; this group cuts across the lines of the district and includes even such alien elements as Shangana-Tonga; and the main obligation of its members is to call fellow members to any beer that is available. Reconciliations are effected by beer, which also 'opens the way for the mother-in-law'. All the essential reciprocities are maintained by beer: a man returns a borrowed article with beer; a family doctor, instead of being paid for his services, expects to be called to the family beer; and in the work party beer removes labour from the category of subservience to that of mutuality. With beer one thanks, but with money one pays.

181 None of the interests that we have considered are intensive, and none of the striving, whether for security, achievement, or recreation, is concentrated. The diverse ideals and achievements that are permitted in social arrangements enrich personality and encourage the qualities of balance and wisdom; and the insistence upon a reciprocity which is not motivated by distrust, conditions mutual helpfulness and suppresses aggressiveness and display. An important clue to Lovedu *Weltanschauung* is their attitude to what may be considered to be ultimate power, the power through which the final goals of life and security can be attained. Such power is sought, not in privations, tortures, visions, and self-oblivion, but in normality, equanimity and maturity; it is derived, not from breaking the ordinary bounds of experience to escape to another world and from transcending the limits of the senses, but from manipulating mundane forces and from identification with nature. The Lovedu do not compel cosmic laws by the power of ecstatic states or trances; they bend these laws to their purposes by supplicating the queen and

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is; and as the result there is a profound distrust which vitiates relations. In the situation of a European-owned mission station, both because of the threat attributed to an iconoclastic creed and of the supposed capitalistic exploitation, the services and sacrifices of a missionary are liable to be rewarded with ingratitude and suspicion. 177

But however favourable the conditions, the difficulties must not be underestimated. It is the sensitive ego that is easily controlled; if a man cannot ordinarily be moved by an appeal to a sense of honour, conscience, or rapidity, moral pressure cannot easily be brought to bear upon him. Not only is the Lovedu ego not vulnerable, but the resort to kindness and the appeal to high motives are liable to be construed as cunning and an attempt to overreach. 'An ingratiating person', such as a European who enters with pleasant words, the Lovedu say, 'lacks not ulterior motive; if he lacks it, he is doomed' (for in any case he will be suspected). No wonder that the European so often believes that firmness and coercion are the only means of controlling the Native.

The different views held by the Lovedu and the European with regard to certainty and precision lead to many conflicts. The lack of Lovedu insistence upon these traits gives an appearance of irresponsibility and disregard of obligations against the background of European society; and the white man readily believes that Natives are innately like children and always need supervision. As employers, masters, and administrators, Europeans have, in the setting of a competitive, calculating society, no alternative but to stress punctuality and precise regulation; but they are wrong in supposing that the essence of every society must be its regulative aspect and that anarchy must follow if irregularities and disregard of rigid procedures are allowed. The meticulous fulfilment of obligations, upon which the Western commercial structure depends, is not necessary in the timeless Lovedu culture, with its reliance upon long-run reciprocities. The Lovedu would easily understand the parable in which the people who worked for an hour in the vineyard in the cool of the evening received as much reward as those who had toiled there all day long in the hot sun, for they have little patience with the dull, mechanical systems that measure merit, work, and time by a highly graduated yardstick. In the hierarchy of Lovedu interests and necessities, time and punctual fulfilment of promises are secondary; but this does not mean that in the setting of the culture people are irresponsible and unreliable. 177 [18]

The beer-drinking of Natives is the bugbear of the European employer; it is a real problem to the farmer. Even in the Reserve its social function is gradually giving way to its pathological one. There are many reasons for the change: the greater abundance of grain, the increasing monotony of life, the sense of frustration, and the recognition in the society that relief and excess may be displayed in states of exhilaration. Farmers legitimately complain of the demoralizing effect of beer. Beer can never be used in its full cultural context on the farms, and its prior claims to time and interest can never be harmonized with the requirements of labour service. The problem thus is raised is apparently insoluble, for total prohibition of beer leads to the surreptitious drinking of injurious, rapidly maturing concoctions, to a sense of grievance on the part 177 273

[77 of the Native, to his increased hostility to greater police activities, [77 to evasions of and disrespect towards the law, and to irritation and loss of time by the farmer in prosecuting offenders. In the contact situation, the food becomes a drug and the vehicle of social intercommunication becomes the means of dimensional escape.

[77 Similarly, it would be possible to show the inevitability of other attitudes of Europeans and Lovedu to one another; but here as elsewhere in this book we must frankly admit that volumes will have to be written before the situation has been fully described. The opinions of the Lovedu held by Europeans are, however, not based upon unrealities. It is true that the Lovedu in the contact situation are liable to be indolent, irresponsible, unreliable, ungrateful, untrustful and irrational. Traders have reason to be exasperated by conduct and by the operation of motives which run counter to all their reasonable expectations. The farmer does not, without reasons which are very real to him, call them 'creatures' or regard them as drunkards who, incapacitated week-end after week-end, justify their existence by work in the intervals between bacchanalian feasts. Those who labour to elevate the 'barbarian', to give him the blessings of a new culture or religion, or to promote his material advancement do in fact find their sacrifices rewarded with ingratitude and advantage taken of their labour of love. These Europeans, as well as the Native, are the victims, sometimes of their personal prejudices, but more often of the whole background of the contact situation. Yet the Lovedu proverb, 'A person is a person; it is a stump that has no ears', encourages the hope that with skilled handling and sympathy the situation may be made to yield to reason.

[77 The anthropologist, who ascribes the practical man's views solely to prejudice and ignorance and, worse still, to inaccurate observation, not only unduly antagonizes those in closest contact with the Native, thus rendering a disservice to better relations and co-operation, but also brings discredit upon his field methods and science and condemns them to ineptitude and distrust. Judgements upon motives and attitudes are always liable to grave error, for valuations are subjective and the personality of the observer is as important as the behaviour he observes: two men, one frustrated and the other successful, may come to very different conclusions, though they observe the same behaviour. We must beware lest practical men, familiar with the Native, ascribe our judgements to our preconceptions, especially to a facile toleration of traits to which not we, the observers from without, but they, the employers and administrators, have themselves to adjust realistically. 'Wisdom', say the Lovedu, 'comes from the scar' [of experience]; and it is the practical man, not the anthropologist, who has suffered the wound. There is great need for co-operation and for resolving differences by open discussion, for, to quote another Lovedu saying, 'Quarrels have no hiding place'—that is to say, if people desire amicably to compose their differences.

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754 i.e., telling the medicine, without any set phraseology, what to do, is important. Day wizards are chiefly men and it is said that, owing to the facility of obtaining bad medicine in towns and from foreign tribes to-day, this type of witchcraft has greatly increased.

In everyday life, however, a person is called a witch, whatever methods he has used, and in an accusation of witchcraft there is never any discussion whether the culprit is a day or night wizard. Moreover, there is in the minds of ordinary people considerable confusion about the type of witchcraft associated with each class, and it is possible to live among Lowveld people a long time without coming upon these distinctions. The night wizard is thus in Evans-Pritchard's terminology the witch, the day wizard the sorcerer; and the great distinction between sorcery and legitimate magic lies not in method but in intention.

• 273 535 SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF BEER AND THE DANCE. It would be a mistake in discussing the main features of Lowveld society to leave out of count the social importance of beer and the use of the dance or *gaka* as a social institution, though neither is confined to these tribes. Beer, apart from its religious value, plays a part in social and economic life. It is continually being carried from one group to another, acting as a bond between people and establishing friendly relations. In the [194] Lowveld, in contrast to the Highveld, it is still of greater importance than money; while people may refuse to attend working parties for money, they will flock to one where beer is served. The *gaka* is a [534] dance in which women do the drumming while men playing reed pipes dance in a circle round the drums. It is, however, much more than a dance. It is an institution for maintaining friendship and reciprocity between groups, a way of showing sympathy on the death of a relative and the means by which subjects approach their chief for rain in time of drought. A *gaka* is often sent by one chief to another in the Northern Transvaal.

5 171 SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN LOBEDU CULTURE AND THAT OF OTHER AREAS. The Lobedu culture complex represents a close blending of two cultures, that of the Lobedu who came south from somewhere in Rhodesia when the empire of Monomotapa was breaking up, bringing

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in the use of motor traffic. Are not people more important than speed? The need for even a chief to respect the wishes of his subjects upon whom he depends for a following is summed up in the saying, *Ushomi gi vathu*, 'chieftainship is people'.

The qualities or virtues that are stressed, then, in the moral code of the Lovedu are moderation and temperance, compromise and agreement, humility, respect for the personality and rights of others. Courage is not rated very high in this non-military society. Perseverance is often enjoined and is especially necessary in the monotonous tasks of hoeing, carrying heavy loads of wood, walking up steep mountain slopes; but it is never carried out with the single-mindedness that a European might expect. Theft is condemned and there are ritual sanctions against it. If the object stolen has been magically treated, for example, a painful sore will develop on the finger which defies treatment until guilt has been confessed and restitution agreed to. 'Don't steal, always beg (*kubela*) for what you want', children are exhorted. But theft is not a problem in this economically undifferentiated society, though nowadays cases of theft, even if extremely rarely, do come before the tribal courts. Drunkenness is bad only if it leads to neglect of duties or fights and quarrels. To be drunk is in itself no disgrace, it is merely pleasant and perhaps exhilarating, not a condition to be ashamed of. Indeed everyone looks forward to the *marula* season when all become slightly intoxicated from the cider made out of the fruits.

Right conduct is relative always to the human situation and morality is oriented not from any absolute standards of honesty or truth but from the social good in each situation. Conduct that promotes smooth relationships, that upholds the social structure, is good; conduct that runs counter to smooth social relationships is bad. Courtesy and the respect due to age or seniority are thus of greater importance than truth. A son-in-law who, tired of always being imposed upon by his wife's father, truthfully signified his unwillingness to help him by providing a goat would be guilty, in view of the special mutualities between families related by marriage, of unpardonable behaviour which might jeopardize his marriage. The correct procedure is to agree to help but to be always 'still looking for it' when approached for the goat. It took us a long time to discover that the right way to deal with incessant begging was not to refuse however politely, but to say 'I have none' or 'It is not mine to give'. The polite lie even if palpable is better calculated to maintain smooth relationships than strict adherence to truth. Truth is not good in itself nor is a lie always evil. Lies are objected to when they are socially inconvenient. Yet not only is it expected that a man will lie to get out of difficulties but there are cases in which lying is prescribed, as when children are told to lie to strangers if asked about village affairs. To keep tribal secrets and the secrets of initiation schools is of far greater importance than to tell the truth.

The social orientation of morality is clear in Lovedu sex morality. Sex is not regarded as a temptation to be resisted by painful efforts of will.

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421 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship
571 and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable
[476] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily
[273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintain-
[177] ing social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes
571 the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new
431 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small
571 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the
602 same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even
421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and
571 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples.
431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went
731 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour
413 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies.
571 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a
[588] *thari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge lada dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga masafi a de a nkhidzla*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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other wives. When the mother's brother's daughter is one of the younger wives in a polygynous household she may be completely overshadowed by the first wife. The eldest son of the first wife occupies a position of importance in the family. He is said to stand in the shoes (literally 'footprints') of his father and after the latter's death has a right to be *suma'd*, i.e., given a portion of any animal killed by any of his brothers long after they have dispersed and live in separate homesteads. There are instances, especially in the case of district heads and where the chief house has no male heir, in which the eldest son of the first wife married tries to usurp the position. But though he may appear for a time to be succeeding as seemed to be the case in more than one instance in the 1930's when first we went into the field, I have not come across any cases in which he has succeeded in the long run.

Each wife has her own fields which it is her duty to cultivate for the needs of her 'house'. On her death her sons have first right to inherit her fields unless their father wants to use them himself or arrange for their cultivation to provide food for the younger children; but they may not be used for the benefit of any other 'house'. A daughter may be given her deceased mother's field to cultivate while she is still in her parental home, but she cannot inherit it. A wife is expected to feed herself, her children, her husband and her mother-in-law from her fields. Each time she cooks she sends food to her husband and to his mother. What is left must be returned to her 'house' unless the husband himself gives it to the herd-boys or other children as a group. In the case of special dishes eaten in-between meals, such as cakes of sesamum or ground peanuts, a little will be sent to each of the other women of the homestead with whom the wife is on good terms. In a large homestead this may be confined to the wives of one man. Beer brought to any one 'house' is usually drunk by all in the village and neighbourhood.

In addition to having her own granaries and cooking utensils every wife has a right to raise livestock. She may keep chickens; she may acquire goats by the exchange of her produce; she may get pigs by feeding other people's pigs in return for a pigling. She may even acquire cattle if she is a doctor. In contrast to the Zulu, where the 'house' like that of the Lobedu is

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group. 621 592 602 571

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*badukulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment. 621 602 431 476 [273] [415] [277] [574]

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CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

As you drive along the winding road on a visit to Mujaji's reserve, you find yourself in a narrow valley between the two ranges of Vulovedu mountains, where flows the Mulodozi River, fed by countless streams from the bush-covered slopes above. It is the month of March. The mealies in the fields, visible on all sides through the bushy vegetation, stand dark green and high, appearing to grow right to the very doorsteps of the villages you pass. At first and to the untrained eye the country seems relatively empty, so well do the dwellings merge into the general view. On looking more closely, however, you see cluster after cluster of conical, thatched roofs peeping out from the bush on the hillsides, some of them perched on ledges like eagles' eyries. For the reserve is in reality very thickly populated. The villages are small, five to fifteen huts being the average size; a few large villages of from forty to eighty huts represent the old order of things, just as those of only two huts do the new. But the Lovedu village was never very large and never could compare, either in size or arrangement, with the great towns of the Tswana and of some Sotho. 361

As you go down a steep dip to cross a stream, a sullen-looking woman balancing a wide-mouthed basket on her head, her legs heavy with leg rings which reach almost up to the knee, suspiciously turns her back on you. She wears a cloth of red salampore behind and before, knotted on the shoulders; while from her neck dangles the ubiquitous snuff box on a necklet of plaited string, black with dirt, but holding three or four treasured heirlooms, large deep-blue or white beads and perhaps some small blue, red, and yellow ones of the kind that were brought from Rhodesia long before the European had come. A little further on you hear a shout, '*Makhuwa, Makhuwa*' (Europeans, Europeans), as a group of herdboys runs towards the road. The younger ones among them, mere toddlers playing outside their village, scurry away crying to their mothers, and scatter the chickens from the ash-heap as they do so. A herdboy, wearing nothing but his loin covering and an old tattered coat which was once his father's, shouts 'More Bass,' European words he has picked up from his elders; but the rest run joyfully after the car, rending the air with their shrieks. 482 301 291 276

The road begins to ascend steeply up the hill to the capital, but here, if you wish to visit headman Raselaka, you must get out and walk. As you go in single file along the narrow footpath, bounded on either side by creeper-covered bush or long grass higher than your shoulders, you become aware of a strong smell somewhat reminiscent of turpentine. In a few moments you discover its cause—the ripening fruits of the 487 137

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for mealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Muvidividi (*Ekebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muvidisa-vyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *muvilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly, 643
ritual suicide is not conceived to have any relation to the welfare of the 762
country. People do not say that the country will suffer if the physical 731
powers of the queen fail. But ritual suicide does elevate the queen to a divinity; only by her act, not because of susceptibility to the weaknesses of man, can she die. Age neither increases nor decreases her powers. She is the 'soil'; her death 'heals' or 'dries up' the soil in the double sense of defiling it (as twins do) and scorching it (as the sun does); and as they phrase it, the 'country dies with its owner'. Consequently, after the queen's death, famines come, cattle and people succumb, and many flee the country. When Mujaji II committed suicide in 1894, there followed the *matshona*, the three years of unprecedented drought and pests, during which, according to contemporary European observers, practically all the cattle and a third of the population died. After the death of Mugɔdɔ, likewise, there was a great famine. The only other famine vividly recorded by tradition was during the reign of a chief who, being a usurper, was unable to make rain. Though the death of a chief presages death of the country, there is no great hurry to appoint a new queen. To the unfolding of a plan that guarantees abundance, immediate needs, even the need for the life-giving rain, must be subordinated.

For an account of succession to the throne we have to rely upon the 643
memories of men who were adults forty-five years ago. The practical 762
and the ideal are confused in their minds. The generalized account we give is thus not specifically related to the death of Mujaji II unless otherwise indicated. Shortly before her death, the queen calls together her great men, sits silently looking at them for a while, and then retires to her hut. She will not see again the young boys who have gone to the *vudiga*. Long before this, Mujaji II and her inner 'council' had named the daughter of Leakhali, who was her 'sister' and great wife, as successor; she had driven both mother and daughter with their brothers from the country, but was secretly receiving and instructing the daughter. None but a small circle of close relatives knew of these arrangements; and a little later she took poison (*khitaba*) [278] in which the fatal ingredients are said to be the brain and spinal cord of the crocodile. There is a rule that the killer of a crocodile is for ever debarred from entering the capital, a prohibition patterned [784] upon the taboos against bringing into a village the wood of trees with which shrines and protective charms (*dithugula*) are made, for these trees 'reveal', and so render useless, what they create. The poison is not conceived to kill instantaneously; the queen dies in the presence of those who know the secrets, but the death is not made public. Those who pass the royal hut still greet her; even cases are still submitted as if for her final decision. Deception of the people is the aim emphasized in descriptions and in phraseology. In the old days many cattle were killed 'to deceive the people', but neither this killing, which provided at least for the funeral feast and the skin for the dead body, nor the other arrangements, had this function only. The spirit of the deceased continues, as it were, to preside over the country and no one could take over the reins 643
of government. 766

The body decomposes, it is ritually rubbed (*hu fɔrɔla*) to remove skin 789

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for a really weak patient. Sprinkling and *hu hata*, combined very often with other treatments, are also used alone. When there is an epidemic of coughing or dysentery, it is said 'a wind has come' and a doctor is called to sprinkle the people to ward it off. *Hu hata*, pressing a counter-irritant to the affected part, is used for toothache, when large pieces of heated bark are held to the cheek; for bruises, which are treated by the application of hot boiled leaves of certain trees; after childbirth, when hot porridge placed in a small flat basket is pressed daily to the stomach to ward off pains, and for many other purposes. But the hot poultice or emollient is not known. 757

Characteristically, the above-mentioned treatments are used both on occasions where they might be of real therapeutic value and for purifications and strengthenings where they could not. The principle of inoculation, which immunizes in diseases such as smallpox, is widely applied to effect cures and to further magical ends with which an empirical relation in our sense is wholly obscure. The relation must be sought, not in the objective link between cause and effect as we see it, but in the Lovedu conceptions of disease, their causes and symptoms, and in the cultural pattern of the methods by which evil may be cast out or symbolically laid upon a scapegoat. This is by no means as foreign to European thought as might at first be supposed, being used to this day among the more backward peasants both in Europe and in South Africa. A cure for headache among the Lovedu is to tie a piece of medicated string or sinew round the head for a day, after which it is cut and allowed to fall with the evil it has absorbed into a hole. To cure gout you scarify the leg to insert medicine, wiping off the blood with the leaves of a growing *mutagola* bush (*Euclea sp.*) to leave the disease on it. The frog is a common scapegoat. We once witnessed how, in the case of pulsating fontanelle of a baby, considered to be a grave danger, some of the medicine inserted into the scarifications, made around the throbbing spot and on other parts of the body, was placed on a green-and-white frog. The frog was stood on the fontanelle, where it puffed itself up by rhythmic inhalations not unlike the beating of the fontanelle and finally, as a scapefrog, to which the evil had been transmitted, it was taken back to the river. One method of curing convulsions is to shave the hair in two 'paths' which cross in the centre of the child's head and to make a bark cockroach, smeared with medicine, run along each path till it drops off. In curing barrenness and in initiation into the cult of possession, a goat, after being made to lie beside the patient or having its nostrils blown into, is killed and used in the treatment. 757 755 [827]

Lovedu medicines appear to us to be a jumble of science and magic. Fully 80 per cent. are of vegetable origin. There is hardly a plant in that rich lowveld vegetation which is not used in the pharmacopoeia of some herbalist or doctor and it is significant that new plants are constantly tried out. The pattern of supposed relations that are believed to exist between symptoms and diseases, of the unscientific analogies which we call sympathetic magic, and the use of roots and barks more frequently than leaves or flowers and fruits, limits the value of this testing out of medicines. Nevertheless, many drugs have effects which either obscure or 278 757 755

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278 cure the symptoms, and whether for that reason and its psychological
757 effect or because of a truly curative value, men have great faith in the
755 medicines. There are undoubtedly ingredients in Lovedu medicines which cannot be empirically related to either symptom or cure, since they operate mainly by a technique of analogies which we relegate to the magical world. Such are animal products like hair, skin, excrement, and ovaries used in a variety of ways—for instance, for barrenness and indigestion; minerals like ironstone used for strengthening babies; and sea or river products, sand and shells, indispensable for keeping witches out of the village. But to Lovedu men and women the use of such ingredients in no way differs from the use of a herb: both are thought to have curative value and for them our distinction between magical and scientific treatments, between cause and effect and false analogy, does not exist. Just as a herb may have properties for curing disease, so, for example, the backbone of a python is effective in curing general debility or backache. The bone is pounded and the powder inoculated into scarifications along the back, by which means the immense power of the python is thus imparted to the patient. But note the sequel. So powerful is this medicine that the patient, when his time has come, will have difficulty in dying. His eyes will remain alive though the body is dead until once more the python powder is applied by being burned under his nose that he may inhale the smoke. This strengthening and the reversal of its influence are like injection and desensitization in our medical practice.

758 When we pursue Lovedu conceptions as regards the nursing and treatment of patients, we have once more to regard them from their
[515 point of view. Cleanliness and hygiene are very remotely related to health.
777] Flies are freely tolerated because it is unlucky to kill them, not because, as is held in some other tribes, abundance of flies means riches in cattle. Invalids are not given a special diet, so that instructions by European doctors that a mother should feed her ailing baby on vitamin-containing foods or fruits are ignored unless medicine is given to be mixed with the food. It is equally fatal to appeal to the curative powers of nature: an invalid will impute unwillingness to help, ignorance or even sinister designs, if you tell him that nature will heal him and give no medicine. It is medicine and medicine alone that is thought to heal. But even medicine is never allowed much time in which to do its curative work. If one drug is not effective within a week it will be changed for another. Often a number of medicines are used at the same time, so that if one is ineffectual the other may heal. In every case we attended we found Native treatment was being given at the same time as, and often to the detriment of, our own. Nor would our protests be of any avail. Even in hospitals there are secret chewings of herbs and surreptitious steamings. Though it is admitted that certain medicines may not 'agree' when used together, use of the wrong medicine is not thought to have any harmful effects. At the most, a medicine merely does not heal; it never definitely harms the patient. Inexactness in the quantity of medicine taken is accompanied by a laxity in the carrying out of doctors' instructions which, though of no consequence where Native medicines are used, may do immense harm if the medicines are European. A careful

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III. ARTS AND CRAFTS

(a) CARVING A PORRIDGE-BOWL

(b) FASHIONING A SKIN SHIRT

[facing p. 32]

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824 protective medicines (*dipiaba*) of the village. The fruits are eaten by herdboys, January to March. The first appearance of its flowers (October) indicates the time when chickens must not be hatched or bought, because of the danger of sand fleas (*madzedze*). There are, incidentally, many other plants which indicate the approach of the seasons or the correct time for certain activities, e.g. when *musoso* (*Terminalia serecea*) blossoms, edible termites get their wings and children go out to catch them.

Muvizi (*Colocasia antiquorum*). Planted at home—in the old days also [262] in river gardens—to provide relish from August to November. The leaves take only a few minutes to cook, compared with an hour or more for many other relishes. The bulb is cooked separately, like sweet potatoes.

Muɔbyani (*Lanna edulis*). A soft wood used for milk pails and bowls. [262] The fruit, which is eaten by children and adults, ripens in November-December. The wood is not suitable for hut rafters, as it is attacked by [283] weevils, but the bark serves as a rough, unworked string for tying together the poles of such structures as pig pens. Water in which the leaves are crushed is used as an eye lotion.

Muvola (*Parinarium curatellifolium*). The fruit, called *grysappel* (grey [262 apple) in Afrikaans, is liked and of very great value in times of starvation. 731] It is said to have saved the people in the years 1894–6, when drought, locusts, and cattle diseases overwhelmed the country. At such times the fruit is prepared, like *morula*, in the form of a cider (*vureba*), which is yellowish and sweet. It also has economic uses.

824 We have in our list over a hundred different kinds of wild edible fruits 262 and berries, many of them, it is true, eaten chiefly by herdboys. But numerous wild fruits are relished by adults, such as wild figs (of which there are seven different kinds), *muukhoma* (*Burchemia discolor*), of which a tasty, if heavy, cake is made, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), *muṭazwa* (*Pouzolzia hypoleuca*), *munnthu* (*Syzygium cordatum*), *mutbe* (*Anona senegalensis*), and many others. The *morula* is, as we have seen, an important national beverage with valuable anti-scorbutic properties. There are also wild bananas (*muɔva*), long ago brought from the north, but now practically eradicated by animals. Not much reliance is placed upon cultivated fruits, but there are oranges, some pawpaws, and mangoes, planted by the early Christians; these have not subsequently been added to to any extent and they are very much neglected.

For relishes, without which porridge cannot be eaten, people rely largely upon nature. Apart from the leaves of pumpkins and beans, which are available from February to June, they use a great variety of wild spinaches, chief among which are blackjack (*Bidens pilosa*), *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*), and *thetbe* (*Amoranthus Thunbergi*). In our list we have forty-five greens or relishes. But not only plants provide relishes. In September and in the winter months, when greens are scarce, *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swaziae*), fatty black male termites, are a great standby. The female of the same species (*dinnṭwa*), which swarm from December to March, the rainy season, are so important in the national diet that they must be ritually 'bitten' (*hu luma*) and sent to the queen from every district. They are roasted, winnowed, and eaten as

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II. A GLIMPSE OF VILLAGE LIFE

(a) COURTYARD SCENE IN MARCH

(b) STAMPING MEALIES

[facing p. 17]

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CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

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(a) CARVING A PORRIDGE-BOWL

(b) FASHIONING A SKIN SHIRT

[facing p. 32]

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IV. CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE

(a) WORK-PARTY DE-COBBING MEALIES

(b) WORK-PARTY CARRYING HOME THE MEALIE CROP

[facing p.33]

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VI. HOUSEWIVES, YOUNG AND OLD

(a) THE WATCHED POT (b) WATER AND VEGETABLES FOR HER HOME

[facing p. 97]

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VII. ADOLESCENCE

(*a*) REALISTIC PLAY-COOKING IN THE MANYWANE

(*b*) A TROUPE OF YOUTHFUL DANCERS

[facing p. 112]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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XI. DOMESTIC DUTIES

(*a*) DISHING UP REQUIRES GREAT SKILL

(*b*) STRAINING THE PRECIOUS BEER BREW

[facing p. 144]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

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XIII. AT THE CAPITAL

(*a*) RE-BUILDING THE COURTYARD OF THE CAPITAL

(*b*) THE COURTYARD (KHORO), WITH A CASE IN PROGRESS

[facing p. 208]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

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XIV. THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

(a) DIAGNOSING THE CAUSE OF ILLNESS

(b) THE KHADI POURS BEER TO APPEASE THE ANCESTORS

[facing p 209]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

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XV. BEER AS A SOCIAL STIMULANT

(*a*) BEER BEING CARRIED TO THE QUEEN

(*b*) A BEER PARTY

[facing p. 288]

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FX14 Lovedu FX14

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VII. ADOLESCENCE

(*a*) REALISTIC PLAY-COOKING IN THE MANDWANE

(*b*) A TROUPE OF YOUTHFUL DANCERS

[facing p. 112]

Z: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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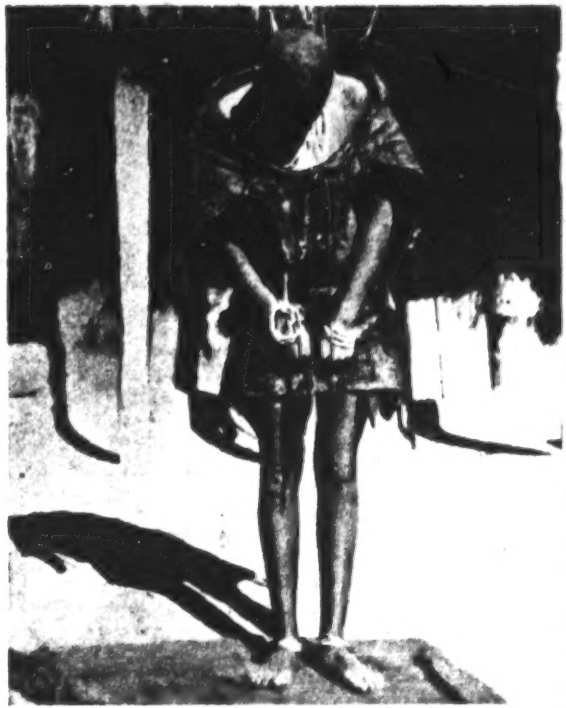

VIII. GIRLS' INITIATION INTO WOMANHOOD

(*a*) COMING FORTH FROM HER PUBERTY SECLUSION (*b*) GIRLS IN THE UYALI

[facing p. 113]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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881 535 male advances can be prevented from becoming dangerous. These are *digɔma*, secret things or mummeries.

The last night of the ceremony is devoted to dancing and the showing of many *digɔma*. It is *khilalawemi*, the night when one sleeps standing—that is, does not sleep at all, though, since people just take a nap any time they feel tired, the name is somewhat exaggerated. All the women of the area who wish to attend gather either in the village, from which men will be debarred, or at a secluded spot somewhere near, bringing with them mealies and nuts to roast and eat while there. There is a great deal of dancing and singing. The greatest *digɔma* are shown at about 3 a.m., after a period of comparative quiet that sets in towards midnight, when most of the people begin to doze around the fires, and these continue until dawn, when disguised figures come dancing in. Each mummery has its own meaning, but this is not clear to the initiate, who does not even see many of them. In the morning, while the girls are at the [302] river, the hut of seclusion is swept and freshly smeared. On her return, after having her head shaved along the sides and back, leaving a circular top, which is a form of hairdress much liked by girls and associated with ritual occasions, the girl is anointed with fat and, except when she is of the royal family, also with ochre. She is given three skins to wear, a [292] frontal covering, a rear covering, and a skin to wear over the shoulders like a cloak. Round her neck is a thick collarette of beads. When dressed, the girl has respectfully to salute the assembled company of women in the courtyard by lying down on one side, palms held together. Now follows a few days during which the novice speaks to no one and walks with bent head, fists clenched and held to the breast. She is taken by the [431] elder girls to greet various relations, who must *nosa* her by means of a small gift before she can rise. A month or more after the ceremony a grand beer-party is given by the girl's parents for the women of the area, [571] who, at a spot near which men are not allowed, have a dance of *digɔma*, specially disguised figures. When the novice has been through the requisite number of ceremonies, she is taken to the queen or the wife of the district head to be beaten with a stick as a sign of her graduation.

881 Boys' initiation (*vudiga*) is much more spectacular than the *khɔba*. Typically it is held by the whole tribe every twelve to fifteen years, but some district heads occasionally do not wait for the authority of the queen. The last *vudiga* upon a national scale was in 1919, but since then there have been local lodges, such as the one held by the district head Maunadala in 1937. The interval of more than twenty years is not considered extraordinary. Sometimes in the past there were delays, especially in the latter half of the reigns of queens, because, so it is said, they wished to postpone their ritual end, which coincided with the fourth initiation after their accession. In 1938–9 the *vyali*, or girls' initiation, was revived after thirty-five years, partly as a preliminary to the next boys' initiation; and if within a year or so there is a *vudiga*, it will be the third of a reign that has already lasted forty-three years. There are other reasons for the present delay. The *vudiga* involves an immense organization, brings all public activities, such as the courts, to a standstill, upsets the economic routine, and concentrates energies upon one supreme

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IX. MASKED DANCERS OF RAUOTHATA

[facing p. 128]

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X. MASQUERADE OF THE UUAHWERA

(*a*) STRUTTING OF THE UUAHWERA DANCE

(*b*) DANCE OF THE DUIKER

[facing p. 129]

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office-bearers of the *vyali*. It is significant that medical treatment is not confined to initiates, but includes, not only the 'owners' or holders of the 'school', but in many instances also all the older men and women present. It is done to make the ceremony a success. After their treatment, the initiates may not wash until about ten days have elapsed, when the 'mother' of the 'school' takes them to the river. From this time the novices, except in the case of pregnant women, are allowed no covering over the shoulder or body. Their loin-coverings should consist of hard, unworked skins, but in the 1939 *vyali*, owing to the difficulty of obtaining skins, European cloth was allowed. 881 [292]

From now the *vyali*, held in the *khɔrɔ* of the district head or chief, will continue for a period of a full year. Except on a few special occasions, however, all the activities are confined to the evenings and early mornings, leaving the initiates free to carry on their ordinary work at home for the greater part of the day. Most of the initiates sleep at home and married women become pregnant and have their babies during the year of their initiation without any inconvenience.

One of the most important activities of the *vyali* is the singing and drumming every morning and evening during the whole period of the initiation. Some of the songs are related to the stage of the initiation, different stages being characterized by different songs: thus after the medical treatment marking the official opening in about September a new song that has not been practised previously is begun, and later, when summer fruits are plentiful, a song is sung in which this abundance is mentioned. There is a cluster of songs associated with bringing the singing to a close each evening, when the *khɔrɔ* has to be closed by the girls, and again in the early morning, when the gate is opened. Most of the songs consist of a simple phrase repeated over and over again, the words of which are meaningless to the singers, and frequently, even where the song is long, only a small portion of it is repeated. There are songs consisting of praises of the queen, well-known district heads, and their areas, and a very important one in praise of the chief girl of the *vyali*. One song sung by the 'shepherds' refers to girls who enter only towards the end of the initiation, pointing out how inferior this is to full initiation, while another exhorts initiates to pinch and otherwise torment such girls. *Muswethɔ* songs, which are accompanied by dancing and begun in about December, are the main feature of the singing after the Bird, the pivot of the ceremony, has arrived (April). They are very similar to *lesugu* songs sung for rain, associated with the *zwiḑajani* spirits, and are believed to be identical in function. There are also *lesugu* songs in the *vyali*, and it is significant that among the Nareni there is each year a woman's counterpart of the *gomana* drumming in which *lesugu* songs are sung. If any initiate is seduced during the period of initiation, special songs of derision are sung in which she and her family are mentioned by name. Where the songs have no dancing accompaniment, they are sung to the clapping of hands until the arrival of the Bird, when two flat pieces of wood are used. 881 533

Initiation is considered to be a time of hardship for those who undergo it. The singing every evening, sometimes as late as eleven o'clock and 881

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881 of feathers to shade the head girl. After much dancing, cloths are tied round the initiates in the manner common to the possessed. This ceremony foreshadows the end of the initiation and indicates to the whole country that it is drawing to a close. The last month is devoted to
881 dancing: every area that is holding a *vyali* sends its initiates to dance
535 before the queen, some coming with *vuhwera*, others without. Last of
778 all come the people of Ravothata with the *magɔgɔbya* and it is their performance that closes the 'school'. The *magɔgɔbya* have more imposing
[292] costumes even than the *vuhwera*, characterized by the stuffed baboon and duiker that surmount them. After a number of important *digɔma* have been shown, there is a grand finale one night (*khilalawemi*), when the Bird hangs its head sideways and says, 'My head aches and I know my end has come.' A *gɔma* of the women, the Butterfly (*khiruruvɛlɛ*), dressed in leaves, comes dancing in at the girls' entrance to tease and chase the Bird. Before sunrise, when the Bird has returned to its hut, some of the initiates (those who have come for a short time only) may be taken to 'touch the Bird', a terrible ordeal. Then next morning they are all taken to the river, where they are shaved and given new clothes to wear. They are now 'things from the rubbish heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), like boys after circumcision: they walk in a bent position, may not speak freely, receive gifts, and at night ask riddles (*dinyɛbo*) specially associated with initiations. The enclosures are burnt. After a final washing in the river the initiates return to ordinary life and activities. A small operation is performed on initiates at the river on the last day. Among some tribes
[304] it consists of defloration, but among the Lovedu it is said to consist of a cut above the clitoris which is so small that it causes no pain or inconvenience.

881 At the time when the initiates make preparations for the arrival
292 of the Bird (February–March), the boys of those areas that have the
535 *vuhwera* as well are taken out into the bush every day to learn how to weave the elaborate costumes associated with this initiation. These are of two types: a light one, said to be for hunting, and a heavy one. Both costumes have skirts of loose-hanging grass, flung out in a circle by the gyrations of the dancer, as well as comely waist, arm, and leg bands and under-skirts of woven grass. The light costume has in addition broad shoulder bands crossing over chest and back and a mask resting upon the shoulders, veiling the face and open at the top. The heavy costume is far more imposing. Besides a woven waistcoat, there is an immense covering for head and shoulders, rising to a crested summit, flanked by what gives the impression of scales arranged in rows or projecting wings, and fronted by a snout like that of a crocodile. The dance reminds one, now of the prancings of a male bird courting its mate, now of a lizard convulsively shaking its whole body as it rests upon a rock. The lizard-bird suggests a weird dragon-like mythical monster, but its appearance belies its functions and qualities, though perhaps not the mystical meaning of the *digɔma* of the 'school'.

[778] The enclosure for *vuhwera* boys is made beside that for the Bird. Here, after having being beaten with medicated sticks, the boys spend their time, except when out hunting or dancing, their food being brought to

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the *vyali* courtyard by their sisters. They are taught a few 'laws' or formulae associated with the *vuhwera*, but their main activities are learning to make the elaborately woven costumes and later to dance in the *vyali* courtyard. Towards the end of the initiation they spend most of their time going about to dance, accepting invitations from other district heads and paying their respects at the royal village. They do beautiful movements to the drumming of their own *vyali* girls. Only two dance at a time and, while they dance, attendants (*medabi*) stand near by supervising. The masked boys may whistle out the tune to which they wish to dance or may beg snuff by means of whistling (for this is their only means of conversation during their initiation). When they dance well, women and girls come to give them gifts of leg- or arm-rings. The *vuhwera* is a kind of finishing school, an initiation into the secret of what the Bird is and how the costumes are made. It is almost as though this is an esoteric art, the preservation of which has become the main function of the *vuhwera*. A person who enters the *vuhwera* enclosure may be required to display his skill at weaving and in 1939 a man who was unable to weave (and thus showed himself to be uninitiated) was heavily fined. The fact that there is no *vuhwera* held at the royal kraal, whose boys used in the old days to go for this initiation to Khaḑa or to the *Tzaneni*, a section of the Khaḑa, suggests that the institution is a more recent adoption than the *vyali*.

It is not easy for a European to appreciate the meaning and value of such institutions as *vyali* and *vuhwera*. Most of their features cannot be explained by the Lovedu themselves. They are the result of a long, historical development which, in the absence of all evidence, may never be unravelled. The *vyali* has many aspects. One of the most important is that of a crossing or initiation similar to circumcision. The initiates are often called *vawedi* (crossers) and initiation may be referred to as 'to cross over' (*hu ʋɛla*). It is conceived as a period of hardship, a crossing for which medical treatment and ancestral blessings are essential. Respect for those older than oneself is emphasized: the initiates must be humble; but older people, especially the old men who remain in the Bird's enclosure, live royally on the beer and delicacies brought daily by initiates. There is emphasis, too, on the importance of the rank of district heads and chief, and the learning of praises of all the areas, followed towards the end of the initiation by inter-district visits, is an important feature.

Intermingled with and overshadowing the *vyali* as an initiation is the *vyali* as a fertility and rain cult, related to the *gomana* drum cult and serving the same purpose. The *vyali* lasts a year, a full agricultural cycle, and some of its stages are associated with the seasons: the typical *vyali* dress of the girls cannot be plaited till the grass has grown long; the Bird arrives only when there is plenty of food. The singing of *vyali* songs is believed to bring rain. Even before the rains of the summer of 1938–9 had fallen, it was said in Ʋulovedu that the year would be one of plenty on account of the *vyali*. These expectations were more than realized, for not only was the summer rainy, but even the winter, which is normally dry, was exceptionally wet. Stress is laid in the *vyali* on grass and vegetation: the girls wear plaited bandoliers of grass which are said by

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XII. THE BRIDE BECOMES A WIFE

(*a*) 'LITTLE BRIDE OF OCHRE, SEEK SHELTER'

(*b*) STILL IN HER FINERY, THE BRIDE BEGINS WORKING

[facing p. 145]

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possessed, they often say they have come to 'play' with the others and 794
they may even cause slight ill-health on this account. Hence quite often 755
when a possessed person does not feel well, he will ask for the drums, 535
saying he must dance. *Lelɔpɔ* dancing consists of fast movements of the foot to the accompaniment of drums or tambourines and rattles. At a seance of *malɔpɔ a zwikwe*, those who speak *Thɔvɔlɔ*, the large hemispherical *gɔma* drum is used in addition to the conical drums. All are, however, beaten with the hands, the elbows being placed on the drumskin in a peculiar manner. *Malɔpɔ*, who speak Sotho or Lovedu, use only the conical drums in the ordinary manner.

If the dance has a great fascination—after a seance one finds even small children practising the steps—the dress worn by the possessed adds to the attraction. Cloths of different colours are worn round the waist [292] and tied at the back; round the legs are usually leggings of the outer shell of the *difuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) fruit filled with pebbles to rattle as one dances; on the head is a cap of fur or brightly coloured wool or a head-gear of black feathers, while very often a spear, battle-axe, or stick is brandished in the hand. These are the *zwifhamo* of the spirit, worn only during possession. The nature of the dress of each possessed person has been indicated by the spirit itself, and people do their best to comply, lest the possessed person dies. Once at a seance the spirit of a woman asked that a beast or, failing that, a goat be 'placed' for him. 'We'll do our best,' the relatives replied, 'but remember we are poor and it is a matter that will take time.' The spirit, angry at this unwillingness, retorted, 'If you don't comply, I'll take away my person [in whom I manifest myself] and go and sleep with her. Tell Makhade (elder brother of the possessed who learnt the profession of doctor from the spirit) I'll take away my profession from him.' 'We'll do our best,' urged the relatives, 'but don't go away in anger.' In spite of this power, possessing spirits have nevertheless to take cognizance of public opinion and the desires of royalty. The spirit of the wife of a royal relative asked for a man's loin-cloth, which women possessed by male spirits occasionally wear, but he refused to allow it on the grounds that for a woman to wear man's attire is unbecoming. An old woman therefore addressed the spirit, saying, 'People here don't like it,' and the spirit was satisfied.

A short description of an institution which contains all the elements 794
of an ordinary seance must suffice to illustrate some of the main features 755
of the cult. When the doctor, called to conduct the initiation, has arrived 535
with his or her attendants, drums are fetched from the district head, and 786
other disciples of the doctor invited to be present. Nothing can, however, be done before the spirit of the doctor descends upon her. To allow this, they retire to a hut and lie down as if to sleep, while an old woman puts down some pinches of snuff on the ground and calls upon the spirits to come. In a few minutes the doctor groans and quivers and the spirit signifies its arrival by a song of greeting. It calls for its *lelɔpɔ* clothes and the doctor is dressed. Soon the spirits of her attendants also arrive and treatment, which consists in making the novitiate dance, is begun.

When Betty was being initiated, we arrived early one Saturday evening, attracted by the noise, to find a picturesque scene. It was winter and

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CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

As you drive along the winding road on a visit to Mujaji's reserve, you find yourself in a narrow valley between the two ranges of Duloedu mountains, where flows the Mulodoni River, fed by countless streams from the bush-covered slopes above. It is the month of March. The mealies in the fields, visible on all sides through the bushy vegetation, stand dark green and high, appearing to grow right to the very doorsteps of the villages you pass. At first and to the untrained eye the country seems relatively empty, so well do the dwellings merge into the general view. On looking more closely, however, you see cluster after cluster of conical, thatched roofs peeping out from the bush on the hillsides, some of them perched on ledges like eagles' eyries. For the reserve is in reality very thickly populated. The villages are small, five to fifteen huts being the average size; a few large villages of from forty to eighty huts represent the old order of things, just as those of only two huts do the new. But the Lovedu village was never very large and never could compare, either in size or arrangement, with the great towns of the Tswana and of some Sotho.

As you go down a steep dip to cross a stream, a sullen-looking woman balancing a wide-mouthed basket on her head, her legs heavy with leg rings which reach almost up to the knee, suspiciously turns her back on you. She wears a cloth of red salampore behind and before, knotted on the shoulders; while from her neck dangles the ubiquitous snuff box on a necklet of plaited string, black with dirt, but holding three or four treasured heirlooms, large deep-blue or white beads and perhaps some small blue, red, and yellow ones of the kind that were brought from Rhodesia long before the European had come. A little further on you hear a shout, '*Makhuma, Makhuma*' (Europeans, Europeans), as a group of herdboys runs towards the road. The younger ones among them, mere toddlers playing outside their village, scurry away crying to their mothers, and scatter the chickens from the ash-heap as they do so. A herdboy, wearing nothing but his loin covering and an old tattered coat which was once his father's, shouts 'More Bass,' European words he has picked up from his elders; but the rest run joyfully after the car, rending the air with their shrieks.

The road begins to ascend steeply up the hill to the capital, but here, if you wish to visit headman Raselaka, you must get out and walk. As you go in single file along the narrow footpath, bounded on either side by creeper-covered bush or long grass higher than your shoulders, you become aware of a strong smell somewhat reminiscent of turpentine. In a few moments you discover its cause—the ripening fruits of the

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occasions of importance. The boys are shown several sacred objects (*digɔma*), each with its own meaning; and the proceedings end with the naming of the lodge and the new regiment that has been created. Next morning the boys remove the clay that 'disguised' them during their seclusion. They are given a loin cloth, which they wear back to front, their hair, except for a circular crown, is shaved and they are smeared with fat (not ochre among the royal Lovedu). They are 'people from the refuse heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), a name they discard only when, a week later, their heads are completely shaved. As they leave, the lodge, with all in it, is burnt down.

The *vudiga* is not at an end yet; it has merely entered a new stage in which the discipline is further relaxed. The novices leave the lodge with double-pointed sticks, covering with their hands the two ends, which are fashioned like the *glans penis*. In that manner they go about whenever they are in public; the action is said to impress upon them the necessity of concealing the object and meaning of circumcision. When they arrive at the village their mothers appear dancing with joy and choose out their sons, not always correctly, because their heads are bent down and their bodies have grown a good deal in the lodge. A goat is killed for them; it is the goat 'of vomiting the rats', for as men they must cast out the things of their childhood. Then for the next week they are in a state of semi-seclusion, but there are still many observances. They appear in public only in the bent, humble attitude, they carry their sticks, and they wear their loin cloths the wrong way round. Nevertheless, the 'gathering up' (*hu aluha*) into the society proceeds apace. They have a special enclosure made for them in the veld, the *khikhudɔ* (hiding place or secluded spot), in which they spend some time of the day. But they are scattered, as each group of villages has its own secluded spot; and their separateness and solidarity is further broken up by sleeping at home and herding for their own people. They do not speak, especially not to women, but at night at home they have contests of riddles (*nyɛbo*) with the old women who come to visit them, exactly as after a marriage ceremony. This stage ends with the 'seizing of the lion' (*hu tswara dau*). One night the shepherds go out with bullroarers, the whirling of which produces the roar of the lion. The boys give chase and he who catches the 'lion' is praised by the old men.

Finally come the last ritual acts. The boys are taken down to the river to lift the 'stomach of the cow', a log tied to a stone in a pool, and then to 'kindle a fire on the river' (done on a log in the water), for a man must be both strong and clever; he must be able even to make fire in the water. After these tests there is the final ordeal at the cave to which the boys are taken one by one, are beaten and given their last admonitions. At the cave the double-pointed stick is discarded, the fat removed from their heads and, if two brothers have attended the same lodge, the elder beats the younger on the way home to remove the presumption of belonging to the same regiment. At home the initiate's mother must *nosa* him by a gift to 'open his mouth', and next day each of the boys, accompanied by a shepherd, goes to visit some relative, who will feast him with meat and beer.

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object. In modern conditions it is not easy to cope with such a situation. On the one hand, many men work in the towns and some boys attend mission schools, and on the other the mobilization of the necessary organization and incentives is difficult in the face of discouragement and opposition. Many people realize that for practical purposes the payment of tax marks the introduction to manhood. The Christian mission cannot countenance interference with its schools. Adjustments are necessary, and in some tribes they are being successfully made; for instance, among the Koni of Maṭala, we saw an experiment whereby the whole *vudiga* was crowded into the month's holiday of the school in June–July, the purpose being to avoid conflicts with the Church and the educational authorities.

We cannot in this brief and generalized account do more than refer cursorily to a few aspects of the institution. It involves circumcision, but has nothing to do with biological puberty. Side by side with toddlers still drinking at their mother's breast, such as Khiebɛ in the 1919 initiation, married men of thirty or forty go to be circumcised. They will all one day belong to the same regiment. Moreover, there used to be an attenuated puberty rite, *hu fura khirugulu* (chewing the herb *khirugulu*), which is also chewed by doctors in order to give them power and insight to interpret the bones. The puberty rite took place after the first nocturnal emission; the boy went down to the river to wash; he was made to dig up a root, chew it and rub it between his legs in order to prevent the danger of *makhuma* (illness associated with crises in life); and he advanced from being a *musinaba* (child) to being a *muṭaṋga* (adolescent or young man).

The *vudiga* is quite different: it is a circumcision rite which invests the adolescent with the beginnings of social adulthood. But the investiture is imperfect, for manhood is not attained at a single bound; one grows into it by imperceptible stages. There is no single criterion of adulthood and the maturity that is required cannot be given merely by a ritual act. For that reason also, the *vudiga* teaches, not any single virtue, but impresses upon the boy all the values of the society and the necessity of a new outlook. From the almost outlaw play-gang, he must be conducted to the fringes of responsible society or be placed in a position from which he can gradually make his way into society. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *vudiga* is designed to cope with the turbulence of youth; for even the circumcised are still wild.

The general pattern of the *vudiga* has often been described and is not difficult to understand. After some preliminary practice of songs, which are the life-blood of the institution, the would-be novices undergo a series of rites culminating in the circumcision at the river and are taken into a lodge hidden somewhere in the bush. This cuts them off completely from the outside world. In their seclusion, emphasized by all manner of taboos and restrictions which mark the difference of their lives from that of ordinary people, they learn strange songs and unintelligible formulae. The spirit of this period is difficult to recapture and the obscure symbolism and secret rites seem unrelated to any cultural realities; yet we must think of them as having their roots deep in the past, while they have become overgrown with the meanings and

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881 purposes of the present culture. Then follows a stage, for about a month, of even stranger events, and it is heralded by a re-orientation of life within the lodge. At their singing performances the novices begin to sit facing the east, not the west, as in the previous three months. This re-orientation gradually affects more and more activities and issues in tentative contacts with the outside world. At last the lodge is burnt down and the initiates go home, where for a further week they remain on the fringes of ordinary life, to be drawn closer and closer by gradual ritual steps into the society and its everyday activities. But if these broad stages are intelligible enough, it is very different when we examine the details. They obviously have an immense background, both in a past that is lost in oblivion and in a present that owes many of its values to that past, but has at the same time added to and modified these values. Fortunately, however, as it is beyond the scope of this book to deal with those details, we may content ourselves with a few general observations.

The first stage among the Lovedu is *hu huwa*, when the heads of districts are told to arrange that the novices be taken into the veld to learn songs. The teaching is quite informal; it is a preparatory class, so that the proceedings in the lodge two weeks later may go with a swing. The teaching is done, not by the real shepherds (*medabi*), but by their juniors, those who were very young in the previous lodge. They were the large-bellied toddlers (*dimbana*, literally 'little stomachs') who ran away from their mothers to enjoy the excitement of the lodge. It could hardly be expected that they would have absorbed much and so they learn now by teaching the novices. At this preliminary and informal training, the boys may attend if they like; there are no taboos and no restrictions; the teachers may not chastise their pupils. There is as yet no seclusion. Nor are the novices given any special work to do for the chief. The fence of the *khɔrɔ* at the capital has to be rebuilt, but the novices do no more than they, as youngsters living at the capital, would do on other occasions when the *khɔrɔ* has to be repaired. When they come home they, as well as other young boys, bring light branches used to fill in the interstices between the poles. From areas beyond the capital it is only the older men who, as is customary whenever the *khɔrɔ* is built, give their assistance. At last the new moon appears, and Copernicus heralds the approach of winter. The shepherds have their hair shaved, district heads come to 'take the firebrand', the symbol that authorizes them to hold the initiation, and the *vudiga* officially opens at the capital. It is a ritual occasion: the older men beat the younger, sometimes black porridge without relish is eaten in the cattle kraal, there is an alarm, and the boys are conducted to the river to be circumcised.

881 For the circumcision the boys go to the valley which is appropriately
● 304 called 'the place where things are forgotten'. They are being separated from ordinary life; they 'get lost'. The '*gɔma* first bites its owners', for in this as in other acts regard is had to certain precedences. It is the hierarchy of rank, as at a formal dinner among us, that is emphasized; but the precedence extends only, so to speak, to the three people sitting at the head table; the others take their place anywhere. As the operator proceeds, the old men chant, 'Sever, sever with the knife, [the foreskins]

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let the fishes take' (*tshikhi-tshikhi ga mufaga, khɔɔɛ jia*). It is the shepherds who are chastised as they drive the novices, called cane-rats (*magwɛlele*) at this stage, to the circumcision; they run the gauntlet through the ranks of singing men. It is enough that the novices should suffer the painful operation. Some bleed profusely, but it is their own fault (so it is thought); the medicine they are given can only alleviate the penalty for pre-circumcision promiscuity. Much else is enacted, but we must pass on to the next stage, the three months of intensive training in the lodge. It is the period, *par excellence*, of seclusion. The novices learn songs and formulae; they make a dancing costume and practise dances; their eating is a hurried ritual, for, as they phrase it, 'We are going to the medicines, the medicines of the veld to which there is no end.' By this they mean they have to go out to hunt, but clearly it is more than hunting that is intended; the outside world is full of wonderful things, shrubs and trees and animals which require their urgent attention; and there is so much to be done and to be learnt, that they should not spend all their time filling their bellies.

If that is the meaning of the ritual at the sacred tables, great *digɔma* which shepherds, polluted by contact with women, approach at the peril of causing the novices to vomit, the ritual of the boys when they sit by the side of the fire 'stabbing the elephant' is inscrutably obscure. In other tribes the fire is undying and is called 'the elephant'. The Lovedu call the fire *khisibe* (meaning 'unknown', but probably from Kharanga *zimbe*, a coal of fire) not *ɖou* (elephant); they do not conceive it to be undying and they know nothing of the conception of 'stabbing the elephant'. Yet some of these conceptions are clearly present in the ritual: the ritual singing is *hu fɛfa ɖou*, merely one of the special phrases of the lodge; the song is *ɖo' vetsi*, an obvious contraction of *ɖou etsela* (elephant lie down); but not even the old men could suggest the derivation of the one from the other; the boys swing their arms in imitation of a stabbing action, but it is not thought of as such and, as they sing, the old men chant, 'Stab the elephant with arrows; next moon we return to those who have stayed at home.' Even this last is interpreted to mean that the boys by their action push on the moon to accelerate their return home. At a later stage, after the 'change', the *ɖo' vetsi* song becomes '*Mamaṭo u ile ɖou sala shagoni*' (mother-of-eyes said, 'elephant remain in the country'—because the boys are going home). We give this brief reconstruction to show how, despite obvious suggestions in this central ritual of the lodge, the Lovedu have reinterpreted the whole situation. This is one of the details to which we have referred, but with which we cannot here deal. The whole *vudiga* ritual is full of them and as often as not the original words of songs or formulae have become distorted out of recognition. Indeed, the diffusion of a culture element is far from being a simple matter.

The three months' seclusion is marked by taboos and restrictions and a régime which, for the Lovedu, is exceptionally strict. But, by comparison with other tribes, the taboos are not stringent and a great deal of latitude is allowed. The large-bellied toddlers are tenderly cared for by the old men. By day they play about in the lodge enclosure and by night

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special permission from the queen on each occasion, and initiates circumcised and uncircumcised alike. 794

Gomana initiation to-day as held by Rasekwalo does not differ from the ceremonial in the queen's own *gomana* of old, though it is regarded as a 'business', a source of revenue to Rasekwalo, without the great power of the old Maulwi ceremony. Madume relates his experiences in 1929. He and about twenty others from the royal village, some of them over forty years of age because there had been no initiation for so long, set out for the scene of the initiation some twelve miles away in the charge of some men (*medabi* or shepherds) who had been through the *gomana* initiation. They walked at a very fast pace, almost running, because they 'were anxious to be initiated'. As members of the royal village, they did not, like the others, pay 5*s*. entrance fee, but on arrival in the evening were offered two huts to sleep in and given a meal. At sunrise next morning, when the *gomana* drums began to sound in the enclosure kept permanently for *gomana* purposes, the initiates gathered in the courtyard to be ceremonially beaten. This beating with sticks that have been medicated is said to *thusa* (help) the neophytes just as the *hu thusa* ceremony of a baby on the day it is first taken out of the hut strengthens it to withstand evil influences of the outside world. This beating is thus conceived to give health to the neophyte. The head of the school (Rasekwalo) himself stood at the gate holding two canes, a bent one in the left hand, a straight one in the right. As each boy passed with bent head and bare back, Rasekwalo, while pretending to beat with the left hand, really beat on the back with his right. The boys then put on the shirts they had had to doff for the beating and were conducted, filled with fearful anticipation, to the lodge by shepherds, who surrounded them and told them to look straight ahead.

On their arrival in the enclosure, they were made to kneel in two rows 794
facing each other with bent heads for the operation. First some one 304
blowing a spirit whistle brushed a handful of *muhulani* grass (*Rhynchelytrum repens*) over their heads, then two operators, one for each row, came with awl and knife. Four semicircular cuts are made on either cheek from mouth to cheekbone, the awl being used for lifting up the flesh. The process is very painful, but no importance is attached to manliness and the drumming and whistling drown all cries. Immediately after the operation, a piece of cloth (of any colour), bought by each boy for 6*d*. at the store, is put over the head, with loose ends hanging over the face and tucked in at the back under the shirt. This cloth must be worn when the initiates walk about, so that the cuts are not seen by the uninitiated, who are told that the boys are bitten by the *goma*. To Madume it came as a great surprise to find that the crying of the spirits was caused by whistles. After the operation the men whistled the song, 'Whoever reveals a *goma* brings about his own death or that of his father or mother', which was interpreted for the benefit of those who found it difficult to follow the whistling. They set out for home again almost immediately after the operation, for the formulae of the *gomana* are taught them at home.

The journey home was slow. The initiates, accompanied by five 794

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881 of feathers to shade the head girl. After much dancing, cloths are tied round the initiates in the manner common to the possessed. This ceremony foreshadows the end of the initiation and indicates to the whole country that it is drawing to a close. The last month is devoted to
881 dancing: every area that is holding a *vyali* sends its initiates to dance
535 before the queen, some coming with *vuhwera*, others without. Last of
778 all come the people of Ravothata with the *magɔgɔbya* and it is their performance that closes the 'school'. The *magɔgɔbya* have more imposing
[292] costumes even than the *vuhwera*, characterized by the stuffed baboon and duiker that surmount them. After a number of important *digɔma* have been shown, there is a grand finale one night (*khilalawemi*), when the Bird hangs its head sideways and says, 'My head aches and I know my end has come.' A *gɔma* of the women, the Butterfly (*khiruruwɛlɛ*), dressed in leaves, comes dancing in at the girls' entrance to tease and chase the Bird. Before sunrise, when the Bird has returned to its hut, some of the initiates (those who have come for a short time only) may be taken to 'touch the Bird', a terrible ordeal. Then next morning they are all taken to the river, where they are shaved and given new clothes to wear. They are now 'things from the rubbish heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), like boys after circumcision: they walk in a bent position, may not speak freely, receive gifts, and at night ask riddles (*dinyɛbo*) specially associated with initiations. The enclosures are burnt. After a final washing in the river the initiates return to ordinary life and activities. A small operation is performed on initiates at the river on the last day. Among some tribes
[304] it consists of defloration, but among the Lovedu it is said to consist of a cut above the clitoris which is so small that it causes no pain or inconvenience.

881 At the time when the initiates make preparations for the arrival
292 of the Bird (February–March), the boys of those areas that have the
535 *vuhwera* as well are taken out into the bush every day to learn how to weave the elaborate costumes associated with this initiation. These are of two types: a light one, said to be for hunting, and a heavy one. Both costumes have skirts of loose-hanging grass, flung out in a circle by the gyrations of the dancer, as well as comely waist, arm, and leg bands and under-skirts of woven grass. The light costume has in addition broad shoulder bands crossing over chest and back and a mask resting upon the shoulders, veiling the face and open at the top. The heavy costume is far more imposing. Besides a woven waistcoat, there is an immense covering for head and shoulders, rising to a crested summit, flanked by what gives the impression of scales arranged in rows or projecting wings, and fronted by a snout like that of a crocodile. The dance reminds one, now of the prancings of a male bird courting its mate, now of a lizard convulsively shaking its whole body as it rests upon a rock. The lizard-bird suggests a weird dragon-like mythical monster, but its appearance belies its functions and qualities, though perhaps not the mystical meaning of the *digɔma* of the 'school'.

[778] The enclosure for *vuhwera* boys is made beside that for the Bird. Here, after having being beaten with medicated sticks, the boys spend their time, except when out hunting or dancing, their food being brought to

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

● 304 Scarification, except in the mutual inoculation and blood mixing of
757 husband and wife prior to their first sexual intercourse after marriage and after the death or miscarriage of a child, is a treatment that is directed less at the evils of blood than towards a strengthening of the body or part of the body by the insertion of medicine. It is used in curing headache, for
[752] sprains and broken limbs, and for all 'strengthenings', such as that prior to taking a child out of the hut for the first time or the 'fixing' of one's body against witches. For general strengthenings, incisions are made on all the joints and on other parts of the body, such as head and neck depression, which are considered important. Scarification is, with the drinking of medicine or eating of powders, quite the most common form of medical treatment; it is used in the home as much as by diviners and forms part of many other treatments, such as the vapour bath. By far the most
751 interesting form of scarification is, however, '*hu thœmela*' (vaccination) against smallpox in which matter from the pustules of affected persons, mixed with other medicines, is inoculated to introduce the disease in a mild form. It is done on the dorsal side of the wrist or on the forehead, a pattern which supports the claim that it was known prior to the advent of the European; moreover, the ingredients of the serum used by Euro-
[171] peans are not known. Possibly the treatment was borrowed from Arabs, who were the first to study smallpox and measles. The old method was
[164] still widely practised in the 1938 smallpox epidemic, for, though it was realized that it 'called' the disease instead of curing it, people noted that, despite European vaccination, there was still much illness.

757 Steaming and the vapour bath also form part of the practical elements in Lovedu medicine. There are various forms of steaming and smoking, all of which go by the same term. To 'loosen' a cough, chips of a certain
[783] root may be placed in a pipe with a live coal and smoked; to purify a person after a death, chips are charred on a potsherd and the smoke
[844] inhaled through a reed; before being taken out of the hut, a new-born child is held naked in the smoke of burning chips or root and bark; boils and other swellings are brought to a head by the application of the steam of boiling roots. To cure fever or general weakness of the body after an illness and for purification of husband and wife after the death of a child the procedure is more complicated. Red-hot stones are put into a large pot of medicated water and when it bubbles and boils the patient, naked except for a cloth passed between the legs, is covered with a blanket and steamed. After much spluttering and shouting, he is taken out, sprinkled or washed down with cold water and then either scarified on the joints or subjected to *hu hata*—that is, a river stone is pressed on the joints and is later taken back to the river. This treatment is considered too drastic

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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *gɔma*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794

With the *vyali-vuhwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*vyali*) and for boys (*vuhwera*), are associated many *digɔma*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khiudogane*, Bird of Muhale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *vyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *gɔma* and a symbol of the royal ancestors. 881

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *vyali-vuhwera* with its great *digɔma* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digɔma*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalavorwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir sits on the smallest drum while being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vadimo* (gods) as well as *digɔma*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gɔmana* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [794 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digɔma* are the *zwidajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thugula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gɔmana*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *lesugu* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife. 783 753

Makhuma (from *hu khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figchela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*hu thuswa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold. 751 783 [304 846] [768]

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'. 783 787 789

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on 783

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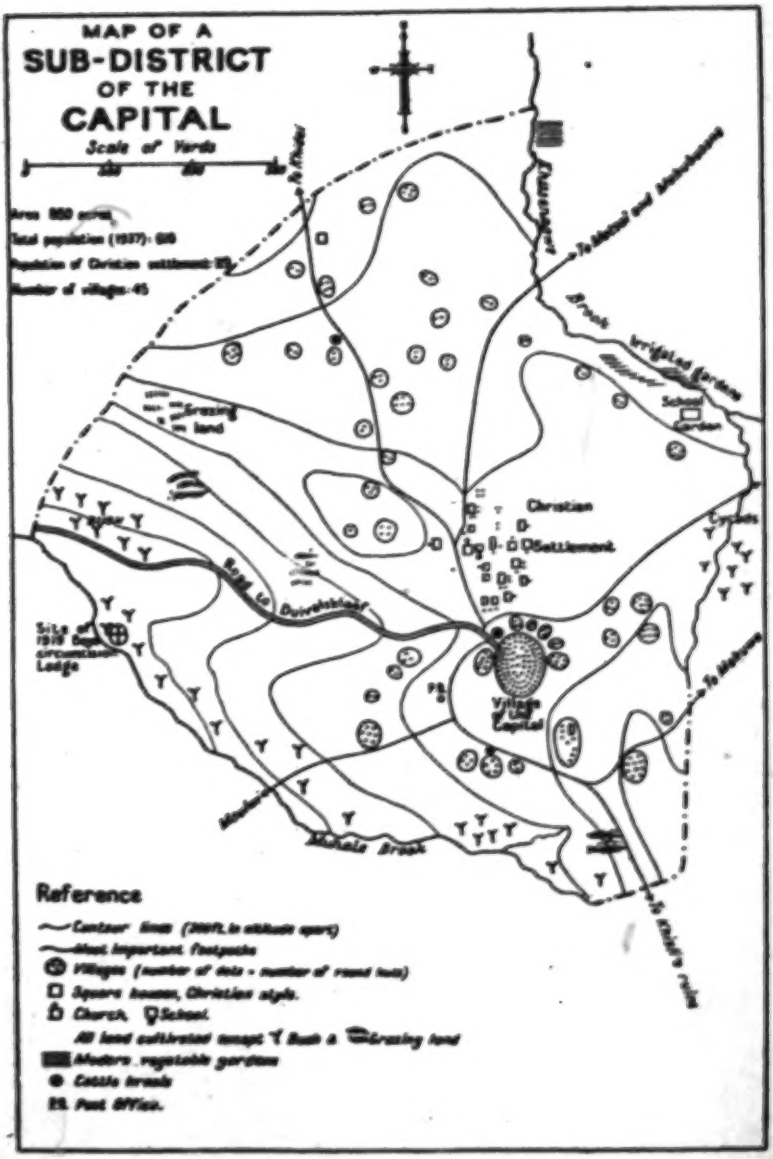

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More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do. 241 462

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new alinements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions: it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet. 241 134 178 [476]

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is 241 311 [16]

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annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such expedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *munyscalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 296.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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824 called the small hemp, *khibajabajani*. The large pods of *legamani*, a
192 peanut of the *masaimtiha* variety, are likened to leggings, for which they use a corruption of the Afrikaans word *hamasters*. *Khithava-misisi* in scientific nomenclature is *Amaranthus spinous* but, for all that, it pricks the 'missus' (*hu thava misisi*). We link the sunflower with the sun, but they call it *munɔntshakhuhu*, fattener of the fowls, because the unaccountable European, instead of leaving fowls to their own devices, fattens them (*hu nɔntsha*) with its seeds. It would be tedious to give more of these interesting names. Suffice it to say that, upon whatever principle they are given, they furnish examples of close observation, of humour and poetry, and of practical sense.

824 In the command that the Lovedu have over the material supplied by
461 vegetation, knowledge of the suitability of the plant to be used is by far the most impressive aspect. By contrast, preparation of the material, by seasoning or otherwise, and skilful or artistic manipulation to produce the required result lag far behind. Utility rather than artistic beauty is the main consideration; a carelessly made article, generally speaking, serves its purpose as well as one well executed. There is not much specialization and a high standard of workmanship is not aimed at; most men know what wood to select and how to make a great variety of ordinary household articles. Special skill is needed for making wooden dishes, drums, and milk pails. The most skilled work is perhaps the making of baskets (*zwiruduana*), which is done by men. This is not the place to describe the technique of the arts and crafts; all we need insist upon is the widespread knowledge of the virtues and defects of the plants that can be used.

824 Modern conditions have brought about a serious decline in craftsman-
178 ship and in familiarity with the vegetation. Schoolboys no longer have the extensive opportunities of learning veld-lore which herding provided. Herding is to them hardly an institutionalized induction into nature study; instead of being a part of life itself, it assumes the aspect of distasteful labour. The introduction of European articles also lessens the interest in the qualities of the vegetation. Yet these influences are in their infancy. They have made some impression upon the material elements of the culture, but they have tended to impoverish rather than to replace the old. You see petrol tins side by side with water pots, ugly sacks ousting the picturesque granaries, patched pieces of boxwood replacing reed doors, cast-off European clothes instead of graceful coverings of skin, machine-made blankets beside hand-woven grass mats, and axes and knives, no longer from the smithy, but only from the stores.

178 More serious is the threat to the traditional outlook. Christianity
●313 stresses the virtue of being different from the pagan, but the status of Europeanized Natives is precarious both in and outside the tribe, and there is no co-ordinated view of life that can successfully combat the subtle economic onslaught of European culture. And, since 1938, the legislative prohibition of cutting down trees, except after permission having been obtained and a fee paid, threatens a change of which the results cannot be foreseen. Many trees, and among them some essential for the crafts, may not be cut down at all. The inconvenience of walking

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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twenty miles or more, quite apart from the fee, when wood is required for so small an article as a hoe handle, a spoon or a basket, encourages general evasion of the law. Destruction of forests is never wanton; it was necessary to relieve the pressure on the land, and to supply the needs of shelter and warmth. The arts and crafts did not lead to any significant encroachment. Blue-gum plantations can meet some needs, but not any of the specialized needs, and sun-dried bricks, already much in evidence, can extensively replace poles in building. But if we are anxious to lessen the sense of frustration, which the clash of Western culture makes inevitable, we should encourage, not destroy, the arts and crafts. Reclamation of the reserves is essential, both in our interests and in order to implement a policy of segregation, but if it is at the price of those things that give meaning to life, it might well ruin the spiritual foundation of the segregational structure.

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III. ARTS AND CRAFTS

(a) CARVING A PORRIDGE-BOWL

(b) FASHIONING A SKIN SHIRT

[facing p. 32]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for mealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Muvidividi (*Ehebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muvidisa-vyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *muvilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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relish, the winnowing being mixed with salt and pressed into a cake used as spinach or eaten alone. Children eat *dinnṭwa makhura* (flying ants) and grasshoppers; *maida*, a large red grasshopper and a few other kinds of grasshoppers, as well as swarming locusts, form part of the diet of adults. Indeed, during a famine in the 1850's, Mujaji, it is said, sent locusts, not to plague, but to succour her subjects, the Shangana-Ṭonga. Honey—not only of the honey bee but also of other insects, such as the *maga*—adds, though only occasionally, to the variety of the foods directly supplied by nature. 824 262

For nutritional purposes, a considerable body of knowledge of the vegetation is necessary. This body of knowledge expands to a veritable science when we consider its application to the arts and crafts. It is used continuously in all daily activities, such as building, fencing, renewing hoe handles, yokes, and storehouses, extracting oil or fat, and so on. In the old days it was not merely woodwork that was important; iron-making was one of the great industries. To-day, though many implements of Native ironwork are still to be found, the industry has disappeared, partly because the sources of the ore have been appropriated by Europeans and partly because of the cheapness of European-made iron objects. The smith was a specialist, but also an agriculturist and a student of the vegetation. In his industry he used, not only special ores, but also special woods. Similarly, for each of the crafts—hut-building, fencing, making stamping blocks, sledges, hoe handles, milk pails, spoons, platters, winnowing baskets, drums, and many others—different qualities in the wood are regarded as important. There are half a dozen different kinds of plants that yield fibre from which string can be made, each involving a somewhat different process. The value of certain grasses for thatching and making mats, baskets, and beer-sieves is ritualized in the taboo on cutting grass before the queen eats the first fruits; i.e. thatching grass must be left untouched until it is quite ripe in May and June. The elaborate working up of skin, though now restricted to the purpose of making skin cradles and a few women's skirts, involves considerable skill as well as knowledge of the value of oils and repellents to drive off destructive insects and even dogs. Pottery is still a live industry involving a knowledge of the qualities of clays, and what we call 'herbalism', the use of the medicinal qualities of plants, is not confined to doctors, but is to a large extent common knowledge. 824 [326] [784] [323]

A whole volume could be written on the interest of the average man or woman in the flora alone. He knows a great deal about almost every plant. Even a herdboy, as we found in discussing our list of names of plants, could mention one or two practical uses of more than half of them. Young men could add several medical or magical uses, while old men could bring the names into relation with a bewildering number of ritual, religious, and other occasions, and many had specialized knowledge, according to the nature of their occupations or interests. Speaking generally, and in terms of what is commonly known, we find that of the 500 plants we have listed, 200 have mainly economic uses. They are daily applied to such activities as building huts, thatching, making spoons. Some 20 are specially useful for making string; another 20 for

1:Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɗaža." He ruled the country, he made the rain fall like his father.. The people loved him much on account of the rain. 173

24. Towards the end of his rule he had a son. This son—he made him live just as an orphan, he hated him and treated him as a thief. He did so especially for the reason that the people should not perceive that the chief wanted to give him his chieftainship. That child had a house erected far from the village, he dwelt there. When he wanted to go home, he did not enter by the main-entrance. His father had made a small path for him unknown to every body; furthermore when the child happened to come amidst other people on that road, the chief prevented him from entering. The name of that child was "Mogôdô, the cast-out, Mogôdô the neck with fat-wrinkles, or the resting-place for property and men,[26] or Mogôdô-Mme-a Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɗaža."

25. These praises were widely spread during his chieftainship. He was a powerful chief of severe government, for he used to kill people. He killed sorcerers and adulterers and people who were found telling lies, When judging he liked to pass sentences of death. Some were strangled. others were ordered to be burdened with stones and drowned in a deep place in the river.

26. Furthermore Mogôdô was a clever man in his undertakings. That what still to-day is to be seen of his clever undertakings is the stone-work which he erected with great skill. In the country there are no buildings which are similar to his. Among these buildings there is to be found a stone-seat which is beautifully carved. It was the seat of chief Mogôdô, when he was basking in the sun. It surprises really, it was hewn out with great skill. On that place there was the chief-kraal, its name is Levyeni.[27] (Others say that those buildings have been erected by Kheale, the ancestor of Mogôdô). 173 643 324

27. In the days of chief Mogôdô two of his head-men quarrelled about their territories. Therefore the chief sent his young men to stop the quarrel; they however found that war had broken out. So they returned home to inform the chief. Now the chief set out himself. When he arrived at the mountain of Mmanopi[28] he divided his army into two divisions to surround the villages of those head-men. When they saw that the chief had come to fight with them they were afraid that they would be killed. So they submitted to their lord. They offered two 173 643

[26] Property and men have space in the wrinkles of his neck.

[27] "At the rock."

[28] In the East.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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relish, the winnowing being mixed with salt and pressed into a cake used as spinach or eaten alone. Children eat *dinnṭwa makhura* (flying ants) and grasshoppers; *maida*, a large red grasshopper and a few other kinds of grasshoppers, as well as swarming locusts, form part of the diet of adults. Indeed, during a famine in the 1850's, Mujaji, it is said, sent locusts, not to plague, but to succour her subjects, the Shangana-Ṭonga. Honey—not only of the honey bee but also of other insects, such as the *mugo*—adds, though only occasionally, to the variety of the foods directly supplied by nature.

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2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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II. A GLIMPSE OF VILLAGE LIFE

(*a*) COURTYARD SCENE IN MARCH

(*b*) STAMPING MEALIES

[facing p. 17]

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the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapidated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 825
It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to 515
urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance; on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives; further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut. To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Leṭavula, with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart [595]
from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342 ●
and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khɔrɔ* and have a wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round. The former have their backs to the *khɔrɔ*, a framework of reeds as a door, and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleeping hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised [352]
platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [353]
mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg. The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted basket (*khirudwana*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart [373]
suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth, plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals, between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Leṭavula, newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too cold in winter.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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cold in winter. The veranda of the sleeping hut is used for storage. Here are pots of all sizes, many with lids glued down with dung, calabashes, sacks of corn on stands, medicinal roots, perhaps an old plough, a small grain basket on an inverted tripod of sticks, and a bag of reed pipes for dancing.

The contrast between sleeping and cooking huts is marked: whereas the former is relatively empty, cool and clean, the kitchen hut is generally rather untidy and, when a fire is burning, full of smoke. This is the domain of the housewife. Here are her cooking utensils—pots, baskets, wooden dishes, dishes of white enamel. At first the smoke deters you from entering, but the woman and her children sitting there appear to be quite at ease, so you summon up courage and go in. You splutter at first and your eyes water, but soon you grow accustomed to the atmosphere. You glance up at the unplastered roof and find it black from the smoke of many years. It is the home of countless cockroaches. Stuck in it are ears of corn and mealie cobs kept for seed, and many other articles, such as a cupping horn, some medicinal roots, some old arrows, and axe and spear of Sotho-worked iron kept as religious objects. On a platform of wood, out of the reach of white termites, are several bags of nuts and mealies, while a handbroom of asparagus fern lying near the hearth in the centre comes in useful from time to time for sweeping all the dirt into the fireplace. In this hut women sit at night; grandmothers sleep here with the children; here children are born and here they are often fed; here people lie when ill and here too they die.

A chair, native-made but after the European fashion, with seat of strips of thong, has been placed for you in a shady spot in the chief wife's courtyard. To be perched so high above ground when every one else sits on the floor is distinctly uncomfortable and out of place, but, in deference to the hospitality of your host in according you the honour of a chair, you feel you must occupy it. Four or five small, pot-bellied urchins with dirty noses range themselves near you to watch more closely the features and clothes of the European. One softly points out your peculiar nose to a companion, another comments on your shoes; altogether they find you and your ways absorbing. One small child holds aloof, screaming with fear when the rest try to force him to come near. With her back to the sun, a woman kneels beside a large pot of boiling water, deftly twirling a wooden twirler between her palms. Every now and then she stops to add a little of the fine white mealie meal beside her by means of a ladle of calabash, for this is the first stage in the making of *vuswa*, cakes of thick meal, their staple food. The twirling prevents the formation of lumps. When the mixture becomes too thick for the twirler, a large, flat, wooden spoon is used with both hands. An aged and wrinkled old woman, mother-in-law of the one who is cooking, arrives from her garden with a basket on her head filled with the young leaves and male flowers of the pumpkin and three or four fresh cobs of mealies. The leaves and flowers are for relish for the meal; the cobs of maize she roasts in the fire for her grandchildren. She sits down, feet straight before her, and begins slowly to pull off the rough outer covering from the stalk of each leaf; it is then broken into two or three pieces and placed in a small, wide-mouthed pot.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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643 578 After the fire rite there follows the rite of opening the door, which will determine the identity of the heir. No one knows for certain who will succeed. Some nobles, availing themselves of the interregnum, mobilize their supporters, and all come fully armed, for there is sure to be some display of hostility. Even in 1896, at the accession of Mujaji III, a son of a wife of Mujaji II and great councillor marched upon the capital supported by the Mahasha, but there was no strife, as Mujaji III's followers were prepared. The rival claimants, in the presence of the [342] assembled people, go one by one to the hut in which the queen died and which (like one of the queen's huts even to-day) has two doors. They approach the door one by one, address the spirit of the deceased, saying who they are, and lightly touch the door. It is arranged that the most ambitious claimants go first, and those who are indifferent as regards their prospects last, the true heir to whom the door will open taking his place between them.

The spirit of the deceased, by opening the door, chooses the successor. The new queen, taking the axe, spear, and shield of her royal predecessors, escapes by the other door. She may have to flee, if the party of a rival is too strong, but in time she will be formally presented by a great councillor to the people. There is doubt as to the fate of the person who held the door from within: some say he must die, others that he is given a wife and sent out of the country. There is much uncertainty and secrecy about what happened in 1896; it is even doubted whether the door was opened. The reason lay in the fear of European intervention, for just previously the Boer General had been deceived and the lowveld tribes conquered, as described in Chapter I. Cowed by disaster, the Lovedu wisely decided to emphasize, not their own ritual, but the formal confirmation of the accession by the European.

643 578 173 The opening of the door, as known among neighbouring tribes, serves chiefly to resolve conflicts between rivals to the throne. It sometimes co-exists with institutional predetermination of the heir—for instance, where he must be the chief son of a wife married with special ceremonies and with cattle contributed by the whole tribe, the issue of a house in which the tribesmen all have a stake. In such circumstances conflicts arise, and European authority throws its weight on the side of 'constitutional arrangements' rather than 'coincidence'. In some tribes the opening of the door serves to strengthen the claim of the institutional heir; that is the case where there is no great massing of institutions behind the chief heir and conflicts are liable to break out if there are several claimants of standing. Among the Lovedu, succession was quite uncertain, the personal choice of the chief, not primogeniture, being stressed. The great son seldom succeeded, it is said, because the second child was favoured; and that is one explanation of the origin of the Mamaila, Sekhopo, and Rakhwadu tribes, for the great son was driven out of the country. In traditional history the 'Filler of the Rivers', who was chief son and seized the throne, had to make way for the 'Drainer of the Rivers', who proved to be the choice of his father and to whom the rain secrets had been imparted. Khashani, the great son, was expelled by Mugodo, his younger brother (we do not know whether he was the second son), of whom it is

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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XVI. RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

(a) AT THE LILY SHRINE

(b) A TYPICAL LOVEDU SHRINE

[facing p. 289]

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417 fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Raselaka complains that
231 herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11
[512] o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday, especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle in Raselaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Lovedulandê give hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent. of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but
[262] also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

361 You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khrrr* to the huts, you hear Raselaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the royal kraal, they would surround the *khrrr*, but here there are too few for that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden,
251 while at the back is the *marala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies are stored after reaping, till dry enough for decobbing. But they are empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly
[273] made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins,
[262] the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-pots, while a heap of goldên, plumlike *movala* fruits with a cloud of midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

252 As you look along the space between the two rows of huts, a pleasant and busy scene meets the eyes. It is ten o'clock and cooking operations are at their height. Some are cooking outside in the courtyard; others prefer to cook in the kitchen hut. An old woman is spreading out her newly lifted monkey nuts, together with a few cobs of mealies which had fallen to the ground, to be sun-dried in her courtyard. Some freshly stamped mealie meal on mats and in baskets is also set out in the sun.
251 On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance. This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and preserved for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other purposes; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

351 Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

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the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapidated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 325
It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to 515
urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance; on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives; further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut. To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Letsoula, with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart [345]
from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342
and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khraal* and have a wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round. The former have their backs to the *khraal*, a framework of reeds as a door, and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleeping hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised [352]
platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [353]
mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg. The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted basket (*khirudzuma*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart [373]
suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth, plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals, between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Letsoula, newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too cold in winter.

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XIII. AT THE CAPITAL

(a) RE-BUILDING THE COURTYARD OF THE CAPITAL

(b) THE COURTYARD (EKOMO), WITH A CASE IN PROGRESS

[facing p. 208]

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platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [353]
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suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth, plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals, between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Leṭavula, newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too cold in winter.

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cold in winter. The veranda of the sleeping hut is used for storage. Here are pots of all sizes, many with lids glued down with dung, calabashes, sacks of corn on stands, medicinal roots, perhaps an old plough, a small grain basket on an inverted tripod of sticks, and a bag of reed pipes for dancing.

The contrast between sleeping and cooking huts is marked: whereas the former is relatively empty, cool and clean, the kitchen hut is generally rather untidy and, when a fire is burning, full of smoke. This is the domain of the housewife. Here are her cooking utensils—pots, baskets, wooden dishes, dishes of white enamel. At first the smoke deters you from entering, but the woman and her children sitting there appear to be quite at ease, so you summon up courage and go in. You splutter at first and your eyes water, but soon you grow accustomed to the atmosphere. You glance up at the unplastered roof and find it black from the smoke of many years. It is the home of countless cockroaches. Stuck in it are ears of corn and mealie cobs kept for seed, and many other articles, such as a cupping horn, some medicinal roots, some old arrows, and axe and spear of Sotho-worked iron kept as religious objects. On a platform of wood, out of the reach of white termites, are several bags of nuts and mealies, while a handbroom of asparagus fern lying near the hearth in the centre comes in useful from time to time for sweeping all the dirt into the fireplace. In this hut women sit at night; grandmothers sleep here with the children; here children are born and here they are often fed; here people lie when ill and here too they die.

A chair, native-made but after the European fashion, with seat of strips of thong, has been placed for you in a shady spot in the chief wife's courtyard. To be perched so high above ground when every one else sits on the floor is distinctly uncomfortable and out of place, but, in deference to the hospitality of your host in according you the honour of a chair, you feel you must occupy it. Four or five small, pot-bellied urchins with dirty noses range themselves near you to watch more closely the features and clothes of the European. One softly points out your peculiar nose to a companion, another comments on your shoes; altogether they find you and your ways absorbing. One small child holds aloof, screaming with fear when the rest try to force him to come near. With her back to the sun, a woman kneels beside a large pot of boiling water, deftly twirling a wooden twirler between her palms. Every now and then she stops to add a little of the fine. white mealie meal beside her by means of a ladle of calabash, for this is the first stage in the making of *pusu*, cakes of thick meal, their staple food. The twirling prevents the formation of lumps. When the mixture becomes too thick for the twirler, a large, flat, wooden spoon is used with both hands. An aged and wrinkled old woman, mother-in-law of the one who is cooking, arrives from her garden with a basket on her head filled with the young leaves and male flowers of the pumpkin and three or four fresh cobs of mealies. The leaves and flowers are for relish for the meal; the cobs of maize she roasts in the fire for her grandchildren. She sits down, feet straight before her, and begins slowly to pull off the rough outer covering from the stalk of each leaf; it is then broken into two or three pieces and placed in a small, wide-mouthed pot.

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476 is upon the sharing of tools rather than upon that sharing of services
571 which characterized the old *khilcbc*. But in the old institution hoes were
241 borrowed from one another and the differentiation of to-day was not unknown, though it took a different form. The organization implies a person-to-person adjustment rather than institutionalized leadership, except that he who provides the animals sometimes tends to dictate whose lands have first to be ploughed. No payment passes, however unequal the contributions or needs of the partners, and sometimes an old widow is a partner who can contribute nothing at all. The essence of the whole institution is a complete disregard of the exact equivalences of the contributions or of the services.

476 This form of co-operation, in which mutual helpfulness and reciprocity
571 and not economic advantage are stressed, finds expression in many activities. Among Christians there are potters who club together; usually they are kin who live in the same settlement. The only work they share is the excavation of the clay; each works quite independently of the other, though advice is exchanged. Men often build *ga khilcbc* instead of *ga lejema*, but in this case the association is a very loose one, consisting merely of the available friends or relatives in or near the village; and though some small gift is given by the owner of the hut built, the main feature of the co-operation is a sense of mutuality and reciprocity. The conception of mutual helpfulness recedes before that of profit when, as is becoming more common, the person for whom the work is done pays a reward in money. Curious anomalies occur, because sometimes less, sometimes more, consideration is given to the exact money equivalence of the services rendered. Where a man considers that he is paying wages for services, he usually models his behaviour upon his conception of the European employer and the whole pattern of reciprocity falls to the ground. But this model is very unpopular, though for the employer it has distinct advantages; as he contracts for the labour, he can requisition it when he wants it and can control its execution. He is no longer an equal partner, but a foreman.

One development of the *khilcbc* which is seen in townships is the 'stock fair'. It is practicable only where each of the partners periodically receives cash wages. Every month one of the partners, taken in rotation, is entitled to a fixed amount from each of the others, the purpose being to make available to every one in turn a fairly large sum of money. Though the partners wear some distinctive dress, the association is very unstable and many as a result suffer loss. The 'stock fair', far though it be removed from the *khilcbc*, is thus based on a generalization from past experience in which social ends are attained by the application of rule-of-thumb principles, with little resort to trial and error and little dependence on organizing ability or on individual leadership.

357 With the various forms of co-operation, we may briefly contrast solitary occupations and services. It is somewhat unusual for any one alone to undertake a large task, and among heathens it is rarer still for an
357 individual to hire out his services. There is no real domestic service;
736 even in the royal household, *vulada* is very different from service in our sense of the term. The *mulada*, usually an orphan, is the ward of his

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munywalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

Rather like the *mulada* was the *murnaiwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ṭuḍa* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'.

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilebe* arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or cattle of others. The standard payment is 10*s*. per acre ploughed. The advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the mother's brother, cares for (*hu lela*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maledi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufiswa*, uses the cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

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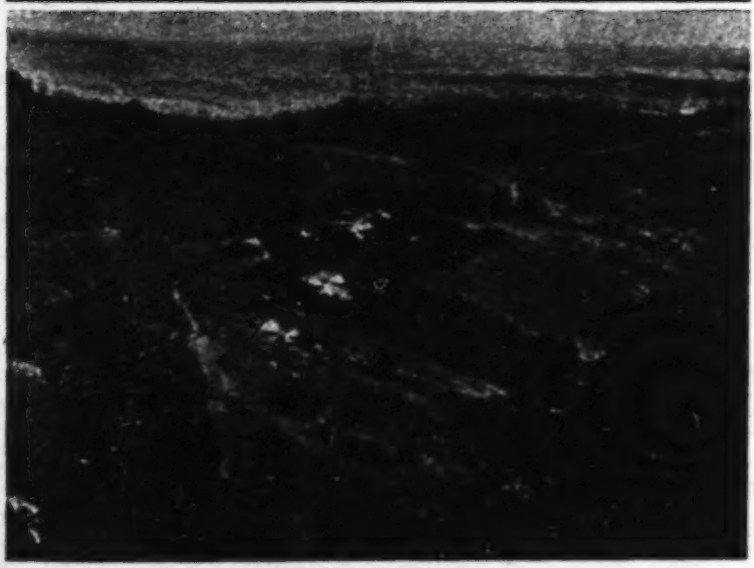

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I. THE LOVEDU LANDSCAPE

(a) THE HILL OF CYCADS

(b) FIELDS AND VILLAGES ON THE FOOTHILLS

[facing p. 16]

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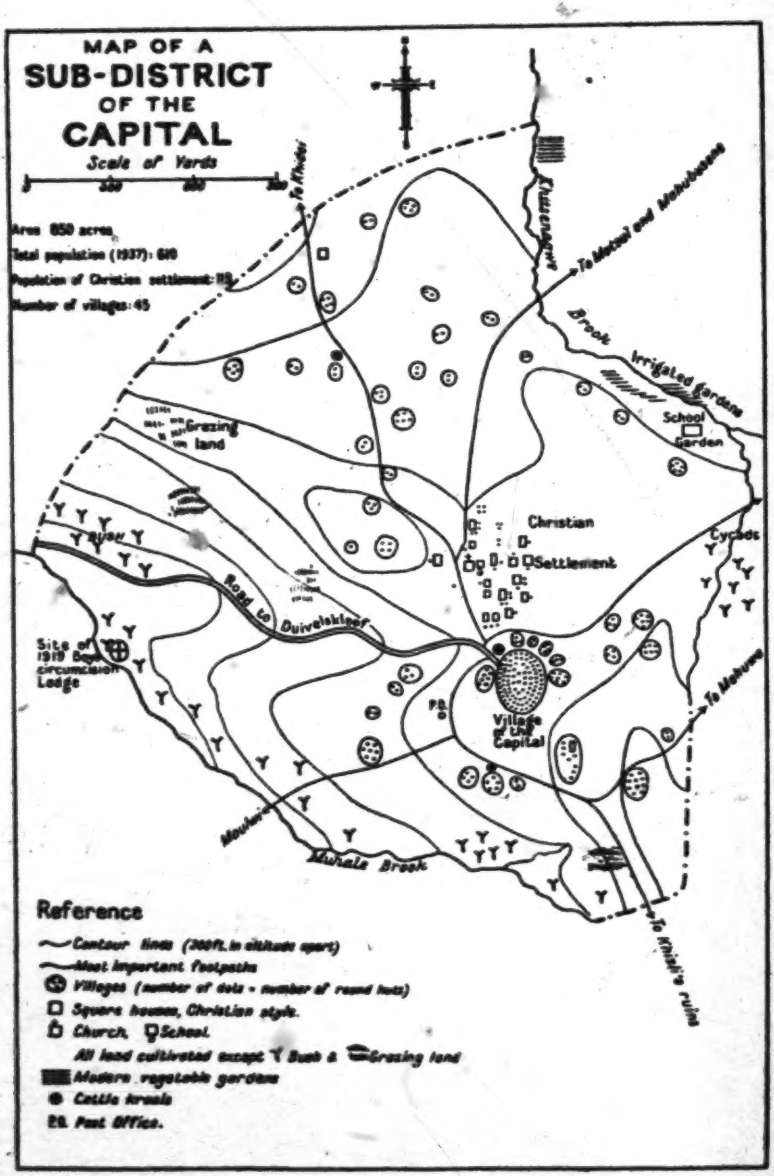

[p.16]

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CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

As you drive along the winding road on a visit to Mujaji's reserve, you find yourself in a narrow valley between the two ranges of Vulovedu mountains, where flows the Mulodozi River, fed by countless streams from the bush-covered slopes above. It is the month of March. The mealies in the fields, visible on all sides through the bushy vegetation, stand dark green and high, appearing to grow right to the very doorsteps of the villages you pass. At first and to the untrained eye the country seems relatively empty, so well do the dwellings merge into the general view. On looking more closely, however, you see cluster after cluster of conical, thatched roofs peeping out from the bush on the hillsides, some of them perched on ledges like eagles' eyries. For the reserve is in reality very thickly populated. The villages are small, five to fifteen huts being the average size; a few large villages of from forty to eighty huts represent the old order of things, just as those of only two huts do the new. But the Lovedu village was never very large and never could compare, either in size or arrangement, with the great towns of the Tswana and of some Sotho. 361

As you go down a steep dip to cross a stream, a sullen-looking woman balancing a wide-mouthed basket on her head, her legs heavy with leg rings which reach almost up to the knee, suspiciously turns her back on you. She wears a cloth of red salampore behind and before, knotted on the shoulders; while from her neck dangles the ubiquitous snuff box on a necklet of plaited string, black with dirt, but holding three or four treasured heirlooms, large deep-blue or white beads and perhaps some small blue, red, and yellow ones of the kind that were brought from Rhodesia long before the European had come. A little further on you hear a shout, '*Makhuwa, Makhuwa*' (Europeans, Europeans), as a group of herdboys runs towards the road. The younger ones among them, mere toddlers playing outside their village, scurry away crying to their mothers, and scatter the chickens from the ash-heap as they do so. A herdboy, wearing nothing but his loin covering and an old tattered coat which was once his father's, shouts 'More Baas,' European words he has picked up from his elders; but the rest run joyfully after the car, rending the air with their shrieks. 482 301 291 276

The road begins to ascend steeply up the hill to the capital, but here, if you wish to visit headman Raselaka, you must get out and walk. As you go in single file along the narrow footpath, bounded on either side by creeper-covered bush or long grass higher than your shoulders, you become aware of a strong smell somewhat reminiscent of turpentine. In a few moments you discover its cause—the ripening fruits of the 487 137

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *titigwani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [824]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*hu dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khɔrɔ*, an open [361] ●
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dona*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khɔrɔ*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a
most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called *maduni* and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khɔrɔ* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khɔrɔ* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khɔrɔ*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khɔrɔ*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khɔrɔ* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 447
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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417 fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Raselaka complains that
231 herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous
[512] to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11 o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday, especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle in Raselaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Loveduland give hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent. of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but
[262] also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

● 361 You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khɔrɔ* to the huts, you hear Raselaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the royal kraal, they would surround the *khɔrɔ*, but here there are too few for that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden,
251 while at the back is the *marala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies are stored after reaping, till dry enough for decobbing. But they are empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly
[273] made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins,
[262] the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-pots, while a heap of golden, plumlike *morula* fruits with a cloud of midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

252 As you look along the space between the two rows of huts, a pleasant and busy scene meets the eyes. It is ten o'clock and cooking operations are at their height. Some are cooking outside in the courtyard; others prefer to cook in the kitchen hut. An old woman is spreading out her newly lifted monkey nuts, together with a few cobs of mealies which had fallen to the ground, to be sun-dried in her courtyard. Some freshly stamped mealie meal on mats and in baskets is also set out in the sun.
251 On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance. This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and preserved for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other purposes; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

351 Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

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101 one might call the Lobedu culture complex, though it is not at all clear what the origin of its differentiating features is. In its most typical form this culture is found among the Lobedu of Modjadji, the Letswalo and the Khaha. To the north-west it merges into the not very different Venda culture complex; to the south, Pedi influences, noticeable on the edge of the Drakensberg, become increasingly apparent among the Mahlo and eventually predominate among the Baha Mamidja on the banks of the Olifants. In the east, the Phalaborwa have developed specialized responses to the challenge of an [184] arid bushveld environment; while to the west along the escarpment, Tokwa influences are so marked that the Sekhopo branch of the Lobedu, who live there, differ more from the Lobedu of Modjadji than do the unrelated Khaha and Letswalo.[1] These gradations are to some extent hidden by the fact that owing to the mixed composition of every tribe differences in custom in any single tribe are often as great as differences from one tribe to another. The nature of this Lowveld cultural pattern, those features peculiar to this area and those held in common with other tribes, will best be shown by a short account in general terms of various aspects of the social and economic organization of these tribes.

•361 171 General Aspects of the Lowveld Village. The Lowveld village, nestling among the trees and shrubs of the surrounding bushveld vegetation, which usually provides a natural fence, differs in general aspect from that of the Highveld tribes with its well-smeared, high-walled courtyards. While there is a tendency in the south, among Narene of Segororo and to a lesser extent among Thabina and Maake's Khaha, for villages to straggle in lines along the hill-sides, there is nowhere any sign of the large agglomerations of dwellings so typical of the Tswana town and present in an attenuated form also among Tokwa of the Highveld. The Lowveld village is not large, consisting generally of from two to twenty huts; but there is evidence that when times were more unsettled and the need for protection kept

[1] The Birwa who live partly in the Lowveld, partly in the Highveld, probably belong to the Lobedu culture complex. Though their culture differs in many respects from that of the Lowveld tribes there are also marked similarities, such as ritual suicide of the chief.

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in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 361
quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 171
larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [592]
two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the cob and beer-making activities.

Tribal Economy. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 241
agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 231
adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [362]
are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 241
a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop, men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pumpkins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
trees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

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137 morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is
[272] made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malematsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga*
[533] *dzwala ga folzja, ga vutla vuphabalem*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise
431 song of a district in Uulovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach
● [364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fithulelem*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fithulelani nenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

621 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any
789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lenghwa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the
[417 protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or
824 *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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643 766 [789] and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mafuge*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

643 765 372 651 789 A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mafuge*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khoro* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mafuge* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mafuge* (*ba fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

372 783 177 Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite.

Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khobe*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*mudigo*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*mashe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *nyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu sua*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mufugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mufugo* is used before the accession of a new queen.

Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, *i.e.* firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mufugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital.

Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *gwai* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*diphuba*) in which the products of the sea are the most powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mufugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler.

Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly reasserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be auspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite.

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821 has been reached), and we were told that in the old days men of import-
527 ance used to come and condole with (*ku cwela*) the chief on such a day, as though to sympathize with her in the frustration of her efforts. There are other holidays associated with rain. On the day after the first rain of the season has fallen no hoeing or fieldwork is to be done. Such a holiday is called *le-nkhi-nteme* (do not cut me), as if the earth, believed still to be hot, dislikes being broken up by the hoeing. Such a holiday is also observed after the rain charms have 'bitten' the new termites and first-fruits of the year and when, any time during the summer, rain falls after two of three weeks drought, it is called *mueme* (guest or stranger) and the next day observed as a holiday, for one honours a guest.

766 Wrong burials which stop the rain are righted by the use of *mufugo*
821 medicine and the water obtained by squeezing the undigested stomach
789 contents (*mumone*) of a sheep down a hole made in the grave with a stick
842 and reaching the body. This is thought to disperse the 'wind' and cool the grave. The flesh of the sheep is eaten without salt. The conception is thus of a grave agitated by ghostly heat and wind, which may be 'laid' by 'cooling', or, as we might say, calming, in the treble sense often of pacifying [the ghost], modifying [the heat], and causing [the wind] to subside. *Mufugo*, the medicine so important in the removal of impediments to rain, has to be obtained from the queen and a specially appointed person is responsible for doling it out in bottles when needed. The office is not conceived to be hereditary, but it has been held by a Mudiga family for some time, being handed down by father to son. When the last official in charge of *mufugo* died, his son was an unmarried man too young for the responsibility of office. Some five years later (1938), when the queen decided that he should assume charge, he protested his youth, though he then had two children, fearing that after contact with the medicine he might forget to wash his hands before eating and thus be rendered impotent. In this he had the full support of his mother, who prevailed upon the queen to allow an older relative to undertake the work provisionally; but the present position is that, should this old man be away, the heir to the office will have to act. Whether *mufugo* is identical with the rain medicine of the rain-pots is not quite clear; but, whatever its ingredients may be, it is considered extremely dangerous, liable to rob men and women of their fertility, and great care is thus necessary when working with it.

789 Sometimes it is said that 'the country is not right' (*naha a a loge*) and
372 then there is a special ceremony in which all the fires in the country are put out with *mufugo*. No generally recognised set of circumstances lead up to such a line of action, nor is there any idea that the fires are defiled in any way. It is simply looked upon as a method of getting rain when there is drought, resorted to when the divining bones of the doctor declare it to be necessary. People sometimes say, 'Fires are put out to usher in a new year,' but this does not mean that putting out the fires is an annual ceremony, as it is, for instance, among the Pedi. The word 'year' must not be taken literally, just as it does not refer to an abstract period of time in the phrase, 'The year has been infected by *ku khuma*', when what is meant is that the rain charms have 'weakened' (*ku khuma*). In this ceremony

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, when the medicine froths up (*ku pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of *mufugo* and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gummifera*) to every village in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been smeared with dung will *khawa* and be unable to have children. A new fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or groundnuts, which they eat in the *khoro*. Each married man in turn must give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s.* or a fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khethe*), anything may be given. Each boy must give 1*s.* or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine, took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water, which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khaḓa; sometimes it is Mugondo's sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery, instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lowa* the queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lowa*, but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case, no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but they have "weakened" (*ku fighela*) it. They want me to be troubled.' She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people themselves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft, had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugo*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 786 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*fgehela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *fere*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

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the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapidated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 825
It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to 515
urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance; on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives; further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut. To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Leṭaṱula, with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart [345]
from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342
and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khrrr* and have a wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round. The former have their backs to the *khrrr*, a framework of reeds as a door, and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleeping hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised [352]
platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [353]
mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg. The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted basket (*khirudzuma*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart [373]
suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth, plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals, between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Leṭaṱula, newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too cold in winter.

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III. ARTS AND CRAFTS

(a) CARVING A PORRIDGE-BOWL

(b) FASHIONING A SKIN SHIRT

[facing p. 32]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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II. A GLIMPSE OF VILLAGE LIFE

(a) COURTYARD SCENE IN MARCH

(b) STAMPING MEALIES

[facing p. 17]

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cold in winter. The veranda of the sleeping hut is used for storage. Here are pots of all sizes, many with lids glued down with dung, calabashes, sacks of corn on stands, medicinal roots, perhaps an old plough, a small grain basket on an inverted tripod of sticks, and a bag of reed pipes for dancing.

The contrast between sleeping and cooking huts is marked: whereas the former is relatively empty, cool and clean, the kitchen hut is generally rather untidy and, when a fire is burning, full of smoke. This is the domain of the housewife. Here are her cooking utensils—pots, baskets, wooden dishes, dishes of white enamel. At first the smoke deters you from entering, but the woman and her children sitting there appear to be quite at ease, so you summon up courage and go in. You splutter at first and your eyes water, but soon you grow accustomed to the atmosphere. You glance up at the unplastered roof and find it black from the smoke of many years. It is the home of countless cockroaches. Stuck in it are ears of corn and mealie cobs kept for seed, and many other articles, such as a cupping horn, some medicinal roots, some old arrows, and axe and spear of Sotho-worked iron kept as religious objects. On a platform of wood, out of the reach of white termites, are several bags of nuts and mealies, while a handbroom of asparagus fern lying near the hearth in the centre comes in useful from time to time for sweeping all the dirt into the fireplace. In this hut women sit at night; grandmothers sleep here with the children; here children are born and here they are often fed; here people lie when ill and here too they die.

A chair, native-made but after the European fashion, with seat of strips of thong, has been placed for you in a shady spot in the chief wife's courtyard. To be perched so high above ground when every one else sits on the floor is distinctly uncomfortable and out of place, but, in deference to the hospitality of your host in according you the honour of a chair, you feel you must occupy it. Four or five small, pot-bellied urchins with dirty noses range themselves near you to watch more closely the features and clothes of the European. One softly points out your peculiar nose to a companion, another comments on your shoes; altogether they find you and your ways absorbing. One small child holds aloof, screaming with fear when the rest try to force him to come near. With her back to the sun, a woman kneels beside a large pot of boiling water, deftly twirling a wooden twirler between her palms. Every now and then she stops to add a little of the fine, white mealie meal beside her by means of a ladle of calabash, for this is the first stage in the making of *sumu*, cakes of thick meal, their staple food. The twirling prevents the formation of lumps. When the mixture becomes too thick for the twirler, a large, flat, wooden spoon is used with both hands. An aged and wrinkled old woman, mother-in-law of the one who is cooking, arrives from her garden with a basket on her head filled with the young leaves and male flowers of the pumpkin and three or four fresh cobs of mealies. The leaves and flowers are for relish for the meal; the cobs of maize she roasts in the fire for her grandchildren. She sits down, feet straight before her, and begins slowly to pull off the rough outer covering from the stalk of each leaf; it is then broken into two or three pieces and placed in a small, wide-mouthed pot.

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from 252
two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in those earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner. While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves roast mealies or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen enters with a large gourd of water on her 576
head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Mukhadi wee*,' calls out her mother. '*Mulemya*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase 563
by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Mukhadi goes into the huts and collects 415
five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used 273
for making light beer (*mabudu*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the 264
sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two- 853
months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by washing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth, she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and gurglings are of no avail till Granny has decided it has had enough. This novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held 854
over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap, special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that at any moment the child may slip out of the woman's hands; but she is skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward occurs. After being air-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline, an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys 000
arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neighbours could be seen; their own were nowhere to be found. Your hostess is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with legs tied together.

The woman of the *musha* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning 264
to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of slovenliness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food; porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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III. ARTS AND CRAFTS

(a) CARVING A PORRIDGE-BOWL

(b) EMBROIDERING A SKIN SHIRT

[facing p. 32]

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VI. HOUSEWIVES, YOUNG AND OLD

(a) THE WATCHED POT (b) WATER AND VEGETABLES FOR HER HOME

[facing p. 97]

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VII. ADOLESCENCE

(a) REALISTIC PLAY-COOKING IN THE MANYWANE

(b) A TROUPE OF YOUTHFUL DANCERS

[facing p. 112]

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XI. DOMESTIC DUTIES

(a) DRESSING OF SEQUINS GREAT SKILL

(b) STRAINING THE PRECIOUS BEER BREW

[facing p. 144]

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XV. BEER AS A SOCIAL STIMULANT

(a) BEER BEING CARRIED TO THE QUEEN

(b) A BEER PARTY

[facing p. 288]

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*malaka*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*badshale*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

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137 [272] *morula* tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malematsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga* [233] *dzwala ga fifaja, ga swala ruphahalwa*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise 431 song of a district in Ubowedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach [564] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Ra fiphalalelwa*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiphalalani zwa*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting on of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the resident reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhwaya*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

621 At last you find yourself before the village of Rasalaka, larger than any 789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lowphaw* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the •[417] protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or [64] *mudula*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhala* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *pipiguani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [824]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*ku dzusa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khoro*, an open [361]
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dowa*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khoro*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a
most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called
madwi and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khoro* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone
sealed down with mud. The *khoro* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khoro*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khoro*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khoro* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Raselaka complains that herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11 o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday, especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle in Raselaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Loveduland give hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent. of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khoro* to the huts, you hear Raselaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the royal kraal, they would surround the *khoro*, but here there are too few for that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden, while at the back is the *morala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies are stored after reaping, till dry enough for decobbing. But they are empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins, the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-pots, while a heap of golden, plumlike *morala* fruits with a cloud of midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

As you look along the space between the two rows of huts, a pleasant and busy scene meets the eyes. It is ten o'clock and cooking operations are at their height. Some are cooking outside in the courtyard; others prefer to cook in the kitchen hut. An old woman is spreading out her newly lifted monkey nuts, together with a few cobs of mealies which had fallen to the ground, to be sun-dried in her courtyard. Some freshly stamped mealie meal on mats and in baskets is also set out in the sun. On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance. This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and preserved for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other purposes; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 296.

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421 591 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable [476] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily [273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintain- [177] ing social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 911 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the 431 form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new 571 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small 602 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even 421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and 591 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples. 431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went 931 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour 613 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies. 911 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a *shari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, [588] Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. *'Ge lede dikhomo tsa ka. Ge nyage mosadi a de a sikhidele*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

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Conclusion

Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djoelane ba ba khwane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

An important principle in the social structure is preferential marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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241 annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according
[31] to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material
241 factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient
464 as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such ex-
241 pedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the
476 essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

231 Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd
[422] and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *mayuvalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the
[262 Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food
782] only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or
[554] even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

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also an economic unit, the Lobedu wife enjoys considerable economic freedom in the disposal of her property. Though she should act in consultation with her husband in the disposal of livestock or large amounts of surplus crops she will often, especially if on bad terms with her husband, act on her own. All these activities, it should however be remembered, are for the advancement of her 'house', which belongs to the husband's lineage. These goods can neither accrue to nor be used by the wife's own relatives. If, for example, she leaves her husband or is divorced she cannot take any of the produce of her fields with her. On the other hand the husband could use such crops or livestock only for the advancement or to feed the children of that 'house,' not for other 'houses'. The only goods a woman may take with her on divorce are cattle or other livestock earned by practising as a doctor because in this case, it is said, she has spirits guiding her which are of her own, not her husband's family.

The Lobedu husband does not in the manner of the Nguni allocate cattle to the 'house' of each wife (milk plays little or no part in the diet). It is said, however, that even if a cow were to be allocated to a house for milking purposes it would not belong to that 'house'. Cattle that come in from the marriage of a daughter are the property of her mother's 'house' and should be used for acquiring a wife for a son of that house. If the son is young and the husband wishes to use his daughter's cattle for a wife for himself, such wife would have to cook for the woman of that house from which the cattle came in the manner of a daughter-in-law. In theory a husband has the right to decide how the cattle of any 'house' are to be used. But he rarely in practice acts against the wishes of the wife. Her right over any woman acquired by the cattle of her daughter gives her great power and makes it difficult for her husband to marry a wife with them himself against her wishes. The bride might run away or her people refuse to let her marry if they hear that the woman the bride will have to 'stamp for' opposes the marriage. That is why so often cattle are handed to the wife's brother in the manner described above.

It is said, '*maka ha o la yo mangwe*—houses do not eat one another', i.e., the property of one house cannot be used for the advancement of another. Hence bride-price of the girl of one

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595 In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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The district is singularly autonomous in its political arrangements. Land is allotted by the district head not, as in many neighbouring tribes, by the chief. The district head, if he wishes, gives land to people living in other districts; at Mawa, for instance, non-residents hold over 300 fields. The district head reports the settlement of a stranger from another tribe by taking £1 to the queen, but it is to him as district owner that landholders annually bring beer. A non-resident also nowadays cultivates the district head with beer, clothes, and even money before asking for land. The land given to a non-resident is not very securely held; the tenure is so imperfectly institutionalized that practice varies from one district to another and definite rights and obligations cannot easily be deduced; on the whole, it is not unlike lending, though the culture does not recognize lending of land for a consideration. A non-resident holding land in a district, unlike a resident, cannot, generally speaking, interchange it with or lend it to others without the consent of the head; but at the capital he can, even without reporting to the queen; and there also a resident may break new land without any one's permission.

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634 Some distinctive cultural and administrative arrangements of the
643 districts have already been mentioned. There are many others. All
651 district heads used to have, and many still have, certain fields cultivated for them. The queen also has such fields in her districts, and since 1927 each district head has had to cultivate a field (*murewo*) in his district for the queen, an innovation suggested by the European to enable the queen to help her people during famines. The experiment has turned out very differently. These fields are badly cultivated, for years some district heads bring no mealies, the failure only sporadically leading to the penalisation of the head and his district, and the mealies are always converted into beer for entertainments at the capital that benefit only the local residents. The storage of mealies is impracticable and a system of distribution is not implied in cultural arrangements. A district head unwillingly surrenders land and sometimes expropriates first one then another landowner, so that there is much dissatisfaction and even refusal to cultivate the *murewo*.

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651 'chief' (*khosi*) and, like the queen, have medicines to safeguard them in their position of authority. A district head is not only the most important person in the district, the centre of its political and legal life, the man who is responsible for the welfare of his people, but the obligations of district residents towards him emphasize both his position and the reciprocities between ruler and subject. It is expected that his subjects shall bring him beer periodically, and sometimes it is held that he should be invited to every beer party held in his area, partly because he is responsible for order at the beer drink and partly because it is his due. All his subjects must make *marula* cider for him in the proper season, and similarly, when at certain ceremonies, held by him for the well-being of the district, beer is required, every resident must contribute. The most important occasion is at the harvest thanksgiving and the beer brought is regarded as being in return for the land given by the head to his people. On the pattern of

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Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *makhele* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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other wives. When the mother's brother's daughter is one of the younger wives in a polygynous household she may be completely overshadowed by the first wife. The eldest son of the first wife occupies a position of importance in the family. He is said to stand in the shoes (literally 'footprints') of his father and after the latter's death has a right to be *sama'd*, i.e., given a portion of any animal killed by any of his brothers long after they have dispersed and live in separate homesteads. There are instances, especially in the case of district heads and where the chief house has no male heir, in which the eldest son of the first wife married tries to usurp the position. But though he may appear for a time to be succeeding as seemed to be the case in more than one instance in the 1930's when first we went into the field, I have not come across any cases in which he has succeeded in the long run.

Each wife has her own fields which it is her duty to cultivate for the needs of her 'house'. On her death her sons have first right to inherit her fields unless their father wants to use them himself or arrange for their cultivation to provide food for the younger children; but they may not be used for the benefit of any other 'house'. A daughter may be given her deceased mother's field to cultivate while she is still in her parental home, but she cannot inherit it. A wife is expected to feed herself, her children, her husband and her mother-in-law from her fields. Each time she cooks she sends food to her husband and to his mother. What is left must be returned to her 'house' unless the husband himself gives it to the herd-boys or other children as a group. In the case of special dishes eaten in-between meals, such as cakes of sesamum or ground peanuts, a little will be sent to each of the other women of the homestead with whom the wife is on good terms. In a large homestead this may be confined to the wives of one man. Beer brought to any one 'house' is usually drunk by all in the village and neighbourhood.

In addition to having her own granaries and cooking utensils every wife has a right to raise livestock. She may keep chickens; she may acquire goats by the exchange of her produce; she may get pigs by feeding other people's pigs in return for a pigling. She may even acquire cattle if she is a doctor. In contrast to the Zulu, where the 'house' like that of the Lobedu is

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economic freedom in the disposal of her property. Though she 425
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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the 357
family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a 736
dependency one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for
him, and he receives cattle as *mayende* (bride-price). His services are
essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no
political disabilities.

Rather like the *mulude* was the *mavisiane* (*ba rua*, to rear cattle or other 735
animals). He was a poor man . . .aken in by the family as a hanger-on, was 178
given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If
he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one
of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave
whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is
also *ba pafa* (or *ba sigula*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or 437
woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his
services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who
feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he
be, he must work until the *dinger* of the field is also tired'. *Ha sigula* is
spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage
he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and
cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore
from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great
road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young
men'.

Ha hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services 464
or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. 426
But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilche*
arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or
cattle of others. The standard payment is 10s. per acre ploughed. The [465]
advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness
in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements
were borrowed (*ba adima*); but even *ba adima*, if it is of things falling
definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing
of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance
is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But
the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as
cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent,
one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer.
Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the
borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the
lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined 855
custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the 431
mother's brother, cares for (*ba lela*) a child for many years, he is given a
head of cattle, called the *mulude*. This is hardly a reward for services;
it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*ba fise*) no consideration 231
passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mafisa*, uses the 465
cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even
as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his
cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

578 unmanageable complication arises, unless there is agreement between all the persons interested: the son to whom the cattle should have been allotted, the daughter from whose marriage they came, the house established by these cattle, and the father himself. Tensions arise in many other ways: neglect of one wife and favoritism of another in respect of economic services, interference with the independence of the houses, and so on. Unwillingness to co-operate in the home and in fulfilling the wider group obligations is a more potent cause of trouble than adultery; and witchcraft, except as a symptom of tensions otherwise created, takes a minor place; and neither adultery nor witchcraft as such can snap the *masyusalo* bonds.

426 The character of these tensions may be briefly illustrated by the case
595 of Muoirwa and Mara. Faced with starvation, Mara obtained cattle
684 from Muoirwa (who was a friend, not a relative), promising, in accordance with the 'mud-stamper' institution, a daughter in exchange. In fact, this daughter, the little 'mud-stamper', as she is called, because she is too young to stamp mealies, was not yet in existence. That is not unusual in these transactions, which require that the 'mud-stamper' shall in due course be given gratuitously to the benefactor; and thereby the two lineages become cattle-linked, so that, for instance, Mara and his descendants would have to offer brides and receive cattle and Muoirwa and his descendants would offer cattle and receive brides. If Mara had no brides to offer, Muoirwa would still have to give cattle; otherwise the link might be broken. The 'mud-stamper', after reaching years of discretion, may dislike the benefactor, who is usually already old and decrepit, and that may lead to conflicts. In this instance, when Mara's daughter entered her *khoba* initiation, Muoirwa, as is customary, paid the *lenala* goat, for a bridegroom for whom a bride is 'born' must, so to speak, nurse her and 'grow' her. Not long afterwards the 'mud-stamper' died. Mara offered another daughter and, as the girl had died before actual marriage, no further *masyusalo* was required from Muoirwa. But the substitute, having grown up, married and then deserted Muoirwa, who was already very old; she ran away to a lover, Mara himself conniving at the desertion. Mara returned some cattle to Muoirwa, thereby severing the relationship, and promised the balance when the lover had paid *masyusalo*.

684 Years passed and nothing happened. Muoirwa eventually brought an action, which Magaebia, Mara's wife, contested. She said that on the death of the 'mud-stamper' she had offered to return the cattle, but this was refused, that the substitute was forced to marry Muoirwa against her will, and that the religious ceremony was omitted. Muoirwa replied that he had already received seventeen of the twenty-four cattle (the number to which the original eight had increased), that it was thus not he who had broken the relationship, and that the religious ceremony, which for various reasons could not be held in Mara's village, had taken place at the village of Magaebia's brother. The court could not but side with Mara, but it tried hard to reduce his claim, for twenty-four cattle, it said, were an enormous number. Then recriminations broke out between Mara and his wife, which revealed a many-sided conflict in the

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mother's brother's daughter, and in contrast to all surrounding Sotho tribes, Pedi to the south and Highveld tribes to the west where it is common, marriage with the father's brother's daughter is not considered possible. Cross-cousin marriage with the father's sister's daughter is known only among the Lobedu, where it is common within the royal clan, Khaba, where it is rare, and Moila's Venda. The prevalence of marriage with the mother's brother's daughter by which a girl is said to be 'born for' a son of a certain house and knows all her life she will marry there, has been a stabilizing influence leading to very much less illegitimacy resulting from the absence in towns of young men than is found in other areas where this type of marriage has broken down. A girl knows she will have to 'cook for' her father's sister, her future mother-in-law (indeed there is a definite moral value attached to this), and even in the absence of her husband-to-be will be married by the family. If, as a young married woman she has a child in the absence of her husband, it is an irregularity without serious social consequences. On the death of a spouse, sororate and levirate are common; marriage with the wife's brother's daughter is found where the wife is barren or dead, and full inheritance of a young wife of one's own father is quite common. 582 [184]

The custom of a woman being 'married' by a woman, so common in the Lowveld, is one often misunderstood by Europeans. Since a girl is 'born for' the son of her father's sister whose cattle made her father's marriage and her own birth possible, her father's sister may, even if she has no son, nevertheless 'marry' the girl, who will come and cook for her and have children by some appointed relative or by private lovers of her own choice. It is possible, though much rarer, for a woman rich in cattle to 'marry' a non-relative. 588

Though in the Lowveld as elsewhere the person responsible for payment of bride-price in a man's first marriage is his father or guardian and brothers and sisters are usually coupled, the cattle for the girl being used by the boy, it is not customary in the Lowveld, as is the case elsewhere, for any other relative to contribute. Here, when a man has no cattle, instead of begging from various relatives, he will proceed to 'show the knee' to a man rich in cattle, i.e., he will borrow cattle on the understanding that his first daughter will 583 583 426

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583 be handed over to the lender to become, in most cases, the wife of
[724] his son. To-day this custom is not as common as it used to be, owing to the fact that girls now often resist such a marriage, knowing that the European authorities will support them. No cattle or presents from the girl's people are ever handed over in marriage, and there is therefore nothing corresponding to the Zulu-Xhosa *ukulobola*. But there is all over the Lowveld a special name and function associated with each beast and goat that is handed over, which, together with the fact that there is generally no fixed number, no organized bargaining, such as that which characterizes Pedi procedure, and that very few people complete payment of bride-price before marriage, illustrate the non-commercial character of this arrangement.

585 The most characteristic feature of marriage ceremonial in the Lowveld is the slow and tedious procession from the girl's to the boy's home, the bridal party having to be persuaded to move at each step by means of gifts, till finally on reaching their destination they have to be carried in on the backs of women from the boy's home, weeping loudly in their distress. There is no central marriage feast, though a goat is killed for the girls who accompany the bride, and no one from the girl's home, except for the bridesmaids, is present. The brilliant competitive dancing displays, mutual vituperations between the two families and general feasting which form part of Nguni marriage ceremonial, all are conspicuously absent in this area where the arrival of a bride hardly disturbs the even tenor of everyday life. It is of common occurrence for a bride, before arrival at her husband's kraal, to be taken to the village of the sister whose cattle the husband has used in the marriage. The sister must see the woman who will bear a wife for her son and will kill a goat in her honour. Blood-mixing ceremonies between bride and bridegroom to eliminate all dangers of sex intercourse are common over the whole area.

586 Barrenness and adultery are not grounds for divorce, though when a woman is barren her parents generally offer her sister, for whom, however, cattle must again be handed over. A peculiar feature of divorce in the Lowveld to-day is that the husband almost always keeps both the children and the cattle, except in rare cases where it can be proved that he has wrongfully driven away his wife, when he receives neither children nor cattle.

593 in the interest of a sister in the house established by her cattle that she may on occasion even exercise some control in her brother's choice of a wife. Dwagu wanted to marry Mahule, who was already married. His sister's husband then said, 'We shall not allow you to use my cattle to marry that woman. She will bring nothing but trouble.' If the wife obtained by means of the sister's cattle is badly treated by her husband, she may run to his sister, who will intervene on her behalf, or even in extreme cases arrange for her to live permanently away from her husband, who could then never claim a return of the bride-price from his wife's parents. Mohale, whom we knew well, had, under the influence of his second wife, chased away his chief wife, who ran to his sister. She advised the wife to make some pardon beer and take it as a peace-offering, but when he refused this his sister arranged for the woman to live with a widow in the village next door to her. Now, when Mohale's second wife quarrels and refuses to cook for him, he takes refuge with the wife he chased away till the storm is over!

The influence of a sister is reinforced by her religious position. At [782] the annual harvest offering to the gods, it is always the eldest sister in the family who has to officiate. She is the one best able to intercede with the spirits. Any displeasure or secret grievance against her brother on [753] her part may have the effect of stirring up the spirits to cause illness in his household, especially among his children (certain other relatives also have this power, but one hears most often of the sister). Hence it is said, 'The sister should roast pips; if she roasts the village [is angry] it will go up in flames' (*khadi e hodiga dithuga; yo hodiga mutse u yo mu*). Sometimes a sister may threaten her brother, saying, 'If I complain, nothing [428] will be good in your village.' On the death of the father, it is the eldest sister who, together with the father's brother, divides out the inheritance, and, at the only installation of a district head that we were able to witness, the emblems of office were handed over to the young heir's sister for him, though he was already in his twenties. In view of all these facts, a man's sister has great influence over him and may be called to remonstrate with him, more especially in matters affecting his own household when even his parents have been unsuccessful. But she has no right to interfere without just cause and, if she were to make needless trouble, her brother would very soon ask her to leave his village in peace.

Not all sisters play the role that has been ascribed in general terms to a man's sister. Though every sister is potentially priestess and guardian of her brother's household, in practice all these offices are seldom combined in one person. In religious ceremonies affecting the family as a whole, the eldest daughter of the chief wife would officiate; in case of illness, a man's uterine sister might be asked to officiate. If the sister whose cattle has been used is younger than her brother, she may have little influence as compared with her elder sister; furthermore, where the sister is a woman of no personality, her influence may be negligible. It is a man's uterine sisters that play the biggest part in his life, for in this, 605 as in everything, the individual family is always asserting itself as against 595 the larger, polygynous family group. A classificatory sister, one by the mother's sister or father's brother, or one by a wife of the father other

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motapo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motapo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhoko* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a different mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*masila mabe o beya le nato ea hae*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

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other wives. When the mother's brother's daughter is one of the younger wives in a polygynous household she may be completely overshadowed by the first wife. The eldest son of the first wife occupies a position of importance in the family. He is said to stand in the shoes (literally 'footprints') of his father and after the latter's death has a right to be *sumu'd*, *i.e.*, given a portion of any animal killed by any of his brothers long after they have dispersed and live in separate homesteads. There are instances, especially in the case of district heads and where the chief house has no male heir, in which the eldest son of the first wife married tries to usurp the position. But though he may appear for a time to be succeeding as seemed to be the case in more than one instance in the 1930's when first we went into the field, I have not come across any cases in which he has succeeded in the long run.

Each wife has her own fields which it is her duty to cultivate for the needs of her 'house'. On her death her sons have first right to inherit her fields unless their father wants to use them himself or arrange for their cultivation to provide food for the younger children; but they may not be used for the benefit of any other 'house'. A daughter may be given her deceased mother's field to cultivate while she is still in her parental home, but she cannot inherit it. A wife is expected to feed herself, her children, her husband and her mother-in-law from her fields. Each time she cooks she sends food to her husband and to his mother. What is left must be returned to her 'house' unless the husband himself gives it to the herd-boys or other children as a group. In the case of special dishes eaten in-between meals, such as cakes of sesamum or ground peanuts, a little will be sent to each of the other women of the homestead with whom the wife is on good terms. In a large homestead this may be confined to the wives of one man. Beer brought to any one 'house' is usually drunk by all in the village and neighbourhood.

In addition to having her own granaries and cooking utensils every wife has a right to raise livestock. She may keep chickens; she may acquire goats by the exchange of her produce; she may get pigs by feeding other people's pigs in return for a pigling. She may even acquire cattle if she is a doctor. In contrast to the Zulu, where the 'house' like that of the Lobedu is

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house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families) and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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wife also died, he sent the children to her sister to be reared and gave her his deceased's wife's fields to cultivate to provide food for the children. When they are big they will be brought back with a gift of beer and their father will give a thanking gift of an ox or money for the rearing of the children.

The utensils of a deceased wife remain in her hut to be used by her children or son's wives; and her eldest son has the right to inherit her fields. Until twenty years ago when it was still the custom for a mother to receive a cow and calf on the marriage of her daughter (if a virgin) in recognition of having reared her, this portion of the bride-price was the special inheritance of the youngest son with whom she generally lived until her death.

When the father of a polygynous family or the head of a homestead dies there is, owing to the property arrangements characteristic of the Lobedu and their attitude to its possession, never a great deal of heritable property. The property of each house is inherited by the eldest son of that house. The heir to the position of head of the homestead is the eldest son of the chief wife. Only he or the uterine brothers of his father are responsible for his father's debts—not the sons of other houses. It is generally stated in discussions that any cattle or goods acquired by the father as his personal possessions should be inherited by the chief son and heir. In practice it is more common to divide out such property among all the sons and daughters.

When Ramalepe, a rain doctor, died about three years ago all his cattle and goods were divided equally among his sons. His rain medicines and his field went to his chief wife's son; his mealies (from his own field) were equally divided between his wives and his uterine sisters. When Philip's father died there was no sister of his father still living so Philip went to the queen and asked her what to do. She told him to call his sisters and to divide out the property in consultation with them. He then called his sisters (eldest and other daughters of his father) and showed them the property—thirty-six goats. They agreed on dividing the goats as follows: the deceased's two elder daughters by his first wife were given ten goats each; Philip, a son by the second wife, received eight; Mutzere, sister's son to deceased, was given one goat to kill and eat at his home; one goat was

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given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *lotsupe*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.

The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshile*) about a year after the death when all the relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died, the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *lasiape*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.

The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died, the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new homestead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, a married woman who does not live in the area was made official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is somewhat different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thaga moye be dala madulula*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1990's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance of being independent are found upon investigation to be portions (a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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[137] [272] morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga* [533] *dzwala ga fɔlɔja, ga vucla vuphabaleni*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise ● 431 song of a district in Vulovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach [364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fithuleleni*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fithulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

62 789 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lentdwa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the [417 protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were 824] set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Raselaka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Raselaka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*hu suma*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Raselaka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the last dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lɔsha* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaau*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khɔra* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Rɛkɛ́la, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khirula* beer to their *tsɛzi* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*hu pɛbɛla*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mushiji khi le; gi y'ɔ sheva ga nama*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10*s*. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsɛzi*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

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482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkin for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263] this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' ('*U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinɔnyana a jia dithɔhɔ a fa vasimana*'). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lewai la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled *njugo* beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khɔrɔ*, the three men of the village are sitting by their 521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spiritedl account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khɔrɔ*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies
to roast

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231 against misfortune and disease, are not necessary when a new kraal is
784 built or when the medicated pegs are hammered around the fence as a
789 protection against witches. Some confine their doctoring to the kraals; others, in addition, give the cattle medicine. Bulls are never magically rendered more virile, nor are cows made more attractive by such means. There are to-day hardly any special cattle doctors, and very few cattle diseases are known or subjected to treatment. This is not the result of the breakdown of the cattle cult; it is evidence of the weakness of the cult among the Lovedu. If one were to detail all the magical practices that are to be found, the volume of which would be doubly formidable owing to their diversity, an overwhelming impression might be given; but in true perspective, regarding them against the total background they are almost too insignificant to be noticed.

231 Far more important from every point of view is the adjustment that
232 Natives are making to modern conditions. On this point we can offer
177 merely a few very general suggestions. Foremost is the problem of better co-operation between the Natives and the Administration. The objections to dipping are a symptom of misunderstanding one another's point of view. The Natives regard the restrictions as a punitive and arbitrary imposition. It is useless merely to urge that, by destroying the ticks that cause cattle diseases, dipping promotes both the increase and the welfare of the cattle. No one believes what is regarded as demonstrably false. Any one can see that cattle often die when they come back from the dip; that the rate of calving has decreased, that there are now no milch cows, that stock have degenerated, and so on. These evils are attributed to dipping, not to the hard driving to the dip, poor grazing, and inadequate care. What is more, it is believed that Europeans do not dip and that tribes that are sufficiently cunning escape the dipping regulations. Not a few advance the theory that dipping is a punishment for attachment to and preservation of old customs—surely an ironical comment upon the execution of a policy that aims at segregation and development on the lines of racial genius. The psychological aspects of these problems are no less important than their other aspects; and they are far more difficult and require delicate handling. It is easy to envisage the immediate effects, for instance, of limitation of stock, such as the starvation that will result from insufficient cultivation and the overburdening of the women with agricultural work; but when it is realized that the cattle are barely sufficient to maintain the *munywalo* exchanges upon which the social organization rests, one cannot venture to predict what the ultimate effect of limitation will be.

231 Goats are the animals *par excellence* of ritual and religious importance.
● 431 They also feature prominently in exchanges which promote social inter-relations, such as marriage exchanges and the goodwill gifts between relatives-in-law. Second only to beer in re-establishing relations that have become strained, they are used very largely in the procedure of reconciliation, of righting wrongs by begging pardon, and in the payment of judgement debts. When a distinguished guest visits you, you honour him by killing a goat for him; when you bring beer to your *vaḓuhulu*, the people to whom the daughters of your lineage are married, or even to a

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for mealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Ṭonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Ṭonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Muvidividi (*Ekebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muvidisa-vyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *muvilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the 357
family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a 736
derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munywalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

Rather like the *mulada* was the *murruwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other 735
animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was 178
given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ṭuḍa* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or 437
woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'.

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services 464
or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. 426
But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilebe*
arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or
cattle of others. The standard payment is 10*s*. per acre ploughed. The [465]
advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined 855
custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the 431
mother's brother, cares for (*hu lela*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maledi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration 231
passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufiswa*, uses the 465
cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

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437 rather than of goodwill; the goods exchanged are primary and the relations between the parties, though not unimportant, are secondary. In *money barter* it is not the objective value of the goods exchanged against one another, but their value as compared with certain common measures that is in the forefront—for instance, such measures as hoes or goats or certain denominations of money. When a man says he has bought 1*s.* worth of maize, he may mean, not that he has paid cash, but that he has bought a 4-gallon tinful (which is regarded as the equivalent of 1*s.* worth) and has paid some goods which are considered to have the value of 1*s.* What he has in mind is the common standard, which some think of as 1*s.*, while others regard it as a tinful of maize. Finally, in *money exchange*, goods are exchanged for money, not against other goods; yet for our purposes, not all money transactions are included in money exchange, but only those payments in money which are business transactions. Many money exchanges fall under gift barter. For instance, A brings beer to her son-in-law, who, not having the two goats that he should return, hands over £1 to A; he is not paying for the beer, but he is exchanging his goodwill.

437 The following table approximately reflects the volume of exchanges
438 during the course of a normal year in an average family of five (two
439 adults and three children). It would be impracticable to give the source
431 of our figures, except for the general remark that they have been worked out from mass statistics of a population of about 2,000 people, supplemented by budgets and personal observations, and are expressed in £ *s. d.*

	External Trade I						Internal Trade I											
Medium of payment	Money			Money barter		Total			Money		Money barter		Barter		Gift barter		Total	
	£	s.	d.	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Cash	1	2	3	—		1	2	3	5	0	—		—			8 3		13 3
Agricultural produce and beer			6	2	0		2	6	1	9	1	6	7	0	1	1 6	1	11 9
Livestock, &c.			6	—				6	4	0	2	0	4	6	2	19 6	3	10 0
Total	1	3	3	2	0	1	5	3	10	9	3	6	11	6	4	9 3	5	15 0

437 It will be seen that money exchange accounts for £1 14*s.*, or 24 per
602 cent. of the total exchanges, money barter for 5*s.* 6*d.*, or under 4 per cent.,
431 barter for 11*s.* 6*d.*, or just under 8 per cent., and gift barter for £4 9*s.* 3*d.*, or just under 64 per cent. By far the largest single exchange is bride-price (*munywalo*), which falls under gift barter. The proportion of

I [See p. 61, Cat. 116 for definition of external and internal trade.—Analyst.]

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goodwill or reciprocal exchanges would be considerably enlarged if we included unilateral gifts (*mpho*), such as delicacies given by the mother's mother to a grandchild, goats to important visitors, money or clothes to wives or in-laws, soap and cloth to lovers or concubines, and so on. We have excluded them, but they all arise out of institutionalized situations; to lavish donations or gifts of goodwill upon anyone but relatives is very unusual. So much is needed to maintain reciprocity between relatives that this kind of generosity to strangers is mere lack of balance. The society specially insists that people should direct their energies towards building up firm friendship between those kin whose relationship to one another is subject to strains. There are endless sources of quarrel between relatives-in-law; hence sons-in-law must always help parents-in-law, while the latter must perpetually be bringing beer to their sons-in-law. The gifts that pass, by anticipation smooth out the differences or relieve the strains arising from structural arrangements; mainly they are not what we would call 'friendship gifts'. The clue to a man's behaviour is not to be found chiefly in personality choices; there are no defined occasions, such as marriages or Christmas among us, when friends can show their goodwill or when the whole world is supposed to be well-disposed. Kinship is the scheme in which reciprocity is most appropriate, at least in exchange transactions.

Among the gift-barter exchanges the most distinctive are certain institutionalized gifts, such as *khirula* beer, the *gɔsha*, and *munywalo*. Essentially they do not belong to a trading context at all; they are not economically motivated and do not result from any objective diversification of needs; yet the attitudes appropriate to them are reflected back upon the trading situation. *Khirula* (*hu rula*, to lift off the head) is beer carried to a relative or occasionally a friend, the most impressive occasion being when relatives-in-law bring beer to the *tsɛzi*, son-in-law. As many as twelve calabashes (35–40 gallons), equivalent to one head of cattle, may be carried. One calabash is usually consumed on the way, a second is given to the carriers on their arrival, and the rest is partaken of by any one, including the carriers, who attend the beer-drink. The recipient is expected to return a gift, generally two goats, one slaughtered immediately for the carriers as relish, the second taken home by them and often called 'the walking stick of the in-laws'. The situation is one of good fellowship and friendliness; there are no displays of suspicion and no mutual recriminations as in some other tribes; the givers and the receivers meet one another with joyful shouts and leave one another mutually exhilarated.

There are no special occasions to which *khirula* beer is appropriate, though it is usually stated to be brought for some, usually a fictitious, reason, such as 'to cause us to see the young grandchild', who, in fact, has been seen often before. An old man sometimes asks a distant relative or even a non-relative who has just returned from town for a jacket or pair of trousers perhaps. Some time later his wives brew beer and he 'gives' the beer to the young man, praising him for his generosity and announcing to all that he was indebted to the young man. This is the beginning of a never-ending series of exchanges, for the young man must

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431 some day reciprocate and the old man again 'thanks' him with beer given in his honour. And this is an essential aspect of these gift exchanges. The most striking illustration is in respect of *munywalo* (bride-price). The *tsɛzi*, it is said, never completes *munywalo* payments (*munywalo a u fɛle*); even in his old age he must still respond to the call for assistance from his relatives-in-law; and they in turn never cease bringing him beer. But whatever he gives falls into the *munywalo* and must be returned should the marriage be dissolved; the chain linking the parties into relations of reciprocity has snapped.

574 The *gɔsha*, essentially a dance performed by the young men of one or
535 more areas, provides the setting of an interesting interchange of goodwill
471 and of commodities. The main object is undoubtedly recreational, and the main participators are not kin, but members of a territorial unit. The district head is not necessarily involved, except as far as he must know what goes on in his district. The old Lovedu word *lucbo*, a musical
[534 entertainment, emphasizes its salient features: youths, blowing on reed flutes, dance round in a circle to the accompaniment of four drums beaten by girls. There is much preliminary practising under the leadership of the dance-master (*malogwani*), but in the actual performances leadership is not marked and changes continually as one performer after the other takes his stand in the centre of the ring of dancers. The artistic aspect, the making of the sets of reeds, their tone compass, the rhythmic counterpoints and the various melodic and harmonic sequences of sound may be dismissed in a sentence: close by, one is reminded of the pealing of bells thrown into ever new combinations by complex steps and movements; at a distance one listens as if to an *ensemble* of brass instruments strongly supported by drums. We are concerned with the socio-economic aspects only.

171 A slight comparison with the Venda *matangwa*, a word also used by the Lovedu (*matagwa*), is instructive. A Venda creditor wishing to collect a debt calls the dancers, gives them some work (such as the building of a hut or the repairing of a fence), and sends them to the recalcitrant debtor. There they stay feeding at the expense of the debtor and of his neighbours until the debtor pays. But the beast that the debtor pays is slaughtered and consumed by the performers, the creditor receiving only a small part. Apart from using the *matangwa* to enforce payment by debtors, the Venda also send such dancers to express sympathy when there has been a death and in that case there is a return visit to get back the beast slaughtered. It has also other uses not relevant to our present purpose.

574 Among the Lovedu the *gɔsha* is somewhat different. Private individuals
535 send it to friends or relatives to express sympathy or to notify a death as
431 well as to celebrate the occasion of the latter's marriage or setting up a new home; and there are special rules for each kind of *gɔsha*. The *gɔsha* of condolence, for instance, lasts one day, drums are not allowed if the deceased is of a foreign tribe, and refusal of the entertainment is impossible. Generally speaking, a *gɔsha* entails special food and lodging arrangements, food for the visitors being collected from households in the district which also provides sleeping quarters. The old rules designed

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to prevent promiscuity among young boys and girls are no longer in evidence, and complications are liable to arise where there is a *gɔsha*. The economic aspect of the *gɔsha*, except where it originates in a visit of condolence or is sent to supplicate for rain, is that the host, whether he himself originally invited the dancers or not, may send back a 'revenge' *gɔsha* to get back the beast he killed for the performers. He gets back very little, only the *musumo*, perhaps a leg of the beast, and the performers do not work for him to compensate him for what they have eaten. The *gɔsha* is not conceived of as a debt-collecting institution, it never originates in a debt, and once it is set into motion, its real function is to maintain reciprocal relations. A man may start the chain of reciprocity by inviting a *gɔsha* from elsewhere; on the other hand, a party of dancers out for merriment sometimes descend upon any one they like, but he may refuse the entertainment as too costly or for other reasons. To notify the host that a *gɔsha* is coming is usual; but a man whose *gɔsha* has been accepted by another may stop (*hu thiva*) the latter from returning the compliment (and getting back his beast) by sending *khirula* beer; he will do so, for instance, when he has no beast to kill or is reluctant to part with one.

The *gɔsha* may be a cumbrous instrument to effect exchanges of commodities, but it throws the social concomitants of these exchanges boldly into relief, magnifying them to such an extent that the gift exchange is completely obscured. This is in accordance with Lovedu conceptions, for they have a great dislike of anything that is clearly and primarily a commercial transaction. The *gɔsha* stresses the interchange of goodwill; the guests, drawn perhaps from three or four areas, come to display their skill for the delectation of their hosts; and the latter, hurriedly collecting their dancers, come forth with their drummers and *ensemble* of flute-players to challenge their guests. First the one party, then the next give their performances; it is a social gala occasion and the competition is carried on in the friendliest spirit. The spectators are the judges: an old man passing gives his verdict, perhaps after having heard only one set of performers; an old woman, after a dance of ecstasy (*hu pɔbɛla*), sets the crown, be it merely a leg-ring or necklace, upon the head of her favourite performer; and when the next party dances, the verdicts are reversed and the honours paid anew. In the end neither party is victor or vanquished. The object has been self-expression, without stress upon individual performance, and entertainment in which the competitive element is present merely to heighten the enjoyment. The boys and girls of the competing areas intermingle and there are many lovers' intrigues; the girls give their favourites cloths to wear as if they were knights; it is truly an occasion for the renewal of the ties of friendship, ties between relatives and ties between districts. The reciprocity is generally at long range, for distant districts are brought into relationship. Resting upon a relationship between two individuals, it draws into its sphere, through the dancing, food, and sleeping arrangements, whole territorial units.

The most impressive of all the gift exchanges, however, involves the two groups of people between whom, by reason of a marriage, brides are exchanged against cattle (*munywalo*). This exchange is as far

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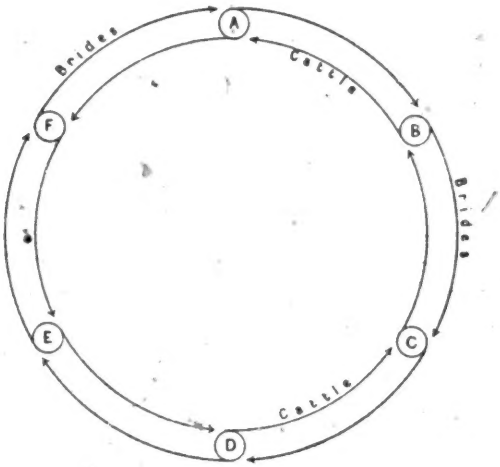
431 583 from a commercial transaction as is an engagement ring among us from buying a bride. It constitutes almost 54 per cent. of the total gift-barter economy, but also over 34 per cent. of the total exchanges in the tribe. In order to understand the Lovedu *munywalo* ring—we might almost borrow the name *kula* ring from Melanesia—we have to imagine a number of groups of people arranged in a circle. We have described the institution elsewhere[1] and merely repeat here what is necessary to understand its working. Each group consists of patrilineal relatives and, in the very simplest configuration, each is doubly linked to two other groups. Thus A is linked to both B and F: to B it owes brides and from



B it receives cattle; from F it receives brides and to F it owes cattle. B is cattle-obligated to A; A is bride-obligated to B. In the figure, brides pass clockwise round an outer circle and cattle move anti-clockwise along an inner concentric circle; the two circles cut through the groups A, B, C, D, E, and F, which are all both cattle-linked and bride-linked. In real life there are no concentric circles and so simple an arrangement is never found; even the general configuration of the groups is obscured by a hundred complications. A polygynist—and about one-third of the [595] men have more than one wife—does not take all his wives from the same group. A man who uses his sister's marriage cattle must return a daughter to be the daughter-in-law of the sister or, in other words, the wife of the man's son; if he had used the cattle of two sisters whose husbands belong to different groups, his sons marry into these different groups. Endless new linkages and complications arise in this and in other ways. Essentially, however, the exchange pattern remains: one kind of valuable (cattle)

[1] Chap. ix. See also J. D. Krige, 'The Significance of Cattle Exchange in Lovedu Social Structure' *Africa*, vol. xii, no. 4.

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travels in one direction, another (brides) in the opposite direction. 431
Usually so many groups are involved that the circular reciprocity cannot
be seen. But what is clear is that each man has a link (we may say a 583
partner) in each direction; on the one hand, a cattle-linked sister, to whose son he must give his daughter if he is offered *munywalo*; on the other hand, his wife's cattle-linked brother, from whom his wife may demand a daughter-in-law.

The partners are primarily cattle-linked brothers and sisters, but secondarily also the lineage of the brother and the lineage into which the sister has married; for the primary obligations readily extend to descendants and even collaterals in the groups concerned. But the partnership is not conceived as part of an economic scheme. Partners do not bargain for advantages: the transaction is institutionalized, and the values and equivalences are fixed. There is no need to use love-charms, magically to dispose one's partner to favour one's suit; the structure of the society stresses the need for reciprocity and harmonious exchanges. There is no way of manipulating the exchange to one's personal benefit or of making it serve a commercial purpose. If a man has more daughters than sons, he will not be enriched; nor will he be impoverished if he has more sons than daughters. In the first instance, the cattle coming in must be used to 'build houses' where the sons of the daughters may find wives, and in the second a variety of arrangements within the group and between it and other groups that are cattle-obligated to it meets the situation. The system of exchanges, like the working of the social structure itself, relies upon reciprocity and not upon commercial incentives and motives.

In such a society it is not surprising that the Lovedu, unlike the 437
Shangana-Tonga in their midst, have no aptitude for barter and that frankly commercial exchanges are insignificant. Where the scale of values against which people exchange commodities is familiar and standardized, money barter is looked upon much as is barter; but where it is not, as in the case of the 6*d*. tins used for exchanging salt, money barter is as suspect as money exchange. The comparatively large proportion of money exchange (24 per cent.) is due not to inclination, but to necessity. People must buy cloths, dress material, and men's wear from the stores. One of the main causes of tension and even divorce between spouses is the burden of dressing a wife. Likewise, only money can buy the poles and planks, the nails and wire, that are needed for building; even for grass, headmen are beginning to exact a fee. It is true that European contact has touched but lightly the equipment of the Lovedu home and articles of Western manufacture are relatively scarce; nevertheless, people have to buy petrol tins, axes, basins, lanterns, and blankets, not to mention soap and matches; and towards the end of the season much of the maize improvidently sold to stores has to be bought back. Perhaps the most important purchases with money are agricultural implements, sacks, and donkeys. There is a very distinct aversion from all transactions of a commercial nature; and the aversion is minimized only where the trading situation has been institutionalized.

Trade is, however, of no great consequence: it is not the basis of

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in their lives and, where a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, 602
his relatives-in-law are his mother's people. The term *tsezi* (bridegroom) has in Lovedu society a very special connotation. The *tsezi* is greatly honoured by his wife's people. He is given the best of everything. When he visits, he is brought a rush mat to sit upon and beer in a special small calabash or pot as his own. Christians invite the 'bridegroom' or his people to all meat feasts connected with confirmation, baptism, and other ceremonies (heathens have practically no meat feasts), while a mother-in-law never visits at her son-in-law's place without bringing some gift. One day, when Mudiga's wife was on the point of leaving on a visit with beer she had specially brewed to take with her, a *tsezi* (her husband's sister's husband) unexpectedly turned up. So, much to her disgust, her visit had to be put off, 'for one cannot take beer from a *tsezi*'. The honour accorded a *tsezi* is given also to his brothers, own and classificatory, when they visit his relatives-in-law.

While a bridegroom is accorded great honour by his relatives-in-law, he has many obligations towards them. When they bring beer, he must slaughter a goat for them and wish them godspeed with another 10*s*. after the feast. If they ask him to help them plough or weed, he must do so. Batamedi, for instance, every year ploughs the field of his wife's grandmother—but they will always entertain him with beer for his trouble. If they have to pay a heavy fine, but have not the wherewithal, they will approach the 'bridegroom', and, if they need more cattle or goats for the marriage of their son, it is again to the daughter's husband that they look for help. A friend of ours, a Christian, is even paying for the schooling of his wife's brother. Hence it is that, in spite of the fact that bride-price is more or less fixed within certain limits, it is always [576] said 'bride-price never ends', for a bridegroom can never refuse to help his wife's relatives. He may not even suggest that they are demanding too much, for this would be a breach of good manners reparable only by the handing over of a pardon goat. His only policy is to remain respectful, promise to 'look for' what they require, then later to send a message that he has been unsuccessful, even if he has many goats and they know it.

The Lovedu do not have that strict system of lasting avoidances 602
between certain relatives-in-law that is to be found among Nguni, where 431
it involves the use of separate paths by the married women of the village and even proscribes the use of words with syllables contained in the names of the husband or his relatives. Avoidances associated with marriage are, among the Lovedu, found also on other occasions. When a girl comes from her puberty ceremony or a boy from circumcision, he will respectfully greet all his relatives and neither rise nor speak till they *nosa* him by giving him a small gift (6*d*. or soap or a leg or arm ring). Similarly, when a woman has a new baby, she will cover its face from inmates of the village till they *nosa* her to see it. Similar avoidances, ended by means of a gift, are associated with marriage.

As soon as a marriage has been agreed upon, prospective bride and 584
groom avoid each other. They may not be together nor speak to each 431
other and, if by chance they should meet, the bride will cover her face with one of the cloths she wears and turn half aside. Often several

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584 courting visits are paid by the boy without seeing the girl at all. He is
431 entertained by the bridesmaids. After a few such visits, the boy will give 10*s*. or £1 to 'see the girl', to remove this taboo. The bride and her sisters similarly avoid all brothers of the groom till they *nosa* her by means of a small gift after the marriage. One often sees such boys teasing these girls to try to get an answer to some question, but they keep resolutely silent. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system, there are areas such as the queen's district, where most of the inhabitants are related in some way. Here many men and women cannot speak to each other because the men cannot afford to *nosa* all the brides of the family. After some years the women will tire of the avoidance and begin to speak to these men.

585 On arrival at the village of the husband, a bride avoids every one (by
431 not speaking) till given a small gift. Her mother-in-law gives her a gift
606 during the first week while she is still secluded, but the father-in-law usually waits longer. On the arrival of any visitor, the bride will lie down on her side in respectful salutation till given some small gift. As soon as a boy begins to avoid his prospective bride, he avoids also her mother. They may not be together in the same hut, the mother may not serve food to the boy, and, should they happen to come near each other, the woman will avert or partially cover her head. But whereas avoidance between groom and bride ends before marriage, that between a man and his mother-in-law ends usually about a year after the marriage, when the woman is given 10*s*. or a blanket. Andreas gave 15*s*. after the birth of his first child. Nevertheless, a man will always take care never to talk loudly or angrily in the company of his mother-in-law. If he does, she will walk away and if a man were to have words with his mother-in-law or scold her in a bout of drunkenness, he would have to pay a pardon goat to her family.

607 The most lasting form of avoidance is that between a man and his wife's brother's wife, especially the one who has been obtained with the cattle he handed over for his wife and who will bear the future wife of his son. Frieda always covers her face when meeting her husband's sister's husband. If he is in a hut, she may not enter it. Beyond exchanging greetings, she does not sit with him or talk directly to him and she may not herself serve him with food. The uterine sister of the husband of
[835] Madinji married Nagambi and so, according to all the rules, she should avoid him; but in reality she is his lover. He, Madinji, is known to be the father of one of her, Nagambi's, children, yet they are not socially ostracized nor have their actions been publicly condemned.

835 That this sort of breach of accepted standards is neither directly punished nor actively disapproved, unless forcibly brought before the public eye in a case, is in keeping with the haphazard nature of Lovedu social arrangements. Letavula, who, on the death of his parents, came to live with his grandfather (mother's mother's brother), has had four children by the wife of his mother's brother, the son of his grandfather, though he himself is a married man. We were at first inclined to attribute this state of affairs partly to culture contact conditions, which have kept the woman's husband in town, though not determining her choice of

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Even if blood flows, no case can be brought against a herdboy, for he is still uncircumcised, irresponsible. 854 857

Training for both boys and girls in home-making is embodied in the institution known as *mandwane*, which, while being little more than a game, is nevertheless accorded adult recognition. Utilization by the children of the harvest gleanings after reaping, which may be regarded as its practical economic aspect, is to-day not much in evidence, but while it lasts women whose sons are taking part are saved the trouble of cooking the evening meal. After the reaping, when the cattle graze in the mealie lands near home, *mandwane* is begun by the girls calling the boys to come and be chosen. They stand in a row while each girl chooses a 'husband' by kneeling before and greeting the boy of her choice. He signifies his consent by answering the greeting. After the parents have been told of their intention to hold *mandwane*, the boys begin to build rough huts in the fields, while the girls smear the floors and courtyards. Each couple may have its own establishment with very often also a small child chosen as their 'child', or one large house for all may be made. With pots, baskets, spoons, and other utensils borrowed from home, the girls stamp mealie meal and cook dishes of porridge, nuts, and pumpkin, while the boys, if they can, bring home birds as relish. The game begins about eleven o'clock in the morning and ends in dancing and singing after dark; this lasts for about ten days or more till, at the end, the miniature village is burnt. Each 'wife', in addition to serving food to her 'husband' in the proper manner, must also take food every evening to her 'mother-in-law' in the boy's home. This is eaten, not by the mother-in-law herself, but by children of the household who are not taking part in the game. Occasionally the elders walk over to watch activities in the play-village and give a word of advice. That the institution is taken seriously by adults is shown by the fact that, though *mandwane* partners never marry, the mother of the girl will very often after the *mandwane* take a gift of beer (usually five calabashes or so) to the parents of her small daughter's 'husband', who will slaughter a goat in recognition of the gift just as though the relationship were real. There is nothing to prevent relatives from being *mandwane* partners. To-day the 'husband' is usually much younger than the 'wife' and the game is confined to children under the age of puberty. Not more than a few years ago, however, boys and girls of marriageable age used to take part, the institution being considered as primarily for them. One of the reasons for the change is the absence of many of the older boys at work in town, while the failure of young men to keep the rules against impregnation in the play sexual intercourse that often forms part of the game makes mothers loath to allow elder girls to join in. 854 868 [431] [883 836]

General behaviour, attitudes, and values are not taught by any formal training. These are inextricably bound up with life in the society and become unconsciously adopted by any one fully partaking in social life. Even a European, when speaking the language and trying to enter into their social activities, finds himself unconsciously taking for granted values that he never had before and which are certainly not to be found in European life. They seem to follow naturally from the social situation 867

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a hole is hollowed out so as to be deep enough for her to sit in (if possible 881
the water should reach the neck) while a fire is kindled for the other girls, at whose pleasure she remains in the water, uttering her wail. If the girl has a good friend among the old women, she may free the initiate from [431] going to the river after the first morning by a gift of snuff to the elder girls. This is called 'lifting the weight' from the girl (*hu rula*). They return home about eleven o'clock in the morning, when they have their meal. After this the elder girls return to their homes or do as they please, while the novice and her friend remain in their hut. They sleep if they can, for at night they get little chance to do so. During the initiation the girl undergoes harsh treatment at the hands of the older girls. She 'pays', by being beaten, for going to sleep, for waking up and on the slightest pretext. At night her blankets are taken away and used by the older girls, while she lies exposed with no fire to warm her. Not only is she allowed no relish with her porridge, but she may also be given filth to eat. One girl's menstrual blood was put in her porridge, which she immediately vomited up; sometimes a frog is given them to eat and one of us has seen initiates made to eat sand as relish. If she asks for water, the elder girls may clear the nose into it before it is given. All this harsh treatment is looked upon as good discipline.

Initiation at puberty includes instruction in rules connected with 881
the new stage of life the girl is entering upon. She is warned that she 864
has reached maturity and must be careful, in sex play with boys, to avoid becoming pregnant. She is advised also not to have more than one lover at a time, lest there be difficulty in establishing the paternity of her child should she have one. In the old days she was at this stage given a calabash doll which at her marriage was carried in a basket by the wedding party. If she was not virgin, the calabash was pierced. This custom has, however, fallen into disuse. The girl is taught the rules connected with menstruation: not to enter a sick-room while menstruating, not to enter [841] a cattle kraal, not to sleep with men during her menses. If she has not enlarged her *labia minora* properly, she is severely scolded or punished by having hot, roasted sesamum put on them. In one case the elder girls inserted a mealie cob in an initiate to show her the dangers of intercourse, hurting her so badly that she was unable to walk properly. Her parents complained to the queen, who imposed a heavy fine on each of the elder girls responsible. There is no teaching connected with marriage. An initiate must be respectful to her elders: she is told that if people older than herself are in a hut she must greet (*lɔsha*) on entering. She is taught in a song to honour and obey her mother. Most of the teaching is in the form of songs or mummeries. The dancing that takes place every night when the women come consists largely of movements in a bent position 881
on the haunches, with arms held above the head for better balance. Some 535
of the dances are associated with the lessons of the initiation: two girls, one with a cloth passed between the legs to represent the loin covering of a man, dance facing each other; the 'man' dances with a lighted firebrand between the legs, the girl wears a cloth which makes her look pregnant. Another dance consists of movements in which legs are held close together, and sometimes crossed, symbolic of the manner in which

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535 male advances can be prevented from becoming dangerous. These are *digɔma*, secret things or mummeries.

The last night of the ceremony is devoted to dancing and the showing of many *digɔma*. It is *khilalawemi*, the night when one sleeps standing—that is, does not sleep at all, though, since people just take a nap any time they feel tired, the name is somewhat exaggerated. All the women of the area who wish to attend gather either in the village, from which men will be debarred, or at a secluded spot somewhere near, bringing with them mealies and nuts to roast and eat while there. There is a great deal of dancing and singing. The greatest *digɔma* are shown at about 3 a.m., after a period of comparative quiet that sets in towards midnight, when most of the people begin to doze around the fires, and these continue until dawn, when disguised figures come dancing in. Each mummery has its own meaning, but this is not clear to the initiate, who does not even see many of them. In the morning, while the girls are at the [302] river, the hut of seclusion is swept and freshly smeared. On her return, after having her head shaved along the sides and back, leaving a circular top, which is a form of hairdress much liked by girls and associated with ritual occasions, the girl is anointed with fat and, except when she is of [292] the royal family, also with ochre. She is given three skins to wear, a frontal covering, a rear covering, and a skin to wear over the shoulders like a cloak. Round her neck is a thick collarette of beads. When dressed, the girl has respectfully to salute the assembled company of women in the courtyard by lying down on one side, palms held together. Now follows a few days during which the novice speaks to no one and walks with bent head, fists clenched and held to the breast. She is taken by the [431] elder girls to greet various relations, who must *nosa* her by means of a small gift before she can rise. A month or more after the ceremony a grand beer-party is given by the girl's parents for the women of the area, [571] who, at a spot near which men are not allowed, have a dance of *digɔma*, specially disguised figures. When the novice has been through the requisite number of ceremonies, she is taken to the queen or the wife of the district head to be beaten with a stick as a sign of her graduation.

551 Boys' initiation (*vudiga*) is much more spectacular than the *khɔba*. Typically it is held by the whole tribe every twelve to fifteen years, but some district heads occasionally do not wait for the authority of the queen. The last *vudiga* upon a national scale was in 1919, but since then there have been local lodges, such as the one held by the district head Maunadala in 1937. The interval of more than twenty years is not considered extraordinary. Sometimes in the past there were delays, especially in the latter half of the reigns of queens, because, so it is said, they wished to postpone their ritual end, which coincided with the fourth initiation after their accession. In 1938–9 the *vyali*, or girls' initiation, was revived after thirty-five years, partly as a preliminary to the next boys' initiation; and if within a year or so there is a *vudiga*, it will be the third of a reign that has already lasted forty-three years. There are other reasons for the present delay. The *vudiga* involves an immense organization, brings all public activities, such as the courts, to a standstill, upsets the economic routine, and concentrates energies upon one supreme

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occasions of importance. The boys are shown several sacred objects (*digoma*), each with its own meaning; and the proceedings end with the naming of the lodge and the new regiment that has been created. Next morning the boys remove the clay that 'disguised' them during their seclusion. They are given a loin cloth, which they wear back to front, their hair, except for a circular crown, is shaved and they are smeared with fat (not ochre among the royal Lovedu). They are 'people from the refuse heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), a name they discard only when, a week later, their heads are completely shaved. As they leave, the lodge, with all in it, is burnt down.

The *vudiga* is not at an end yet; it has merely entered a new stage in which the discipline is further relaxed. The novices leave the lodge with double-pointed sticks, covering with their hands the two ends, which are fashioned like the *glans penis*. In that manner they go about whenever they are in public; the action is said to impress upon them the necessity of concealing the object and meaning of circumcision. When they arrive at the village their mothers appear dancing with joy and choose out their sons, not always correctly, because their heads are bent down and their bodies have grown a good deal in the lodge. A goat is killed for them; it is the goat 'of vomiting the rats', for as men they must cast out the things of their childhood. Then for the next week they are in a state of semi-seclusion, but there are still many observances. They appear in public only in the bent, humble attitude, they carry their sticks, and they wear their loin cloths the wrong way round. Nevertheless, the 'gathering up' (*hu aluha*) into the society proceeds apace. They have a special enclosure made for them in the veld, the *khikhudɔ* (hiding place or secluded spot), in which they spend some time of the day. But they are scattered, as each group of villages has its own secluded spot; and their separateness and solidarity is further broken up by sleeping at home and herding for their own people. They do not speak, especially not to women, but at night at home they have contests of riddles (*nyɛbo*) with the old women who come to visit them, exactly as after a marriage ceremony. This stage ends with the 'seizing of the lion' (*hu tswara dau*). One night the shepherds go out with bullroarers, the whirling of which produces the roar of the lion. The boys give chase and he who catches the 'lion' is praised by the old men.

Finally come the last ritual acts. The boys are taken down to the river to lift the 'stomach of the cow', a log tied to a stone in a pool, and then to 'kindle a fire on the river' (done on a log in the water), for a man must be both strong and clever; he must be able even to make fire in the water. After these tests there is the final ordeal at the cave to which the boys are taken one by one, are beaten and given their last admonitions. At the cave the double-pointed stick is discarded, the fat removed from their heads and, if two brothers have attended the same lodge, the elder beats the younger on the way home to remove the presumption of belonging to the same regiment. At home the initiate's mother must *nosa* him by a gift to 'open his mouth', and next day each of the boys, accompanied by a shepherd, goes to visit some relative, who will feast him with meat and beer.

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supreme consequence in supporting the structure that the marriage will 584
eventually build up. Courtship visits are concerned, not with courting, but with laying the foundations of the new pattern of reciprocity between the young people. They were cross-cousins before, free and easy in their relations with one another; after the marriage they are in-laws, between whom the delicate balance of adult privileges and responsibilities must be evenly maintained.

The courtship visits have other functions. They would hardly appeal to the young if there were no lighter side to the heavy burden of their serious purpose. All Lovedu ceremonial recognizes the need for diversity, for dramatic interest, for ringing the changes between the serious and the superficial, the purposeful and the playful, the grave and the comic. The bridegroom, unseen by his bride though he be, has a thrill in displaying his best clothes. He sometimes deliberately breaks taboos. In the old days the *musubullo* used to 'reveal' the bride, for only after it the bridegroom could see her and speak to her in private, a privilege he obtains to-day by a gift of a few shillings or more (*hu nosa*) long before [431] the *musubullo* is given. Nevertheless, there is to-day adventure in going to the store, where, besides making her wishes felt by requiring this or that as part of her *musubullo* (change of clothes), the bride must be coaxed by gifts to look at one thing, to handle another, and at every step. After he brings the calabash of water, 'the beast of asking the bride to come home with him', the bridegroom and his companion come on the *hu sela* visit. *Hu sela* means that they will 'trouble' the girl and her companions. In other tribes the parents have to be 'begged' to release the bride; the Lovedu *hu sela* is designed to irritate the parents so that they will be impatient of the bride's unwillingness to go and will bring pressure to bear upon her. For the *mumywalo* has all passed and the will of the bride must not be allowed to cause them discomfort. The boy's companion especially makes things unpleasant. He interferes with the work of the girls, worries and annoys them at night when they want to sleep He tries to stir their hearts by playing a plaintive stringed instrument, pinches and beats them. But what is really effective is his interference with their cooking: he throws sticks and filth into the porridge pots, and the older people, always particular about the cleanliness of their food, complain bitterly and say that the bride had better go.

The drama ends usually with an exciting 'elopement' of the couple. 585
It is not a true but an institutionalized elopement. Sometimes it does 431
not occur and sometimes it occurs even after a religious ceremony with which, strictly speaking, it is incompatible. Indeed, theoretically the giving of the *musubullo* is supposed to exclude resort to an elopement. But the 'elopement' is so common that it is the only form usually described. One night the bridegroom, having left 1s., 'the thing resting under the mat', which in the old days was an arrow, surreptitiously escapes with the bride and her companions. The 'thing under the mat' explains the flight. The journey to the bridegroom's village is painfully slow: at each step the girls call a halt and have to be persuaded by gifts (*hu nosa*) to move on; they may even have to be pushed, threatened, carried. The bride is completely covered with a blanket amid the troop of girls as they

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585 431 walk in single file. The bride (and sometimes her companions too) weeps, fearful of the new life full of responsibilities. They visit the boy's cattle-linked sister to be offered a goat and as a reminder that it is that sister who with her cattle has erected the new home. There may be a dumb show as the girls, marching up and down, display their final reluctance to give up the bride and, by contrast, the old women humorously mock the girls. At the gate of the boy's village they have to be carried in, and at last, as they humbly crawl to enter the hut, some one pours water on the roof and you hear the song, 'Little bride of ochre, seek shelter, you are raining wet'.

This is merely the general plan; there are many embellishments and many variations. But of some significance and worth mentioning as illustrative of the comprehensive nature of the ceremonial are the last few gifts just before the bride leaves home. There is a goat or 10s. to 'lift' the bride from maiden to wife, for every important new step she takes may, in Lovedu phraseology, be made the occasion for asking something; another goat to 'take out the stamping block', symbolizing the transference of the bride's chief economically productive power; and still another to 'finish the complaints' of the bride's mother. Among neighbouring tribes there are similar gifts, but sometimes with different names and often, though having the same name, with different functions. A study of their reinterpretation by, and merging with the purposes of, each culture cannot be undertaken here. To two points we may, however, briefly refer. Occasionally among the Lovedu there are reciprocal feasts entailing the slaughter of a beast, first by the bride's and then by the bridegroom's family, and ending with an extra beast given by the latter to 'fill up the *munywalo*'. These feasts belong to a very different pattern, found, for instance, among the Lirwa, where bride and bridegroom before the final acts are made to sit together on a mat, are offered advice and given presents. Secondly, and in strong contrast to many other tribes, the bride comes to her new home without any presents from her people. The troop of girls carry a waisted basket (*khirudwana*) in which there are certain grains from the bride's village, but everything else except the grains, even her clothes, have been given her by the bridegroom. Her people give her nothing whatever to set up a new home. Household utensils she does not need, for she cooks in the hut and uses the pots and furniture of her mother-in-law until, with the coming of a younger daughter-in-law, she becomes independent and has her own cooking hut.

585 782 In a really orthodox marriage among the Lovedu there is a religious ceremony. It is preceded by the slaughter of the 'goat of killing' brought by the bridegroom; a leg is given to him and from the skin the bride's *thevyana* (skirt) is made. Thereafter a prayer is offered to the gods on behalf of the girl: 'Here is the woman. We let you know that she is leaving us. She is going to the place where she is married. Let her be happy there; let all she does there be right; let her be smeared with fat [have children]. We have no complaint against her [i.e. we shall not cause illness through being angry and so also you should not]; we have given her beads to help her so that she may make a good home where she

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is going.' It is, of course, an extempore prayer, not bound to any set words. After this rite there is no need to elope; it is *hu vega*, to marry with proper rites, not *hu ʈala*, to run away surreptitiously. Yet the secret elopement by night is so interesting that it frequently follows, and in any case the slow journey of the troop of girls, who must be persuaded at every step, is always part of the ceremony.

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The final stage of the marriage ceremonial consists of several successive steps lasting a month or longer. Again a whole series of new gifts (*manosa*) passes and new rites are enacted. From early morning until late at night the bride's companions are busy—cooking, stamping mealies, bringing water for the inmates of the village to wash in, and in other ways. At night there are contests of riddles between the visiting girls and the boys and girls of the village; they are ordinary riddles (*dithai*), not those curious *dinyɛbo* that end the initiations, but the pattern of the institution is the same. There is, for instance, the *hu nosa* of the girls at every turn and their exaggerated politeness. Then, after a week, having fetched wood and distributed among themselves the gifts received, the bride's companions go home, crawling out of the village and accompanied some way by the boys. The bride is now alone and, still in her finery, she begins to do the household work. When she menstruates for the first time, she secretly 'flees the moon' (*hu shava mucdi*), running to an old woman, who takes her back with beer of 'shunning the moon' and a goat is killed for her. This shunning of the menses is a minor detail in marriage ceremonial, with rules and observances, however, in which the virginity of the bride, the part played by the go-between, the division of the beer and meat, the reciprocal duties of the *vamakhulu* and the *vaḑuhulu*, the one giving beer, the other returning a goat, are once more emphasized.

[841]

But all the rites and ceremonies are equally full of meaning, not only for the purpose in hand, but for the whole social structure. About three or four weeks after the marriage the bride goes to her home with the goat or 10s. of 'pouring out her bridehood' (*hu shulla vumyɛji*), and thereafter, according to ideal standards, the bridegroom may exercise full marital rights. This 'pouring out', with its associated observances, is still universally carried out, though the couple may already have received permission to cohabit. If the bridegroom migrates to town, as sometimes happens, before the home-bringing of the bride, the breach of orthodox rules, implied by the premature permission, is avoided. After a while the bride returns and brings the beer to 'open the way' for her mother. In the old days the boy's people then sent the *hu hobɛla* goat, the goat 'of asking permission' for the consummation of the marriage. At the stage when permission to cohabit is given, the couple are ritually mixed, the ceremony varying from mutual inoculation to common steaming under a blanket: it is a rite pregnant with meaning and with the associations it acquires as being a part of many other ritual occasions. The bride becomes an apprentice to her mother-in-law, there are avoidances and gifts (*manosa*) to remove them and so, at every stage, the marriage ceremonial is cut to the configuration of the social structure, fitted into its foundations and walls, and made to merge into the smallest details of its ornamentation.

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creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and realignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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ance against future want by building up relations of friendship and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintaining social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples. Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies. She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a *thari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge loda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga mosadi a de a nthsidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

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Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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wife also died, he sent the children to her sister to be reared and 768
gave her his deceased's wife's fields to cultivate to provide food
for the children. When they are big they will be brought back [591]
with a gift of beer and their father will give a thanking gift of [431]
an ox or money for the rearing of the children.

The utensils of a deceased wife remain in her hut to be used 428
by her children or son's wives; and her eldest son has the right [768]
to inherit her fields. Until twenty years ago when it was still [583]
the custom for a mother to receive a cow and calf on the marriage of her daughter (if a virgin) in recognition of having reared her, this portion of the bride-price was the special inheritance of the youngest son with whom she generally lived until her death.

When the father of a polygynous family or the head of a homestead dies there is, owing to the property arrangements characteristic of the Lobedu and their attitude to its possession, never a great deal of heritable property. The property of each house is inherited by the eldest son of that house. The heir to [592]
the position of head of the homestead is the eldest son of the chief wife. Only he or the uterine brothers of his father are responsible for his father's debts—not the sons of other houses. It is generally stated in discussions that any cattle or goods acquired by the father as his personal possessions should be inherited by the chief son and heir. In practice it is more common to divide out such property among all the sons and daughters.

When Ramalepe, a rain doctor, died about three years ago all his cattle and goods were divided equally among his sons. His rain medicines and his field went to his chief wife's son; his mealies (from his own field) were equally divided between his wives and his uterine sisters. When Philip's father died there was no sister of his father still living so Philip went to the queen and asked her what to do. She told him to call his sisters and to divide out the property in consultation with them. He then called his sisters (eldest and other daughters of his father) and showed them the property—thirty-six goats. They agreed on dividing the goats as follows: the deceased's two elder daughters by his first wife were given ten goats each; Philip, a son by the second wife, received eight; Mutzere, sister's son to deceased, was given one goat to kill and eat at his home; one goat was

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group. 621 592 602 571

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*baduhulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment. 621 602 436 476 [273] [416] [777] [574]

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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paid in salt and the other commodities mentioned. But the practice is, except for payment in meat, largely confined to Christians. As far as it exists, it completely alters the old long-run reciprocity pattern. There is no social feast. Collective replaces co-operative activity; for personal profit, not sociability, is the prime motive; the social gala is converted into a labour situation, and the interests of employer and employee begin to diverge. Room for roundabout recipocity is narrowed; instead of the indefinite mutuality upon which a man who helps others to-day may rely in the future, he receives an immediate and individual reward; faith in long-range equivalence of services and obligations gives way to a desire for direct personal satisfaction.

To the new situation, in which the *lejema*-giver corrects and directs and the worker obeys and submits, imperfect adjustments have been made. Direction, hitherto unknown in the economic relations of equals, degenerates to exploitation; the answer to unwilling submission is resentment; and the employer is regarded as a renegade and cheat. He is known to buy a bag of salt for 7*s*.—and to distribute it so that each worker receives only one-sixth of the accepted value (1*s*.) of a day's work. The conflict, in which the worker retaliates by calling the employer 'unscrupulous', is only beginning. It may resolve itself by new adjustments, even though an aggravating feature is the fact that it is the Christian who is the budding capitalist and the pagan who is the dependent labourer. From the point of view of progress in agriculture, the danger is that employers are usually progressive, and progress thus comes to stand for anti-social methods. This hampers the work of agricultural demonstrators. It is clear that lasting solutions, even of apparently simple agricultural problems, not to speak of the complicated problems of administration or of wider spheres of culture contact, can be attained only by studying both the forms of the old institutions and psychological reactions among the people to the changes.

Turning to exchanges in the society—that is, purchases and sales, whether cash or kind is transferred—we may consider external and internal trade from the standpoint of whether it falls within a money, money-barter, barter, or gift-barter economy. We use these terms to designate the distinctions mentioned below. *External trade* refers to transactions with people belonging to groups outside or alien to the tribe, such as stores, farmers, and individuals of other tribes. *Internal trade* is largely local, but it may be interlocal when it occurs across the boundaries of the reserve, but between members of the tribe. *Gift barter* is reciprocal gift exchange. There is no exact economic equivalence. Mutuality, goodwill, and reciprocity are the primary considerations, but it is not the same as a gift, for a gift implies no return gift, but merely one-sided donations, such as presents to children. Out-and-out gift is *mpho* (from *hu fa*) and, while such gifts imply indirect mutuality, there is no expectation of a return gift. For our present purposes and in the table given below, they are left out of consideration; it would, for instance, be impracticable to distinguish between feeding one's household and giving them presents. From gift barter must be distinguished *pure barter*, in which the aim is an interchange of goods of equivalent value

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556 for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an
●436 economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a
431 doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the
476 general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

612 The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

582 One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and
583 sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-link-
604 ing of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister
[588] of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Monoalo a o fede*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tsetse* (or *muduhulu*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*muduhulu*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939) 1943
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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munywalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities. 357 736

Rather like the *mulada* was the *muruiwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ṭuḍa* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'. 735 178 437

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilebe* arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or cattle of others. The standard payment is 10s. per acre ploughed. The advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the mother's brother, cares for (*hu lela*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maledi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid. 464 426 [465] 855 431

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufiswa*, uses the cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a 231 465

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paid in salt and the other commodities mentioned. But the practice is, except for payment in meat, largely confined to Christians. As far as it exists, it completely alters the old long-run reciprocity pattern. There is no social feast. Collective replaces co-operative activity; for personal profit, not sociability, is the prime motive; the social gala is converted into a labour situation, and the interests of employer and employee begin to diverge. Room for roundabout recipocity is narrowed; instead of the indefinite mutuality upon which a man who helps others to-day may rely in the future, he receives an immediate and individual reward; faith in long-range equivalence of services and obligations gives way to a desire for direct personal satisfaction. 476 182

To the new situation, in which the *lejema*-giver corrects and directs and the worker obeys and submits, imperfect adjustments have been made. Direction, hitherto unknown in the economic relations of equals, degenerates to exploitation; the answer to unwilling submission is resentment; and the employer is regarded as a renegade and cheat. He is known to buy a bag of salt for 7*s*.—and to distribute it so that each worker receives only one-sixth of the accepted value (1*s*.) of a day's work. The conflict, in which the worker retaliates by calling the employer 'unscrupulous', is only beginning. It may resolve itself by new adjustments, even though an aggravating feature is the fact that it is the Christian who is the budding capitalist and the pagan who is the dependent labourer. From the point of view of progress in agriculture, the danger is that employers are usually progressive, and progress thus comes to stand for anti-social methods. This hampers the work of agricultural demonstrators. It is clear that lasting solutions, even of apparently simple agricultural problems, not to speak of the complicated problems of administration or of wider spheres of culture contact, can be attained only by studying both the forms of the old institutions and psychological reactions among the people to the changes. 476 466 182 [435] [241]

Turning to exchanges in the society—that is, purchases and sales, whether cash or kind is transferred—we may consider external and internal trade from the standpoint of whether it falls within a money, money-barter, barter, or gift-barter economy. We use these terms to designate the distinctions mentioned below. *External trade* refers to transactions with people belonging to groups outside or alien to the tribe, such as stores, farmers, and individuals of other tribes. *Internal trade* is largely local, but it may be interlocal when it occurs across the boundaries of the reserve, but between members of the tribe. *Gift barter* is reciprocal gift exchange. There is no exact economic equivalence. Mutuality, goodwill, and reciprocity are the primary considerations, but it is not the same as a gift, for a gift implies no return gift, but merely one-sided donations, such as presents to children. Out-and-out gift is *mpho* (from *hu fa*) and, while such gifts imply indirect mutuality, there is no expectation of a return gift. For our present purposes and in the table given below, they are left out of consideration; it would, for instance, be impracticable to distinguish between feeding one's household and giving them presents. From gift barter must be distinguished *pure barter*, in which the aim is an interchange of goods of equivalent value 437

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437 rather than of goodwill; the goods exchanged are primary and the relations between the parties, though not unimportant, are secondary. In *money barter* it is not the objective value of the goods exchanged against one another, but their value as compared with certain common measures that is in the forefront—for instance, such measures as hoes or goats or certain denominations of money. When a man says he has bought 1*s.* worth of maize, he may mean, not that he has paid cash, but that he has bought a 4-gallon tinful (which is regarded as the equivalent of 1*s.* worth) and has paid some goods which are considered to have the value of 1*s.* What he has in mind is the common standard, which some think of as 1*s.*, while others regard it as a tinful of maize. Finally, in *money exchange*, goods are exchanged for money, not against other goods; yet for our purposes, not all money transactions are included in money exchange, but only those payments in money which are business transactions. Many money exchanges fall under gift barter. For instance, A brings beer to her son-in-law, who, not having the two goats that he should return, hands over £1 to A; he is not paying for the beer, but he is exchanging his goodwill.

437 438 439 431 The following table approximately reflects the volume of exchanges during the course of a normal year in an average family of five (two adults and three children). It would be impracticable to give the source of our figures, except for the general remark that they have been worked out from mass statistics of a population of about 2,000 people, supplemented by budgets and personal observations, and are expressed in £ *s. d.*

	External Trade I						Internal Trade I											
Medium of payment	Money			Money barter		Total			Money		Money barter		Barter		Gift barter		Total	
	£	s.	d.	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£ s. d.
Cash	1	2	3	—		1	2	3	5	0	—		—			8	3	13 2
Agricultural produce and beer			6	2	0		2	6	1	9	1	6	7	0	1	1	6	1 11 9
Livestock, &c.			6	—				6	4	0	2	0	4	6	2	19	6	3 10 0
Total	1	3	3	2	0	1	5	3	10	9	3	6	11	6	4	9	3	5 15 0

437 602 431 It will be seen that money exchange accounts for £1 14*s.*, or 24 per cent. of the total exchanges, money barter for 5*s.* 6*d.*, or under 4 per cent., barter for 11*s.* 6*d.*, or just under 8 per cent., and gift barter for £4 9*s.* 3*d.*, or just under 64 per cent. By far the largest single exchange is bride-price (*munywalo*), which falls under gift barter. The proportion of

I [See p. 61, Cat. 116 for definition of external and internal trade -- Analysis]

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goodwill or reciprocal exchanges would be considerably enlarged if we included unilateral gifts (*mpho*), such as delicacies given by the mother's mother to a grandchild, goats to important visitors, money or clothes to wives or in-laws, soap and cloth to lovers or concubines, and so on. We have excluded them, but they all arise out of institutionalized situations; to lavish donations or gifts of goodwill upon anyone but relatives is very unusual. So much is needed to maintain reciprocity between relatives that this kind of generosity to strangers is mere lack of balance. The society specially insists that people should direct their energies towards building up firm friendship between those kin whose relationship to one another is subject to strains. There are endless sources of quarrel between relatives-in-law; hence sons-in-law must always help parents-in-law, while the latter must perpetually be bringing beer to their sons-in-law. The gifts that pass, by anticipation smooth out the differences or relieve the strains arising from structural arrangements; mainly they are not what we would call 'friendship gifts'. The clue to a man's behaviour is not to be found chiefly in personality choices; there are no defined occasions, such as marriages or Christmas among us, when friends can show their goodwill, or when the whole world is supposed to be well-disposed. Kinship is the scheme in which reciprocity is most appropriate, at least in exchange transactions.

Among the gift-barter exchanges the most distinctive are certain institutionalized gifts, such as *khirula* beer, the *gɔsha*, and *munywalo*. Essentially they do not belong to a trading context at all; they are not economically motivated and do not result from any objective diversification of needs; yet the attitudes appropriate to them are reflected back upon the trading situation. *Khirula* (*hu rula*, to lift off the head) is beer carried to a relative or occasionally a friend, the most impressive occasion being when relatives-in-law bring beer to the *tsɛɛi*, son-in-law. As many as twelve calabashes (35–40 gallons), equivalent to one head of cattle, may be carried. One calabash is usually consumed on the way, a second is given to the carriers on their arrival, and the rest is partaken of by any one, including the carriers, who attend the beer-drink. The recipient is expected to return a gift, generally two goats, one slaughtered immediately for the carriers as relish, the second taken home by them and often called 'the walking stick of the in-laws'. The situation is one of good fellowship and friendliness; there are no displays of suspicion and no mutual recriminations as in some other tribes; the givers and the receivers meet one another with joyful shouts and leave one another mutually exhilarated.

There are no special occasions to which *khirula* beer is appropriate, though it is usually stated to be brought for some, usually a fictitious, reason, such as 'to cause us to see the young grandchild', who, in fact, has been seen often before. An old man sometimes asks a distant relative or even a non-relative who has just returned from town for a jacket or pair of trousers perhaps. Some time later his wives brew beer and he 'gives' the beer to the young man, praising him for his generosity and announcing to all that he was indebted to the young man. This is the beginning of a never-ending series of exchanges, for the young man must

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travels in one direction, another (brides) in the opposite direction. Usually so many groups are involved that the circular reciprocity cannot be seen. But what is clear is that each man has a link (we may say a partner) in each direction; on the one hand, a cattle-linked sister, to whose son he must give his daughter if he is offered *munywalo*; on the other hand, his wife's cattle-linked brother, from whom his wife may demand a daughter-in-law.

The partners are primarily cattle-linked brothers and sisters, but secondarily also the lineage of the brother and the lineage into which the sister has married; for the primary obligations readily extend to descendants and even collaterals in the groups concerned. But the partnership is not conceived as part of an economic scheme. Partners do not bargain for advantages: the transaction is institutionalized, and the values and equivalences are fixed. There is no need to use love-charms, magically to dispose one's partner to favour one's suit; the structure of the society stresses the need for reciprocity and harmonious exchanges. There is no way of manipulating the exchange to one's personal benefit or of making it serve a commercial purpose. If a man has more daughters than sons, he will not be enriched; nor will he be impoverished if he has more sons than daughters. In the first instance, the cattle coming in must be used to 'build houses' where the sons of the daughters may find wives, and in the second a variety of arrangements within the group and between it and other groups that are cattle-obligated to it meets the situation. The system of exchanges, like the working of the social structure itself, relies upon reciprocity and not upon commercial incentives and motives.

In such a society it is not surprising that the Lovedu, unlike the Shangana-Tonga in their midst, have no aptitude for barter and that frankly commercial exchanges are insignificant. Where the scale of values against which people exchange commodities is familiar and standardized, money barter is looked upon much as is barter; but where it is not, as in the case of the 6*d*. tins used for exchanging salt, money barter is as suspect as money exchange. The comparatively large proportion of money exchange (24 per cent.) is due not to inclination, but to necessity. People must buy cloths, dress material, and men's wear from the stores. One of the main causes of tension and even divorce between spouses is the burden of dressing a wife. Likewise, only money can buy the poles and planks, the nails and wire, that are needed for building; even for grass, headmen are beginning to exact a fee. It is true that European contact has touched but lightly the equipment of the Lovedu home and articles of Western manufacture are relatively scarce; nevertheless, people have to buy petrol tins, axes, basins, lanterns, and blankets, not to mention soap and matches; and towards the end of the season much of the maize improvidently sold to stores has to be bought back. Perhaps the most important purchases with money are agricultural implements, sacks, and donkeys. There is a very distinct aversion from all transactions of a commercial nature; and the aversion is minimized only where the trading situation has been institutionalized.

Trade is, however, of no great consequence: it is not the basis of

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●437 wealth; and the rewards of the society do not go to those who can manipulate the trading situation. Land cannot be traded, and cattle, the only other recognizable form of wealth, are completely absorbed in the *munywalo* exchanges. For the rest, the economic unit is as nearly as possible self-sufficient. There are occasional shortages, but usually they affect everybody more or less equally. The volume of internal trade, apart from gift exchange, was and still is insignificant. There are no markets, and skilled workers do not usually produce articles in anticipation of the needs of others. Hoes were, and pots still are, exchanged for agricultural products. The small interchange of agricultural products in normal times never unduly benefited one man at the expense of another. Animals constantly died, but only those people who had little consideration for their relatives—for elaborate rules exist as to the distribution of the various parts of an animal—thought of selling the meat. In abnormal times people sold and still sell cattle: the instinct of self-preservation overrides the sentiments against tampering with one of the main pillars of the social structure.

The Lovedu are in this respect wholly unlike their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga, who undertook commercial journeys and had companies of carriers with elaborate organization and sharing of profits.. The earliest Europeans constantly mention the begging propensities and topsy-turvy economic conceptions of the Lovedu. And even now it is useless to attempt to buy a valuable thing from them. You may succeed in getting it by begging or appealing to sentiment or showing how much you need it. With a Shangana-Tonga you may bargain; with a Lovedu bargaining arouses suspicion, the suspicion that you are making a profit out of his ignorance, and it is considered better to give than to sell. Begging is not [735] socially disapproved; it is contrasted, not with self-reliance, but with theft; and a man, it is said, should always ask for, not steal, the things of another. Begging is really the counterpart of mutual helpfulness, of the feeling of dependence on one another. Where such sentiments have a right of existence, even in royalty itself, the only consideration that evokes a sympathetic response in the trading situation is the need of the person who wishes to transact the exchange. A man does not sell for his personal gain and the price is not a matter of great moment; either goods have their fixed price or they have no price at all. The situation is always an embarrassing one. The Lovedu, in short, have no commercial instincts; they have been conditioned to mutual helpfulness and non-competitive trading.

437 They distinguish sharply between trade carried on in the traditional
577 manner and what they call 'bizmis' (business), which generally involves
795 money transactions and is associated with subterfuge and personal gain. 'Bizmis' is beyond the pale of decency; it is specially debased in the hands of those upstarts who hold initiation schools for their own personal profit. The most depraved people are the few Christians, who, in league with Europeans or on their own account, constitute themselves as middlemen and exploit their fellow men. They are *dibava*, deceivers and breakers of promises, comparable only with prostitutes who 'are eaten on the road'. The Christian Church, with its fees and collections, falls,

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to the Lovedu manner of thinking, within the 'bizmis' scheme: one buys baptism and confirmation; at communion one pays for the flesh and blood of Christ. How different is the institution of *munywalo*. No wonder the work of the Church is infinitely difficult.

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177 planted with sweet sorghum, and breaking down the contour walls of
241 stone that stopped the rush of water on the slopes. The soil, taxed to its
134 utmost by the mixed crops planted, is gradually becoming exhausted; it is being more easily washed away and the erosion has already silted up the lower stretches of rivers, so that old riverside gardens there have been destroyed. The introduction of donkeys added to the cumulative destructive effect, with which neither the combined forces of agricultural demonstrators and forest rangers, nor the stimulus of agricultural shows and competitions, nor the innate ingenuity of the Native can hope to contend. The fundamental evil is over-population, not over-stocking. In the old days a man hoed near grazing land at his own risk; to-day he must plough where he can.

177 A miscellaneous series of reactions may be briefly enumerated. Money
437 subserves some purely economic purposes: it purchases various European articles, such as clothes and cloths, sewing machines and soap, candles, lanterns and paraffin, sieves and enamel dishes, iron objects, cycles, and wagons. But, compared with articles of local manufacture, these introductions are insignificant except among Christians. In the new forms of service and co-operation money also has a purely economic function and threatens the old reciprocities. But it is not always easy to say whether money economy is more rapidly transforming institutions than institutions are transforming money economy: often money becomes incorporated into the pattern of goodwill exchanges. The victory may lie with
[182] Western conceptions, but incalculable forces are massing against them, and there is a tendency among the best-educated Natives to revive the past in answer to the challenge of the European.

177 The result will be a subtle and unpredictable interpretation. The
182 suspicion that motivates the reaction is both effect and cause: it is the result of a feeling of insecurity, but it leads to protective adjustments in all spheres of culture. A woman may refuse to don a newly bought European blanket until it has been soiled by being worn by some one else susceptible to its dangers or, as they say, until 'the European can no longer be seen in it'. This attitude is evidence both of an old pattern and of profound distrust of the European. Tropical ulcers are sometimes
[164] attributed to Nyasaland boys, who are hated for their sexual adventures with Lovedu women; but in fact tropical ulcers have always been there, though the serious lesions appeared for the first time only after the great famine of 1894–6. The psychological determinants of change are resultants of subtle combinations of objective facts and subjective errors.

177 Change of diet in recent years has contributed to the evil of malnutri-
146 tion. Its causes are complex. On the one hand, the variety of old crops has been reduced by the plough and congestion destroys the vegetation
182 that is used as relishes and fruits; on the other, the substitutions are inadequate and consist mostly of starches. Physical degeneration weakens the Native as an employee, lassitude adversely affects the incentives and the energy necessary for the tasks of subsistence, and a sense of insecurity fans the flames of suspicion. The difficulties of the dietician and the medical man increase immensely. This is what an intelligent and particularly unbiased young man feels: 'In European hospitals they plan

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I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Monoalo a o fede*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tsetse* (or *mudukulu*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*mudukulu*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

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437 rather than of goodwill; the goods exchanged are primary and the relations between the parties, though not unimportant, are secondary. In *money barter* it is not the objective value of the goods exchanged against one another, but their value as compared with certain common measures that is in the forefront—for instance, such measures as hoes or goats or certain denominations of money. When a man says he has bought 1*s.* worth of maize, he may mean, not that he has paid cash, but that he has bought a 4-gallon tinful (which is regarded as the equivalent of 1*s.* worth) and has paid some goods which are considered to have the value of 1*s.* What he has in mind is the common standard, which some think of as 1*s.*, while others regard it as a tinful of maize. Finally, in *money exchange*, goods are exchanged for money, not against other goods; yet for our purposes, not all money transactions are included in money exchange, but only those payments in money which are business transactions. Many money exchanges fall under gift barter. For instance, A brings beer to her son-in-law, who, not having the two goats that he should return, hands over £1 to A; he is not paying for the beer, but he is exchanging his goodwill.

437 The following table approximately reflects the volume of exchanges
438 during the course of a normal year in an average family of five (two
439 adults and three children). It would be impracticable to give the source
431 of our figures, except for the general remark that they have been worked out from mass statistics of a population of about 2,000 people, supplemented by budgets and personal observations, and are expressed in £ *s. d.*

	External Trade I						Internal Trade I											
Medium of payment	Money			Money barter			Total			Money			Money barter			Barter			Gift barter			Total		
	£	s.	d.	s.		d.	£	s.	d.	s.		d.	s.		d.	s.		d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Cash	1	2	3	—			1	2	3	5	0		—			—				8	3		13	3
Agricultural produce and beer			6	2	0			2	6	1	9		1	6		7	0		1	1	6	1	11	9
Livestock, &c.			6	—					6	4	0		2	0		4	6		2	19	6	3	10	0
Total	1	3	3	2	0		1	5	3	10	9		3	6		11	6		4	9	3	5	15	0

437 It will be seen that money exchange accounts for £1 14*s.*, or 24 per
602 cent. of the total exchanges, money barter for 5*s.* 6*d.*, or under 4 per cent.,
431 barter for 11*s.* 6*d.*, or just under 8 per cent., and gift barter for £4 9*s.* 3*d.*, or just under 64 per cent. By far the largest single exchange is bride-price (*munywalo*), which falls under gift barter. The proportion of

I [See p. 61, Cat. 116 for definition of external and internal trade.--Analyst.]

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Cash	1	2	3	—		1	2	3	5	0	—		—			8 3		13 3
Agricultural produce and beer			6	2	0		2	6	1	9	1	6	7	0	1	1 6	1	11 9
Livestock, &c.			6	—				6	4	0	2	0	4	6	2	19 6	3	10 0
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164 Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which 221 are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things [262] cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudumtoli*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*hu rula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green [251] mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for [252] winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *muukhoma* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and 241 sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, 221 which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first 461 finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their [273] fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption 535 and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gosha*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. 231 Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on 857 the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

221 In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's 461 seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *madulahae* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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storing, the majority no longer go to the fields and cattle are no longer herded. True, mealies have to be de-cobbed, but this is work done at home to the strains of wagging tongues and friendly gossip. Many visits are being paid to relatives and friends; people are re-establishing contacts with one another. But if it is a time of leisure, it is also a period of monotonous diet, for relishes are scarce and resort is had to dried relishes, roasted pumpkin pips, and *mahoru* ants, for even blackjacks are scarce before the spring rains. This is the season of the year when European vegetables are welcomed and many people, more particularly Christians, specially cultivate them for these months to be sold as relish. Those, like cabbage and lettuce and tomatoes, which can be cooked in the manner of spinach, are preferred. Where beetroots, radishes, turnips, or carrots are grown, it is the leaves that are sold to be cooked and eaten with porridge. More often than not the roots are thrown away or eaten in desperation by the owner himself. Many people willingly hire their services for a day to a farmer in return for a basket of tomatoes.

Changes have and are taking place in village life, but they have as yet been neither very great nor of a fundamental nature. Even the absence of 37 per cent.[1] of the male population over fifteen years of age in European service on farms and in towns, has been more than offset by the use of the plough. There is a growing spirit of independence among younger people of to-day which makes them impatient of control by their elders, and modern conditions of safety and peace make it possible for people to move away from their parents and establish their own small villages after any quarrel or suspicion of witchcraft.

[1] This figure was obtained by a detailed census of three different areas. Women in this tribe do not leave home to any extent to work for Europeans.

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241 planted, disappear before the advance of European vegetables. This is
178 as yet not a great change, because there are very few of these gardens, and it is far beyond present resources to construct irrigation furrows.

The balance is also upset by other tendencies. Agriculture is still a vital interest, but others are beginning to compete with it, and the various cultural devices by which interests were massed behind the various stages of agriculture are no longer as effective as formerly. Mobilization of energies by the seasonal calendar and their concentration at the strategic points of time and place are only partially effective. The unfolding of nature, the increasing signs of the coming spring, the more and more auspicious banking up of the thunder-clouds used to be like the culmination of intensive propaganda playing upon the emotions of the people. As the first rains fell and the scent of the veld rose to men's nostrils, they seemed to liberate internal secretions which drove men to action; and the example of the first workers in the fields made the impulse irresistible. But to-day, though much of this is in evidence and one still sees an impulsive restlessness canalized into productive activity, the reactions are, according to Native accounts, much weaker. Neither internal secretions, if such there are, nor suggestion in a tense situation have their old overpowering effect.

[461] Translation of the impulses aroused into useful action is to some extent inhibited by enervating listlessness, at least among a proportion of the people. They are people puzzled by the changes around them or caught in the vicious circle of malnutrition and weakened incentives. They seek solutions in smaller exertions, lotus-like inactivity, and excessive beer-drinking; and in the hierarchy of ideals, these values are beginning to become unduly prominent. It would be disastrous if they created a cultural pattern, as the tendency suggests, in which agricultural work is mere drudgery and people concentrate upon easy crops, thus over-simplifying a wholesome simplicity in food and, as a cumulative result,
[146 not fulfilling, but draining the joys of life. Even to-day, weakened by
164 unbalanced nutrition, many more people succumb to tuberculosis,
754] bilharzia, tape-worm, even dysentery and malaria; as disease spreads and shakes the sense of security, sorcery and witchcraft become more common interpretations, and men must rely upon magic to restore their confidence. It is in agricultural practices that some of the greatest changes have occurred in the society. But, as will be seen, the changes are not of a simple nature.

These are the tendencies; but we must remember that the foundations of the society are deeply laid and the tensions are evident only in the upper superstructure. The people have a remarkable capacity for making adjustments, at least when no profound social arrangements are affected. They have adopted new crops, changed from hoe to plough cultivation, and adjusted themselves from unlimited to limited land. Unfortunately, they do not as yet have faith in manure. They have seen, they say, that manure raises an excess of weeds and that for *njugo* beans it is useless, even dangerous. One cannot appeal to the value of medicine, because only witches 'doctor' their fields, not indeed to fertilize them, but to steal the crops of their neighbours. Garden magic is never

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824 called the small hemp, *khibajabajani*. The large pods of *legamasi*, a
192 peanut of the *masaimitka* variety, are likened to leggings, for which they use a corruption of the Afrikaans word *kamasters*. *Khithava-misisi* in scientific nomenclature is *Amaranthus spinous* but, for all that, it pricks the 'missus' (*hu thava misisi*). We link the sunflower with the sun, but they call it *munontshaknuhu*, fattener of the fowls, because the unaccountable European, instead of leaving fowls to their own devices, fattens them (*hu nontsha*) with its seeds. It would be tedious to give more of these interesting names. Suffice it to say that, upon whatever principle they are given, they furnish examples of close observation, of humour and poetry, and of practical sense.

824 In the command that the Lovedu have over the material supplied by
461 vegetation, knowledge of the suitability of the plant to be used is by far the most impressive aspect. By contrast, preparation of the material, by seasoning or otherwise, and skilful or artistic manipulation to produce the required result lag far behind. Utility rather than artistic beauty is the main consideration; a carelessly made article, generally speaking, serves its purpose as well as one well executed. There is not much specialization and a high standard of workmanship is not aimed at; most men know what wood to select and how to make a great variety of ordinary household articles. Special skill is needed for making wooden dishes, drums, and milk pails. The most skilled work is perhaps the making of baskets (*zwirudwana*), which is done by men. This is not the place to describe the technique of the arts and crafts; all we need insist upon is the widespread knowledge of the virtues and defects of the plants that can be used.

824 Modern conditions have brought about a serious decline in craftsman-
178 ship and in familiarity with the vegetation. Schoolboys no longer have the extensive opportunities of learning veld-lore which herding provided. Herding is to them hardly an institutionalized induction into nature study; instead of being a part of life itself, it assumes the aspect of distasteful labour. The introduction of European articles also lessens the interest in the qualities of the vegetation. Yet these influences are in their infancy. They have made some impression upon the material elements of the culture, but they have tended to impoverish rather than to replace the old. You see petrol tins side by side with water pots, ugly sacks ousting the picturesque granaries, patched pieces of boxwood replacing reed doors, cast-off European clothes instead of graceful coverings of skin, machine-made blankets beside hand-woven grass mats, and axes and knives, no longer from the smithy, but only from the stores.

178 More serious is the threat to the traditional outlook. Christianity
3|3 stresses the virtue of being different from the pagan, but the status of Europeanized Natives is precarious both in and outside the tribe, and there is no co-ordinated view of life that can successfully combat the subtle economic onslaught of European culture. And, since 1938, the legislative prohibition of cutting down trees, except after permission having been obtained and a fee paid, threatens a change of which the results cannot be foreseen. Many trees, and among them some essential for the crafts, may not be cut down at all. The inconvenience of walking

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and friends—indeed anyone—may join the group and help in the task, usually agricultural, which is being performed. But the group that collects for the occasion is not wholly fortuitous; relatives and neighbours always predominate. There is no elaborate pre-arrangement. The *lejema*-giver usually announces his *lejema* beforehand and invites some people to come. Women, who brew the beer, usually organize more than men, some of whom rely on those they can collect on their way down to the field that is to be hoed or weeded or reaped. People who are invited are not bound to give an excuse for not coming; it is far more usual to promise to come and not to come than to give an excuse which, whatever it is, can hardly be valid in a society where people are not considered to be bound by time or by their previous engagements. Moreover, the beer for the *lejema* may not yet have matured on the day fixed by the *lejema*-giver. People may have come from long distances, but they will not be annoyed; there is sure to be a beer party in progress quite near. On the other hand, the *lejema*-giver will not complain if those who promised to come do not put in an appearance, for he knows that since 'the far-off well causes thirst', it is better to drink by the way.

Often, though the beer may be ready, no work is possible on the day. The weather may be unpropitious, some important event may require rearrangement of the activities of the day, or sometimes work may be taboo because of a death or hail or the first rain after a period of drought. In these circumstances, the beer must nevertheless be consumed; it is not something that can await the convenience of man. And to those who partake, it is announced that the *lejema* has been converted into a *phɔdwa*—that is to say, the drinkers are not mere drinkers, but a potential labour force that may be expected to do a day's work at some future date. The arrangement is so vague that we cannot fit it into any of our conceptions, such as a promise to perform or a right to demand the labour. The *lejema*-giver may, if he has a good supply of corn, give beer again when he calls those who previously drank of the *phɔdwa*. A *phɔdwa* is essentially a pre-arranged *lejema* which has miscarried; but it may be fortuitous—for instance, when one has to kill a pig against which neighbours have complained. A social occasion at which one gives beer cannot be converted into a *phɔdwa*. Sometimes, when supplies are low or for other reasons no beer can be provided, a man invites a group of people to work for him in anticipation of a beer party, also called a *phɔdwa*, at a future date. But only very special circumstances justify these departures from the *lejema*.

According to our standards, activities at a *lejema* appear to be very haphazard and unorganized. Each member of the group contributes to one end, the execution of the task which is to benefit the *lejema*-giver; but the effort of each worker is not individually assessed; some may turn up when the work begins, others join in much later, even perhaps just before the workers prepare to go home. The work proceeds in a leisurely manner, without undue exertion; no special achievement is expected from any one and the organization is such that the most inexperienced and dilatory can keep pace with the most efficient. Efficiency is as little a matter for comment as inefficiency. There is no rivalry, no spirit of

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476 calculation, no supervision. The adjustments in the situation rely upon
571 no pre-organization; there is practically no leadership or direction; and
● 461 yet an effective interaction is attained. The total pattern is a part of the social system; it is not as if two or more people have casually encountered one another and have by trial and error to discover how to co-operate
[184] effectively in performing the task. Christians, whose standards of organization, performance, and efficiency are derived from those of the white man, attempt to submit the workers to discipline. They sometimes constitute themselves as foremen, they attempt to apply the available energy systematically, they have a system of rewards and penalties. The result is, not co-operation, but service; there are few, if any, songs and the occasion is no longer a gala social event.

The workers at a *lejema* usually adjourn after one and a half or two hours to refresh themselves at about 11 a.m., when a pot of beer, euphemistically called 'the knife-sharpener', is brought to the field. The interval is of indefinite duration and is so much out of harmony with modern ideas, that 'the knife-sharpener' is often regarded with disfavour; instead of sharpening, it blunts the edge of activity in the modern situation, in which the *lejema*-giver thinks of himself as an employer and the workers are concerned to avoid being exploited. Neither employer nor employee is equipped by his background of culture and training to achieve success in these new roles; and the result is that tensions arise. Fortunately, however, the *lejema* is still overwhelmingly a collective social event. There is as yet no need to buoy up labour with dignity and moral worth; it is sufficient to submerge it in the sociability of beer. For the real nature of the *lejema* appears when the workers go to the home of the *lejema*-giver. The situation there instantly dispels any preconception
[574] we may have of special rewards for the workers. There are visitors, dubbed *vahobedi* (solicitants) and as such are distinguished from the *vashumi* (workers). In our society they would be called 'gate-crashers' or 'beggars', but they are not in needy circumstances and do not ask for favours; they are entitled to join in. Individually they not only imbibe calabash for calabash with the workers, but far outnumber them, not unusually by as much as four or five to one.

[735] To judge the situation correctly, we must remember that begging, one of the traits of the Lovedu we might regard as most irritating, is not socially disapproved. He who has and does not give is the offender, not he who asks for what he needs. The case is different, however, when the beggar is a loafer and sponger, roaming about in search of beer without doing any work; and if, as is not unlikely, he is disliked, his presence during the exhilaration caused by the beer is liable to cause a breach of the peace and he might be turned away. Generally speaking, *vashumi* are not given special beer; the beer is not a reward for their services, but a feast transforming work into recreation and reflecting the emphasis upon liberality. To-day the *vahobedi* are sometimes looked upon as parasitic beggars, and measures are taken to reconstitute the *lejema* so as to make it a more economical method of co-operation. Fundamentally, all the arduous work is still done by *lejema*, though every one knows that, for, say, 4*s*. worth of salt, more workers could be obtained and better

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work accomplished than if one had beer made at the cost of 10s. worth of corn, not to mention the time, labour, and firewood that is consumed in preparing the beer. The motive is, however, not economic but social. *Majema* are used, not for long and difficult tasks only, but also for light work, which a man can easily do himself without help. The aim in these cases is not so much to complete the work quickly—time is rarely a matter of importance—as to be credited with generous impulses and to have a pleasant social event. Christians, with their more Europeanized outlook, averse from the waste entailed, and fearing excommunication by the Church, which prohibits beer, nevertheless find it hard not to conform to this custom.

Another form of co-operation is the *khilebe* (*jebe*, a hoe). Uncommon to-day in its original form, it has its essentials preserved in ploughing partnerships, the so-called 'stock fair' in towns and particularly in the collective agricultural work of young girls. The co-operating group, defined by convenience and proximity of domicile, is largely a local one and consists mainly of close relatives, both on the mother's and on the father's side. The group is still comparatively stable, as it was in the old days, when it had its basis in common interests and common needs. Its members collectively reaped or weeded or hoed one another's fields, completing one field and then going to the next, and each arranged about his own food. Kin or neighbours had their lands closer together and less split up than to-day; they started their various tasks at much the same time; there was safety in concentration, and economy in co-operation. The great distinction between *khilebe* and *lejema* was and still is that no beer is provided; but, as in the *lejema*, the *khilebe* partnership lessened the monotony of arduous work and mobilized energies and incentives. As the group was smaller and more closely khit, relied more tangibly upon reciprocity and had more elements of continuity, the stimulus of beer was not necessary to hold it together. Each partner remained an individualist, for the crops were not shared; but each realized the value of mutual helpfulness and the necessity of minimizing the self in relation to the ends of others.

To-day the conditions of the operation of the *khilebe* no longer exist in their old form. Fields have become split up; the old dangers are no more; the plough has vastly decreased man's dependence upon the help of his kin or his neighbour. Though it was perhaps the most potent agent of destruction of the old *khilebe*, the plough has become the centre of the new. The household, which is the economic unit, hardly ever has ploughs, animals, and workers all available at the same time; only 30 per cent. of such units possess ploughs and only 15 per cent. have cattle or donkeys. Thus cultivation calls for some form of co-operation, and the form which was familiar was the *khilebe*. There are new elements in the situation, but their co-ordination was effected by drawing upon pre-existing patterns of co-operation. Typically the *khilebe* in ploughing consists of four partners, representing four economic units: one supplies the animals, a second the plough, the third some of the workers, and the fourth the herdboy, who looks after the cattle during the year and might wield the whip or plant behind the plough. The emphasis

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231 young goat, 'the payment of the herding', to-day, even if the goats have
465 not prospered, because herdboys are no longer willing to work for nothing. Moreover, the *mufiswa* of cattle is nowadays asked to help the owner with his ploughing and he often (illegally, by traditional standards) charges herding and grazing fees. This charge is levied on the model of European farmers and is exacted even in areas within the reserve, where grazing fees are unknown. *Hu fisa* differs from *hu disija* (to cause to graze), an arrangement whereby one man allows another's cattle to run with his own, usually because he has no herdboy; for this no consideration passes.

●461 Service, just like the various forms of co-operation, thus hardly ever implies subservience. Where it does, as in the old *hu fuja* or in the various modern forms of service, its incidents are regarded as derogatory, because they are incongruent with the emphasis on reciprocity. Even
567 *vuthobya* (slavery), which arises from captivity and was practically unknown, implies no real bondage. There is to-day still one 'slave', an old Shangana-Tonga woman captured, not by the Lovedu, but by the Shangana-Tonga, who sent her as tribute for rain to Mujaji. The institution of slavery is unknown among the Lovedu; so she, just like other wives of the queen, was handed over to one of the nobles, who accepted her as a daughter. As we have mentioned, there is a tendency to adopt European patterns of labour, both in the more or less solitary and in the co-operative activities.

166 The most important change is the migration to towns and farms in
464 search of cash wages. The cash amount that enters the tribe, as compared with the total income of an average family, is small, not more than 7 per cent. The effects of the migration itself are proportionately small. It is not so much the absence in town of the men nor even the ideas that they bring back with them that are of the first importance. More men, not less, are idle to-day, and more crops, not less, are reaped than in the old days. Moreover, what the men have learnt in the towns is on the whole so different from the practice at home that it has to be laid aside. The greatest changes are not the direct introductions by these men, but the indirect reactions to the rule and the economy of the white man. Many of these reactions are unintelligible in relation to local conditions; they have spread from the highveld. We are concerned at present only with changes in the outlook towards economic arrangements. At first sight they appear to be very great, but the longer one looks the more superficial they appear and the firmer the old foundations stand out. The Christians
[184] are a notable exception, not because they migrate more to the towns (on the whole the difference is negligible), but because, orientating themselves from an anti-tribal angle, they have eagerly accepted whatever differentiates them from their heathen brothers. They are competitive and money-conscious; they exploit their brothers.

For purposes of comparison, we may briefly consider two areas: A, with a population of 822, and B, with a population of 610. The census in A was taken in April, 1936, of B in April, 1937, the seasons 1936 and 1937 not being significantly different. A is 40 per cent. Christian and on the whole Christian standards of living prevail; B is 16 per cent. Christian

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241 789 couples sleep for the first few nights. Among the Lovedu these practices have no counterpart. Given rain, what is necessary to make the crops prosper is work and good soil, not medicine, and as a result one receives the impression of a practical attitude, not only to agriculture, but, by extension, also to most economic activities. But success both in hunting and in pastoral activities to some extent depends upon the use of magic, although by comparison with the Nguni and Tswana the cattle cult is very much attenuated.

461 Thrift and industry are regarded as virtues. It is the hard-working bride who is sought after, while the most eligible bridegrooms are the *dibudu*, those who by industry have filled their grain pits. But what is valued is not just work; it is work to attain self-sufficiency, that will make one independent, rather than work which places one in a subservient position. Even, as they phrase it, 'In work for the chief, it is only the fool who kills himself'. Hard work must not be thought of in terms of our conceptions, for the outlook of the Lovedu is far less dominated by intensive striving and deep concentration and more by care-free, easy-going standards than ours. Work has dignity, for the maxim, 'It is not the gift-pumpkin [but the produce of one's own garden] that is juicy', is meant, not to deprecate the gift, but to foster pride in the products of one's labour; it is a tenet appropriately urged when the clothes which a youth displays have been acquired, not by his own efforts, but as a present from his parents. Work is accorded recognition: the child who begins herding is said also to begin to deserve the food he gets. Work excuses failures and losses, for as they say, 'The one who loses cattle is the one who herds them', or, more generally, 'The one who breaks is the one who works'. On the other hand, there is scorn of indolence in the proverb, 'The sluggard has no locusts even if they sleep in his courtyard', and a warning in 'He who sits with staring eye-balls [idly] will die, but he who scratches for food [cultivates assiduously] will live'. Considering the craving for beer, it is almost heroic for a man, when refused this elixir of life, to console himself with the thought that 'He who stints me is he who helps me' [because I shall better be able to attend to my work]. But the work that is honoured and considered most congenial is work in situations in which, as in the work party, the reciprocities are fundamental.

643 648 The weakness of the queen as a woman is also her strength and the source of the prestige of the tribe. Her foreign policy is appeasement, not war; for, as they phrase it, 'The queen does not fight'. Reciprocity is the basis of her relations with her district heads, reconciliation the method of settling difficulties. Appeasement, one of the great values in the society, harmonizes with, supports, and is in turn supported by the reliance of the whole social structure upon compromise. This value and the traits corresponding to it interpenetrate every aspect of culture and of life. The hard régime of the initiation 'school' has been softened: there is no need to direct its procedures towards hardening the youth or instilling manly courage, and military discipline and regimentation are of little or no importance. Diplomacy works hand in hand with the 167 methods of the *khoro* and of reconciliation (*ku khumtwa*), but it also

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241 177 not practical knowledge applied from our point of view; it must be from their point of view. Instruction must be articulated with their practices and techniques; it must take into account their arrangements and their rhythm of life. The knowledge imparted must be applicable to their conditions and be linked with the instruments at their disposal. For the dietician to extol the virtues of a new crop, for the doctor to show that bacteria more readily enter where resistance is lowered by deficiencies in food, even for the agricultural demonstrator using his superior implements to demonstrate the practicability of the crop—all this is very nearly fruitless. These things will have their value when they can be fitted into the Native's world of thought and technology. In the meanwhile, the execution of our plans, sound though they be in theory, is merely causing irritation and resistance.

241 476 178 All the old Lovedu cultivation was on the hills or along their slopes and, generally speaking, close relatives, not necessarily relatives through males, had all or some of their fields in large blocks (*demo*). Unlike the Tswana custom, these blocks stood in no relation to the social organization; the land was not pointed out by the chief and its size was not predetermined, but depended upon the energy of the individual cultivators. The *demo* was a matter of convenience and utility: the concentration facilitated co-operation in clearing the fields, economized the labour necessary for protecting the gardens, and made mutual assistance in hoeing and weeding much easier. No doubt the arrangements also mobilized incentives and added to the joys of life. There is to-day nothing left of these blocks. The old ones have inevitably fallen into the hands of more and more scattered people and no new ones can be created because large blocks of land are no longer available. The tendency towards dispersal and fragmentation was still further emphasized when Shangana-Ṭonga cultivation proved the fertility of the valleys. To-day a man must take land where he can find it, and though the Lovedu still live on the hills, they have their lands scattered all over the country. Indeed, since it is easier to plough on level ground, the hills are liable to be neglected, though wisdom dictates that it is best to have fields in two different environments. The result is that a man's fields are widely separated, sometimes being as far as ten miles apart.

241 462 The old division of labour in agriculture between the sexes was not uneven; both men and women hoed, weeded, and reaped. Only men cleared the forest, but against that only women cultivated certain crops, such as groundnuts. The old pattern is still more or less maintained, at least in principle. But cultivation by the plough has changed matters. Men look upon hoeing as the work of women, although the old ideal so much survives that they despise the Shangana-Ṭonga because their menfolk neither hoed nor weeded in the past. To-day hoeing and weeding among the Lovedu fall largely upon the women, and ploughing almost exclusively upon the men. This is not a fair division of labour; it might be fairer if the other activities of men, such as hunting and public life, had not become greatly attenuated. For the women are always busy, and their work is more monotonous than that of the men, who, despite the labour migration to the towns, have much more leisure than women.

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More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do.

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new alinements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions: it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet.

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 361
quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 171
larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [592]
two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the cob and beer-making activities.

TRIBAL ECONOMY. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 241
agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 231
adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [362]
are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 241
a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop, men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pumpkins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
trees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

241 of the agriculture of the more mountainous portions of the Lowveld is the use of terraces, or rather contour walls of stone, for there is no levelling of the ground in between, to prevent excessive washing away of soil. With the absence of men in the towns and the introduction of the plough with subsequent preference for valley cultivation, these contour walls are tending to fall into disuse.

●462 Division of labour between the sexes is the same here as among
[171] Venda and the Highveld tribes of the Northern Transvaal. While care of cattle is the province of men and agricultural work is done by both sexes, cooking and housekeeping is confined to women. Men are responsible for the erection of storage receptacles, renewal of pantry and village enclosures and the lion's share in hut-building, including thatching, for women do only plastering of walls and preparation of the floor. The crafts confined to men are ironwork, work in skin, and all wood-work such as the manufacture of drums, platters, spoons, milk pails, stamping blocks, porridge twirlers, and flat winnowing baskets. Pottery is confined to women, but weaving and basketry (other than the making of winnowing baskets) is done by both sexes.

642 POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND POSITION OF THE CHIEF. The most
643 outstanding features of the Lobedu culture complex, which clearly differentiate the Lowveld tribes from their neighbours to the south and west, are ritual suicide of the chief and the possibility of women ruling in their own right.[1] Among the Lobedu the chief reigns for a period of four circumcision schools, each 'school' being separated from the previous one by a period of almost ten years, and then has to drink poison and die. The institution can hardly continue when its supporting background of ritual and belief is crumbling, but it has survived to this day; the immediate predecessors of the present Lobedu and Letswalo rulers died unnatural deaths in the traditional manner, Modjadji II in 1894 and Mamathola in 1905. There is in this area no conscious belief that growth of the crops, welfare of the cattle,

[184] [1] These two features occur together in the most important tribes of the Lowveld such as the Lobedu, Khaha, Narene, Thabina. The only tribes to whom this institution is foreign are the Phalaborwa and Tsubye and the two Venda tribes of Moila and Tswale. Sekhopo and Radwadu, sections of the Balobedu, broke away when the first woman succeeded and themselves have only men rulers.

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Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu husband is expected to play his part in producing food for his family. Every married man, therefore, has a field of his own which he cultivates with the help of his wives. The produce of this field is used for any beer- or work-parties that the man may wish to give and is a kind of bank upon which his wives may draw when they run short. If, however, a man helps one wife from his personal stores he must give all his wives an equal amount irrespective of their needs. When he first marries, the husband works with his wife in their common field. On marrying a second wife he acquires a field of his own (in addition to the one for his new wife) which his wives take it in turn to weed. It is said that if he had no field of his own but were merely to help each wife in turn to cultivate her field there would be endless trouble in maintaining equality between them. One of them for instance might say, 'How is it that when you come and work in my field you just sit but when you go to the field of the mother of So and So even the shade doesn't tempt you!' 595 241 [462]

A father is responsible for helping his sons to marry. But since a man seldom possesses cattle other than those already involved in bride-price exchange and a son uses the cattle of his sister, boys in a 'house' in which there are no girls often have to go out and work or with the help and advice of their father acquire bride-price in other ways. In the old days an orphan usually hired out his services to carry salt or iron ore from far countries in order in this way to acquire marriage hoes or cattle. Expenses in goats and money over and above the cattle given in marriage are met by the boy himself with the help of his father. A father should see to it that his son is provided with a field when he marries but in practice it is very often the mother who concerns herself with this problem. The father has jural control over his sons and is responsible for their debts. 593 583 [464]

The wives in a polygynous household differ in status. The chief wife is the daughter of the mother's brother—the cattle-linked or any uterine mother's brother or mother's half-brother. She will bear the heir and future head of the village. Where there has been no marriage with the mother's brother's daughter it is the first wife, the one married with his father's cattle that is chief wife. A chief wife exercises no control over 595

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him. 593 591 571

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking. 592 571 603 602

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *mosha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*muduhulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people. 592 571 602 604

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact 592 571 606

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annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such expedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *munywalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the 357
family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a 736
derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *mumwalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

Rather like the *mulada* was the *muruiwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other 735
animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was 178
given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ṭuḍa* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or 437
woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours' The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'.

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services 464
or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. 426
But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilebe*
arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or [465]
cattle of others. The standard payment is 10*s*. per acre ploughed. The advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined 855
custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the 431
mother's brother, cares for (*hu lela*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maledi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration 231
passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufiswa*, uses the 465
cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

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young goat, 'the payment of the herding', to-day, even if the goats have not prospered, because herdboys are no longer willing to work for nothing. Moreover, the *mufiswa* of cattle is nowadays asked to help the owner with his ploughing and he often (illegally, by traditional standards) charges herding and grazing fees. This charge is levied on the model of European farmers and is exacted even in areas within the reserve, where grazing fees are unknown. *Hu fisa* differs from *hu distja* (to cause to graze), an arrangement whereby one man allows another's cattle to run with his own, usually because he has no herdboy; for this no consideration passes.

Service, just like the various forms of co-operation, thus hardly ever implies subservience. Where it does, as in the old *hu ṭuḍa* or in the various modern forms of service, its incidents are regarded as derogatory, because they are incongruent with the emphasis on reciprocity. Even *vuthobya* (slavery), which arises from captivity and was practically unknown, implies no real bondage. There is to-day still one 'slave', an old Shangana-Ṭonga woman captured, not by the Lovedu, but by the Shangana-Ṭonga, who sent her as tribute for rain to Mujaji. The institution of slavery is unknown among the Lovedu; so she, just like other wives of the queen, was handed over to one of the nobles, who accepted her as a daughter. As we have mentioned, there is a tendency to adopt European patterns of labour, both in the more or less solitary and in the co-operative activities.

The most important change is the migration to towns and farms in search of cash wages. The cash amount that enters the tribe, as compared with the total income of an average family, is small, not more than 7 per cent. The effects of the migration itself are proportionately small. It is not so much the absence in town of the men nor even the ideas that they bring back with them that are of the first importance. More men, not less, are idle to-day, and more crops, not less, are reaped than in the old days. Moreover, what the men have learnt in the towns is on the whole so different from the practice at home that it has to be laid aside. The greatest changes are not the direct introductions by these men, but the indirect reactions to the rule and the economy of the white man. Many of these reactions are unintelligible in relation to local conditions; they have spread from the highveld. We are concerned at present only with changes in the outlook towards economic arrangements. At first sight they appear to be very great, but the longer one looks the more superficial they appear and the firmer the old foundations stand out. The Christians are a notable exception, not because they migrate more to the towns (on the whole the difference is negligible), but because, orientating themselves from an anti-tribal angle, they have eagerly accepted whatever differentiates them from their heathen brothers. They are competitive and money-conscious; they exploit their brothers.

For purposes of comparison, we may briefly consider two areas: A, with a population of 822, and B, with a population of 610. The census in A was taken in April, 1936, of B in April, 1937, the seasons 1936 and 1937 not being significantly different. A is 40 per cent. Christian and on the whole Christian standards of living prevail; B is 16 per cent. Christian

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and heathen standards prevail. The main differences between A and B are that in A tribal life is at a minimum and economic obligations are slightly heavier than in B upon both Christians and pagans; and in B, where tribal life is at a maximum, Christians have far better opportunities of economically exploiting their heathen neighbours. The extent of the migration to towns turns out to be a function mainly of economic considerations, but social factors play an important differentiating role, as the following figures will illustrate. The figures refer to males only, as there were no females absent in towns, and they are expressed as the approximate percentage of males absent for each of the age groups that are enumerated.

PERCENTAGE OF MALES WORKING IN TOWNS DURING APRIL (A, 1936; B, 1937)

	Pagans and Christians			Pagans		Christians	
Age Group	A & B	A	B	A	B	A	B
6–14	2	2	1	3	0	0	5
15–19	25	31	11	42	13	16	8
6–19	10	14	4	17	4	7	6
20–25	60	55	68	47	71	58	17
26–49	43	53	33	52	33	55	33
20–49	50	54	40	49	44	56	29
50–	1	2	0	0	0	5	0
All ages, 6 upwards	25	28	21	27	22	31	18

As one would expect, the total exodus in A exceeds that in B, but while the proportion of Christians who migrate is comparatively large in A, it is small in B. On the whole the Christians rely for cash income chiefly upon wages earned in town in A, but not in B, where there are far better opportunities of trade. There are, however, striking differences in the relative numbers of Christians and pagans who migrate in the two areas, especially for the age groups 6–19 and 20–25. This is not the place to give a full explanation: it will be sufficient to note the significance of the fact that for the first-mentioned age group four times larger a percentage of pagans migrate in A than in B, though for Christians there is no marked difference, and, on the other hand, the corresponding percentages in the second-mentioned age group are so strikingly different as to suggest the operation of entirely different factors. Whereas in A it is the pagans, in B it is the Christians who start migrating at an early age. There are many complicated factors that account for these differences, but mainly they are due to the less realistic adjustment of adolescents among pagans in A and among Christians in B, for among them there is little scope for recreational and other activities; and upon young men the burden of providing for the older men, whose social duties and inclinations keep them at home, falls heavily, especially among pagans in B, where tribal life is still in full force. Above all, the figures indicate that the more closely we examine the situation, the more necessary does it

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166 become to interpret economic forces as operating, not *in vacuo*, but against
464 the whole background of social life.

182 It is likewise not economic forces alone, but the diffusion of a new
157 outlook that has caused the major changes in the old co-operative system. Individual achievement was of little account; no one was penalized because he attained only a very indifferent standard of efficiency or industry; people were devoted to a non-material ideal. A man's whole upbringing and training conditioned him to the ideal of reciprocity and helpfulness. Yet in the modern world, where personal achievement is important and rivalries must necessarily arise, the life-adjustment value of this ideal is doubtful. To some extent, the individual adapts himself by accepting European standards when he is in town and relaxing from the strain when he has returned home. He comes back mentally tired, and it is recognized that he is entitled to take a long holiday, even though there is pressing work to be done. His failures in town are attributed, not to causes within himself, but to the operation of external forces. His dismissal is ascribed to the jealousy and witchcraft of a competitor for the same position, and the success of his rival to magic. Rivalry is an unfamiliar situation in economic activities at home, and the competitive, individualistic struggle in the towns is never phrased as being between members of the tribe; the magic that is used to oust him from competitive positions or to cause an employer to favour another is always magic used by members of another tribe, such as the Zulu or Xhosa. The Lovedu
[789] traditionally regard luck magic with some suspicion, at least as applied in economic situations. But it has become increasingly necessary in order to re-establish their sense of security; a whole new technique of charms, burning medicines to attract custom, chewing roots to give confidence (what the European might call 'effrontery'), and the like has developed. Many invoke, as before a dangerous enterprise in the old days, the blessing of the gods. Even within the tribal economy itself the spread of ideas of competition has been accompanied by the extension of magic and sorcery to new spheres of activity.

476 That this answer to contact with the new economy may not always
182 suffice, we see among many neighbouring tribes—for instance, the people of Sekhopo, 'brothers' of the Lovedu. Among them beer, the quintessence of situations of reciprocity and co-operation, is converted into an article of sale. Beer is provided, even at *majema*, as wages, and hence only to the workers; visitors may join the beer-party, but must pay for each calabash they have. This commercialization is deplored by the Lovedu; it is regarded in the same light as charging strangers for board and lodging, a practice that prevails among highveld tribes; and it is almost as bad as what the Lovedu imagine to be the European custom of making relatives who come on a holiday pay their hosts. 'Our hotels are our relatives', said a Lovedu man to us; but while he was prepared to justify the commercial pattern in which salt, meat, tobacco, European vegetables, even money, oust beer in the *lejema*, the sale of beer seemed to him intolerable. This view fairly reflects the general opinion, as well as the attempt to harmonize the two patterns, among the Lovedu. Rewards are sometimes given to individual *lejema* workers, who are

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu husband is expected to play his part in producing food for his family. Every married man, therefore, has a field of his own which he cultivates with the help of his wives. The produce of this field is used for any beer- or work-parties that the man may wish to give and is a kind of bank upon which his wives may draw when they run short. If, however, a man helps one wife from his personal stores he must give all his wives an equal amount irrespective of their needs. When he first marries, the husband works with his wife in their common field. On marrying a second wife he acquires a field of his own (in addition to the one for his new wife) which his wives take it in turn to weed. It is said that if he had no field of his own but were merely to help each wife in turn to cultivate her field there would be endless trouble in maintaining equality between them. One of them for instance might say, 'How is it that when you come and work in my field you just sit but when you go to the field of the mother of So and So even the shade doesn't tempt you!' 595 241 [462]

A father is responsible for helping his sons to marry. But since a man seldom possesses cattle other than those already involved in bride-price exchange and a son uses the cattle of his sister, boys in a 'house' in which there are no girls often have to go out and work or with the help and advice of their father acquire bride-price in other ways. In the old days an orphan usually hired out his services to carry salt or iron ore from far countries in order in this way to acquire marriage hoes or cattle. Expenses in goats and money over and above the cattle given in marriage are met by the boy himself with the help of his father. A father should see to it that his son is provided with a field when he marries but in practice it is very often the mother who concerns herself with this problem. The father has jural control over his sons and is responsible for their debts. 593 583 [464]

The wives in a polygynous household diffe. in status. The chief wife is the daughter of the mother's brother—the cattle-linked or any uterine mother's brother or mother's half-brother. She will bear the heir and future head of the village. Where there has been no marriage with the mother's brother's daughter it is the first wife, the one married with his father's cattle that is chief wife. A chief wife exercises no control over 595

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woman, K, has, during her husband's prolonged absence in a labour centre, moved away from her fellow wives into another district in order to be near her married daughter. She lives in a small homestead with her married son, who is absent doing migrant labour, and her other children. In contrast to this is the homestead of a neighbour of hers who has five wives and

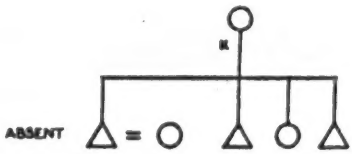

FIG. 5. Composition of a very small homestead.

whose ten brothers together with their wives and children still live with him in the homestead—a total of sixty-eight inmates (twenty-nine adults, thirty-nine children). Of these three married and two unmarried men are away doing migrant labour.

The domestic group indicated in Figure 6 originally lived in one homestead.

On A's death his chief son, B, inherited his youngest wife (No. 3) who as yet had no children. They all moved out of the old homestead, the sons (B and D) of A's two elder wives

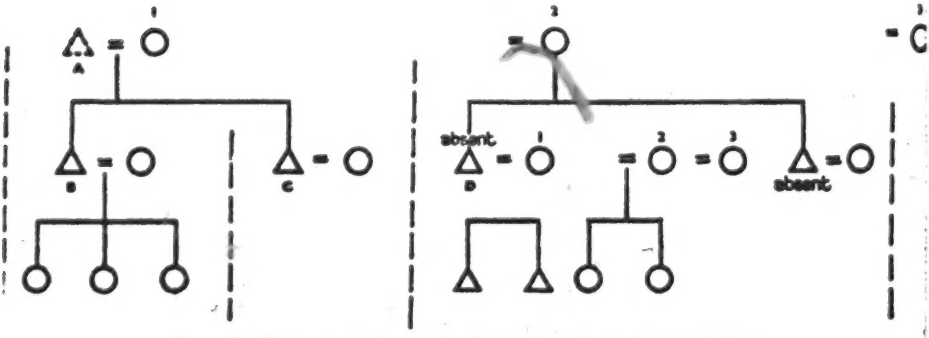

FIG. 6. Segmentation of a homestead on 'house' lines.

building separate homesteads next to one another, where I found them in 1938. The women in the homestead of D considered themselves part of the homestead of A and in the

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the 357
family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a 736
derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munywalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

Rather like the *mulada* was the *muruiwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other 735
animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was 178
given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ʃuda* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or 437
woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'.

Hu hiri (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services 464
or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. 426
But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilebe* arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or cattle of others. The standard payment is 10*s*. per acre ploughed. The [465]
advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined 855
custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the 431
mother's brother, cares for (*hu lela*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maledi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration 231
passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufiswa*, uses the 465
cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

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young goat, 'the payment of the herding', to-day, even if the goats have not prospered, because herdboys are no longer willing to work for nothing. Moreover, the *mufiswa* of cattle is nowadays asked to help the owner with his ploughing and he often (illegally, by traditional standards) charges herding and grazing fees. This charge is levied on the model of European farmers and is exacted even in areas within the reserve, where grazing fees are unknown. *Hu fisa* differs from *hu disija* (to cause to graze), an arrangement whereby one man allows another's cattle to run with his own, usually because he has no herdboy; for this no consideration passes.

Service, just like the various forms of co-operation, thus hardly ever implies subservience. Where it does, as in the old *hu ṭuḓa* or in the various modern forms of service, its incidents are regarded as derogatory, because they are incongruent with the emphasis on reciprocity. Even *vuthobya* (slavery), which arises from captivity and was practically unknown, implies no real bondage. There is to-day still one 'slave', an old Shangana-Ṭonga woman captured, not by the Lovedu, but by the Shangana-Ṭonga, who sent her as tribute for rain to Mujaji. The institution of slavery is unknown among the Lovedu; so she, just like other wives of the queen, was handed over to one of the nobles, who accepted her as a daughter. As we have mentioned, there is a tendency to adopt European patterns of labour, both in the more or less solitary and in the co-operative activities.

The most important change is the migration to towns and farms in search of cash wages. The cash amount that enters the tribe, as compared with the total income of an average family, is small, not more than 7 per cent. The effects of the migration itself are proportionately small. It is not so much the absence in town of the men nor even the ideas that they bring back with them that are of the first importance. More men, not less, are idle to-day, and more crops, not less, are reaped than in the old days. Moreover, what the men have learnt in the towns is on the whole so different from the practice at home that it has to be laid aside. The greatest changes are not the direct introductions by these men, but the indirect reactions to the rule and the economy of the white man. Many of these reactions are unintelligible in relation to local conditions; they have spread from the highveld. We are concerned at present only with changes in the outlook towards economic arrangements. At first sight they appear to be very great, but the longer one looks the more superficial they appear and the firmer the old foundations stand out. The Christians are a notable exception, not because they migrate more to the towns (on the whole the difference is negligible), but because, orientating themselves from an anti-tribal angle, they have eagerly accepted whatever differentiates them from their heathen brothers. They are competitive and money-conscious; they exploit their brothers.

For purposes of comparison, we may briefly consider two areas: A, with a population of 822, and B, with a population of 610. The census in A was taken in April, 1936, of B in April, 1937, the seasons 1936 and 1937 not being significantly different. A is 40 per cent. Christian and on the whole Christian standards of living prevail; B is 16 per cent. Christian

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paid in salt and the other commodities mentioned. But the practice is, except for payment in meat, largely confined to Christians. As far as it exists, it completely alters the old long-run reciprocity pattern. There is no social feast. Collective replaces co-operative activity; for personal profit, not sociability, is the prime motive; the social gala is converted into a labour situation, and the interests of employer and employee begin to diverge. Room for roundabout recipocity is narrowed; instead of the indefinite mutuality upon which a man who helps others to-day may rely in the future, he receives an immediate and individual reward; faith in long-range equivalence of services and obligations gives way to a desire for direct personal satisfaction. 476 182

To the new situation, in which the *lejema*-giver corrects and directs and the worker obeys and submits, imperfect adjustments have been made. Direction, hitherto unknown in the economic relations of equals, degenerates to exploitation; the answer to unwilling submission is resentment; and the employer is regarded as a renegade and cheat. He is known to buy a bag of salt for 7*s*.—and to distribute it so that each worker receives only one-sixth of the accepted value (1*s*.) of a day's work. The conflict, in which the worker retaliates by calling the employer 'unscrupulous', is only beginning. It may resolve itself by new adjustments, even though an aggravating feature is the fact that it is the Christian who is the budding capitalist and the pagan who is the dependent labourer. From the point of view of progress in agriculture, the danger is that employers are usually progressive, and progress thus comes to stand for anti-social methods. This hampers the work of agricultural demonstrators. It is clear that lasting solutions, even of apparently simple agricultural problems, not to speak of the complicated problems of administration or of wider spheres of culture contact, can be attained only by studying both the forms of the old institutions and psychological reactions among the people to the changes. 476 466 182 735 241

Turning to exchanges in the society—that is, purchases and sales, whether cash or kind is transferred—we may consider external and internal trade from the standpoint of whether it falls within a money, money-barter, barter, or gift-barter economy. We use these terms to designate the distinctions mentioned below. *External trade* refers to transactions with people belonging to groups outside or alien to the tribe, such as stores, farmers, and individuals of other tribes. *Internal trade* is largely local, but it may be interlocal when it occurs across the boundaries of the reserve, but between members of the tribe. *Gift barter* is reciprocal gift exchange. There is no exact economic equivalence. Mutuality, goodwill, and reciprocity are the primary considerations, but it is not the same as a gift, for a gift implies no return gift, but merely one-sided donations, such as presents to children. Out-and-out gift is *supho* (from *hu fa*) and, while such gifts imply indirect mutuality, there is no expectation of a return gift. For our present purposes and in the table given below, they are left out of consideration; it would, for instance, be impracticable to distinguish between feeding one's household and giving them presents. From gift barter must be distinguished *pure barter*, in which the aim is an interchange of goods of equivalent value 437

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431 some day reciprocate and the old man again 'thanks' him with beer given in his honour. And this is an essential aspect of these gift exchanges. The most striking illustration is in respect of *munywalo* (bride-price). The *tsezi*, it is said, never completes *munywalo* payments (*munywalo a u ftle*); even in his old age he must still respond to the call for assistance from his relatives-in-law; and they in turn never cease bringing him beer. But whatever he gives falls into the *munywalo* and must be returned should the marriage be dissolved; the chain linking the parties into relations of reciprocity has snapped.

574 535 471 The *gɔsha*, essentially a dance performed by the young men of one or more areas, provides the setting of an interesting interchange of goodwill and of commodities. The main object is undoubtedly recreational, and the main participators are not kin, but members of a territorial unit. The district head is not necessarily involved, except as far as he must know what goes on in his district. The old Lovedu word *lucbo*, a musical [534] entertainment, emphasizes its salient features: youths, blowing on reed flutes, dance round in a circle to the accompaniment of four drums beaten by girls. There is much preliminary practising under the leadership of the dance-master (*malogwani*), but in the actual performances leadership is not marked and changes continually as one performer after the other takes his stand in the centre of the ring of dancers. The artistic aspect, the making of the sets of reeds, their tone compass, the rhythmic counterpoints and the various melodic and harmonic sequences of sound may be dismissed in a sentence: close by, one is reminded of the pealing of bells thrown into ever new combinations by complex steps and movements; at a distance one listens as if to an *ensemble* of brass instruments strongly supported by drums. We are concerned with the socio-economic aspects only.

171 A slight comparison with the Venda *matangwa*, a word also used by the Lovedu (*matagwa*), is instructive. A Venda creditor wishing to collect a debt calls the dancers, gives them some work (such as the building of a hut or the repairing of a fence), and sends them to the recalcitrant debtor. There they stay feeding at the expense of the debtor and of his neighbours until the debtor pays. But the beast that the debtor pays is slaughtered and consumed by the performers, the creditor receiving only a small part. Apart from using the *matangwa* to enforce payment by debtors, the Venda also send such dancers to express sympathy when there has been a death and in that case there is a return visit to get back the beast slaughtered. It has also other uses not relevant to our present purpose.

574 535 473 Among the Lovedu the *gɔsha* is somewhat different. Private individuals send it to friends or relatives to express sympathy or to notify a death as well as to celebrate the occasion of the latter's marriage or setting up a new home; and there are special rules for each kind of *gɔsha*. The *gɔsha* of condolence, for instance, lasts one day, drums are not allowed if the deceased is of a foreign tribe, and refusal of the entertainment is impossible. Generally speaking, a *gɔsha* entails special food and lodging arrangements, food for the visitors being collected from households in the district which also provides sleeping quarters. The old rules designed

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241 177 not practical knowledge applied from our point of view; it must be from their point of view. Instruction must be articulated with their practices and techniques; it must take into account their arrangements and their rhythm of life. The knowledge imparted must be applicable to their conditions and be linked with the instruments at their disposal. For the dietician to extol the virtues of a new crop, for the doctor to show that bacteria more readily enter where resistance is lowered by deficiencies in food, even for the agricultural demonstrator using his superior implements to demonstrate the practicability of the crop—all this is very nearly fruitless. These things will have their value when they can be fitted into the Native's world of thought and technology. In the meanwhile, the execution of our plans, sound though they be in theory, is merely causing irritation and resistance.

241 476 178 All the old Lovedu cultivation was on the hills or along their slopes and, generally speaking, close relatives, not necessarily relatives through males, had all or some of their fields in large blocks (*demo*). Unlike the Tswana custom, these blocks stood in no relation to the social organization; the land was not pointed out by the chief and its size was not predetermined, but depended upon the energy of the individual cultivators. The *demo* was a matter of convenience and utility: the concentration facilitated co-operation in clearing the fields, economized the labour necessary for protecting the gardens, and made mutual assistance in hoeing and weeding much easier. No doubt the arrangements also mobilized incentives and added to the joys of life. There is to-day nothing left of these blocks. The old ones have inevitably fallen into the hands of more and more scattered people and no new ones can be created because large blocks of land are no longer available. The tendency towards dispersal and fragmentation was still further emphasized when Shangana-Ṭonga cultivation proved the fertility of the valleys. To-day a man must take land where he can find it, and though the Lovedu still live on the hills, they have their lands scattered all over the country. Indeed, since it is easier to plough on level ground, the hills are liable to be neglected, though wisdom dictates that it is best to have fields in two different environments. The result is that a man's fields are widely separated, sometimes being as far as ten miles apart.

241 462 The old division of labour in agriculture between the sexes was not uneven; both men and women hoed, weeded, and reaped. Only men cleared the forest, but against that only women cultivated certain crops, such as groundnuts. The old pattern is still more or less maintained, at least in principle. But cultivation by the plough has changed matters. Men look upon hoeing as the work of women, although the old ideal so much survives that they despise the Shangana-Ṭonga because their menfolk neither hoed nor weeded in the past. To-day hoeing and weeding among the Lovedu fall largely upon the women, and ploughing almost exclusively upon the men. This is not a fair division of labour; it might be fairer if the other activities of men, such as hunting and public life, had not become greatly attenuated. For the women are always busy, and their work is more monotonous than that of the men, who, despite the labour migration to the towns, have much more leisure than women.

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More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do. 241 462

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new alinements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions: it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet. 241 134 178 476

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is 241 311 16

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annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such expedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *munywalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

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CHAPTER IV

CO-OPERATION AND EXCHANGE

Arrangements of and changes in the work-party, partnerships, and solitary occupations—relative roles of economic and goodwill exchanges—beer, dances and bride-price as vehicles of reciprocal exchanges—aversion from business.

181 To convert to his use the material resources upon which man relies for subsistence, some organization of labour is necessary; man must co-ordinate his energies with those of his fellow man. He must co-operate with some and he may consider himself as a competitor of others. The Lovedu is an individualist, but life is hardly regarded as a competitive struggle, even in respect of the things that are limited in supply. Men aim, not so much at achievement and riches, as at maturity and self-sufficiency. There is no single scale of attainments by which men measure themselves against one another. Moderate success is credited to industry, but immoderate success may be suspect; he who reaps much more than his neighbours is in danger of being looked upon as an enemy in league with anti-social forces. The Lovedu do not display either their emotions or their possessions; ostentation is appropriate only to states of exhilaration. Self-expression finds its legitimate scope, not in worsting a rival, but in a gradually expanding responsibility and prestige. The society has a hierarchical framework so constructed that rank and age interpose themselves between possible competitors This does not mean that there is no competition, but the great emphasis is upon co-operation.

476 The two methods by which men pool their resources in order to provide for their primary needs are working together in mutual helpfulness and exchanging the products of their labour. Co-operative working together arises chiefly in agricultural and building activities, where its main purpose is easily intelligible; exchanges are not felt to bear such a direct relation to the differentiated needs and activities of men. Yet fundamentally co-operation and exchange are part of the same system of values. Mutual helpfulness is highly esteemed and aggressive exploitation deeply despised. In the co-operative situation these values are intrinsically present; but the exchange situation must be reconstituted to bring it into harmony with them. The problem in co-operative situations is to harmonize with them the individualism of the peasant; the problem of exchange situations is to eliminate the idea of a commercial transaction; and in both types of situations this is done by the stress upon reciprocity. The purely economic aspect tends to become wholly obscured, except in modern forms of co-operation and exchange. In them the helper becomes a servant and exchanges become 'bizmis' (business). Service and 'bizmis' are tolerated only so far as they conform to the old pattern and values.

476 571 The *lejema*, which is the most distinctive form of co-operative work, consists of a more or less casual group of workers. Neighbours, relatives,

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and friends—indeed anyone—may join the group and help in the task, usually agricultural, which is being performed. But the group that collects for the occasion is not wholly fortuitous; relatives and neighbours always predominate. There is no elaborate pre-arrangement. The *lejema*-giver usually announces his *lejema* beforehand and invites some people to come. Women, who brew the beer, usually organize more than men, some of whom rely on those they can collect on their way down to the field that is to be hoed or weeded or reaped. People who are invited are not bound to give an excuse for not coming; it is far more usual to promise to come and not to come than to give an excuse which, whatever it is, can hardly be valid in a society where people are not considered to be bound by time or by their previous engagements. Moreover, the beer for the *lejema* may not yet have matured on the day fixed by the *lejema*-giver. People may have come from long distances, but they will not be annoyed; there is sure to be a beer party in progress quite near. On the other hand, the *lejema*-giver will not complain if those who promised to come do not put in an appearance, for he knows that since 'the far-off well causes thirst', it is better to drink by the way.

Often, though the beer may be ready, no work is possible on the day. The weather may be unpropitious, some important event may require rearrangement of the activities of the day, or sometimes work may be taboo because of a death or hail or the first rain after a period of drought. In these circumstances, the beer must nevertheless be consumed; it is not something that can await the convenience of man. And to those who partake, it is announced that the *lejema* has been converted into a *phɔdwa*—that is to say, the drinkers are not mere drinkers, but a potential labour force that may be expected to do a day's work at some future date. The arrangement is so vague that we cannot fit it into any of our conceptions, such as a promise to perform or a right to demand the labour. The *lejema*-giver may, if he has a good supply of corn, give beer again when he calls those who previously drank of the *phɔdwa*. A *phɔdwa* is essentially a pre-arranged *lejema* which has miscarried; but it may be fortuitous—for instance, when one has to kill a pig against which neighbours have complained. A social occasion at which one gives beer cannot be converted into a *phɔdwa*. Sometimes, when supplies are low or for other reasons no beer can be provided, a man invites a group of people to work for him in anticipation of a beer party, also called a *phɔdwa*, at a future date. But only very special circumstances justify these departures from the *lejema*.

According to our standards, activities at a *lejema* appear to be very haphazard and unorganized. Each member of the group contributes to one end, the execution of the task which is to benefit the *lejema*-giver; but the effort of each worker is not individually assessed; some may turn up when the work begins, others join in much later, even perhaps just before the workers prepare to go home. The work proceeds in a leisurely manner, without undue exertion; no special achievement is expected from any one and the organization is such that the most inexperienced and dilatory can keep pace with the most efficient. Efficiency is as little a matter for comment as inefficiency. There is no rivalry, no spirit of

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476 571 461 calculation, no supervision. The adjustments in the situation rely upon no pre-organization; there is practically no leadership or direction; and yet an effective interaction is attained. The total pattern is a part of the social system; it is not as if two or more people have casually encountered one another and have by trial and error to discover how to co-operate effectively in performing the task. Christians, whose standards of organization, performance, and efficiency are derived from those of the white man, attempt to submit the workers to discipline. They sometimes constitute themselves as foremen, they attempt to apply the available energy systematically, they have a system of rewards and penalties. The result is, not co-operation, but service; there are few, if any, songs and the occasion is no longer a gala social event. [184]

The workers at a *lejema* usually adjourn after one and a half or two hours to refresh themselves at about 11 a.m., when a pot of beer, euphemistically called 'the knife-sharpener', is brought to the field. The interval is of indefinite duration and is so much out of harmony with modern ideas, that 'the knife-sharpener' is often regarded with disfavour; instead of sharpening, it blunts the edge of activity in the modern situation, in which the *lejema*-giver thinks of himself as an employer and the workers are concerned to avoid being exploited. Neither employer nor employee is equipped by his background of culture and training to achieve success in these new roles; and the result is that tensions arise. Fortunately, however, the *lejema* is still overwhelmingly a collective social event. There is as yet no need to buoy up labour with dignity and moral worth; it is sufficient to submerge it in the sociability of beer. For the real nature of the *lejema* appears when the workers go to the home of the *lejema*-giver. The situation there instantly dispels any preconception we may have of special rewards for the workers. There are visitors, dubbed *vahobedi* (solicitants) and as such are distinguished from the *vashumi* (workers). In our society they would be called 'gate-crashers' or 'beggars', but they are not in needy circumstances and do not ask for favours; they are entitled to join in. Individually they not only imbibe calabash for calabash with the workers, but far outnumber them, not unusually by as much as four or five to one. [574]

To judge the situation correctly, we must remember that begging, one of the traits of the Lovedu we might regard as most irritating, is not socially disapproved. He who has and does not give is the offender, not he who asks for what he needs. The case is different, however, when the beggar is a loafer and sponger, roaming about in search of beer without doing any work; and if, as is not unlikely, he is disliked, his presence during the exhilaration caused by the beer is liable to cause a breach of the peace and he might be turned away. Generally speaking, *vashumi* are not given special beer; the beer is not a reward for their services, but a feast transforming work into recreation and reflecting the emphasis upon liberality. To-day the *vahobedi* are sometimes looked upon as parasitic beggars, and measures are taken to reconstitute the *lejema* so as to make it a more economical method of co-operation. Fundamentally, all the arduous work is still done by *lejema*, though every one knows that, for, say, 4s. worth of salt, more workers could be obtained and better [735]

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work accomplished than if one had beer made at the cost of 10s. worth of corn, not to mention the time, labour, and firewood that is consumed in preparing the beer. The motive is, however, not economic but social. *Majema* are used, not for long and difficult tasks only, but also for light work, which a man can easily do himself without help. The aim in these cases is not so much to complete the work quickly—time is rarely a matter of importance—as to be credited with generous impulses and to have a pleasant social event. Christians, with their more Europeanized outlook, averse from the waste entailed, and fearing excommunication by the Church, which prohibits beer, nevertheless find it hard not to conform to this custom.

Another form of co-operation is the *khilɛbɛ* (*jɛbɛ*, a hoe). Uncommon to-day in its original form, it has its essentials preserved in ploughing partnerships, the so-called 'stock fair' in towns and particularly in the collective agricultural work of young girls. The co-operating group, defined by convenience and proximity of domicile, is largely a local one and consists mainly of close relatives, both on the mother's and on the father's side. The group is still comparatively stable, as it was in the old days, when it had its basis in common interests and common needs. Its members collectively reaped or weeded or hoed one another's fields, completing one field and then going to the next, and each arranged about his own food. Kin or neighbours had their lands closer together and less split up than to-day; they started their various tasks at much the same time; there was safety in concentration, and economy in co-operation. The great distinction between *khilɛbɛ* and *lejema* was and still is that no beer is provided; but, as in the *lejema*, the *khilɛbɛ* partnership lessened the monotony of arduous work and mobilized energies and incentives. As the group was smaller and more closely khit, relied more tangibly upon reciprocity and had more elements of continuity, the stimulus of beer was not necessary to hold it together. Each partner remained an individualist, for the crops were not shared; but each realized the value of mutual helpfulness and the necessity of minimizing the self in relation to the ends of others.

To-day the conditions of the operation of the *khilɛbɛ* no longer exist in their old form. Fields have become split up; the old dangers are no more; the plough has vastly decreased man's dependence upon the help of his kin or his neighbour. Though it was perhaps the most potent agent of destruction of the old *khilɛbɛ*, the plough has become the centre of the new. The household, which is the economic unit, hardly ever has ploughs, animals, and workers all available at the same time; only 30 per cent. of such units possess ploughs and only 15 per cent. have cattle or donkeys. Thus cultivation calls for some form of co-operation, and the form which was familiar was the *khilɛbɛ*. There are new elements in the situation, but their co-ordination was effected by drawing upon pre-existing patterns of co-operation. Typically the *khilɛbɛ* in ploughing consists of four partners, representing four economic units: one supplies the animals, a second the plough, the third some of the workers, and the fourth the herdboy, who looks after the cattle during the year and might wield the whip or plant behind the plough. The emphasis

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is upon the sharing of tools rather than upon that sharing of services which characterized the old *khilebe*. But in the old institution hoes were borrowed from one another and the differentiation of to-day was not unknown, though it took a different form. The organization implies a person-to-person adjustment rather than institutionalized leadership, except that he who provides the animals sometimes tends to dictate whose lands have first to be ploughed. No payment passes, however unequal the contributions or needs of the partners, and sometimes an old widow is a partner who can contribute nothing at all. The essence of the whole institution is a complete disregard of the exact equivalences of the contributions or of the services.

This form of co-operation, in which mutual helpfulness and reciprocity and not economic advantage are stressed, finds expression in many activities. Among Christians there are potters who club together; usually they are kin who live in the same settlement. The only work they share is the excavation of the clay; each works quite independently of the other, though advice is exchanged. Men often build *ga khilebe* instead of *ga lejema*, but in this case the association is a very loose one, consisting merely of the available friends or relatives in or near the village; and though some small gift is given by the owner of the hut built, the main feature of the co-operation is a sense of mutuality and reciprocity. The conception of mutual helpfulness recedes before that of profit when, as is becoming more common, the person for whom the work is done pays a reward in money. Curious anomalies occur, because sometimes less, sometimes more, consideration is given to the exact money equivalence of the services rendered. Where a man considers that he is paying wages for services, he usually models his behaviour upon his conception of the European employer and the whole pattern of reciprocity falls to the ground. But this model is very unpopular, though for the employer it has distinct advantages; as he contracts for the labour, he can requisition it when he wants it and can control its execution. He is no longer an equal partner, but a foreman.

One development of the *khilebe* which is seen in townships is the 'stock fair'. It is practicable only where each of the partners periodically receives cash wages. Every month one of the partners, taken in rotation, is entitled to a fixed amount from each of the others, the purpose being to make available to every one in turn a fairly large sum of money. Though the partners wear some distinctive dress, the association is very unstable and many as a result suffer loss. The 'stock fair', far though it be removed from the *khilebe*, is thus based on a generalization from past experience in which social ends are attained by the application of rule-of-thumb principles, with little resort to trial and error and little dependence on organizing ability or on individual leadership.

With the various forms of co-operation, we may briefly contrast solitary occupations and services. It is somewhat unusual for any one alone to undertake a large task, and among heathens it is rarer still for an individual to hire out his services. There is no real domestic service; even in the royal household, *vulada* is very different from service in our sense of the term. The *mulada*, usually an orphan, is the ward of his

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166 464 become to interpret economic forces as operating, not *in vacuo*, but against the whole background of social life.

182 157 It is likewise not economic forces alone, but the diffusion of a new outlook that has caused the major changes in the old co-operative system. Individual achievement was of little account; no one was penalized because he attained only a very indifferent standard of efficiency or industry; people were devoted to a non-material ideal. A man's whole upbringing and training conditioned him to the ideal of reciprocity and helpfulness. Yet in the modern world, where personal achievement is important and rivalries must necessarily arise, the life-adjustment value of this ideal is doubtful. To some extent, the individual adapts himself by accepting European standards when he is in town and relaxing from the strain when he has returned home. He comes back mentally tired, and it is recognized that he is entitled to take a long holiday, even though there is pressing work to be done. His failures in town are attributed, not to causes within himself, but to the operation of external forces. His dismissal is ascribed to the jealousy and witchcraft of a competitor for the same position, and the success of his rival to magic. Rivalry is an unfamiliar situation in economic activities at home, and the competitive, individualistic struggle in the towns is never phrased as being between members of the tribe; the magic that is used to oust him from competitive positions or to cause an employer to favour another is always magic used by members of another tribe, such as the Zulu or Xhosa. The Lovedu [789] traditionally regard luck magic with some suspicion, at least as applied in economic situations. But it has become increasingly necessary in order to re-establish their sense of security; a whole new technique of charms, burning medicines to attract custom, chewing roots to give confidence (what the European might call 'effrontery'), and the like has developed. Many invoke, as before a dangerous enterprise in the old days, the blessing of the gods. Even within the tribal economy itself the spread of ideas of competition has been accompanied by the extension of magic and sorcery to new spheres of activity.

476 182 That this answer to contact with the new economy may not always suffice, we see among many neighbouring tribes—for instance, the people of Sekhopo, 'brothers' of the Lovedu. Among them beer, the quintessence of situations of reciprocity and co-operation, is converted into an article of sale. Beer is provided, even at *majema*, as wages, and hence only to the workers; visitors may join the beer-party, but must pay for each calabash they have. This commercialization is deplored by the Lovedu; it is regarded in the same light as charging strangers for board and lodging, a practice that prevails among highveld tribes; and it is almost as bad as what the Lovedu imagine to be the European custom of making relatives who come on a holiday pay their hosts. 'Our hotels are our relatives', said a Lovedu man to us; but while he was prepared to justify the commercial pattern in which salt, meat, tobacco, European vegetables, even money, oust beer in the *lejema*, the sale of beer seemed to him intolerable. This view fairly reflects the general opinion, as well as the attempt to harmonize the two patterns, among the Lovedu. Rewards are sometimes given to individual *lejema* workers, who are

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paid in salt and the other commodities mentioned. But the practice is, except for payment in meat, largely confined to Christians. As far as it exists, it completely alters the old long-run reciprocity pattern. There is no social feast. Collective replaces co-operative activity; for personal profit, not sociability, is the prime motive; the social gala is converted into a labour situation, and the interests of employer and employee begin to diverge. Room for roundabout recipocity is narrowed; instead of the indefinite mutuality upon which a man who helps others to-day may rely in the future, he receives an immediate and individual reward; faith in long-range equivalence of services and obligations gives way to a desire for direct personal satisfaction.

To the new situation, in which the *lejema*-giver corrects and directs and the worker obeys and submits, imperfect adjustments have been made. Direction, hitherto unknown in the economic relations of equals, degenerates to exploitation; the answer to unwilling submission is resentment; and the employer is regarded as a renegade and cheat. He is known to buy a bag of salt for 7*s*.—and to distribute it so that each worker receives only one-sixth of the accepted value (1*s*.) of a day's work. The conflict, in which the worker retaliates by calling the employer 'unscrupulous', is only beginning. It may resolve itself by new adjustments, even though an aggravating feature is the fact that it is the Christian who is the budding capitalist and the pagan who is the dependent labourer. From the point of view of progress in agriculture, the danger is that employers are usually progressive, and progress thus comes to stand for anti-social methods. This hampers the work of agricultural demonstrators. It is clear that lasting solutions, even of apparently simple agricultural problems, not to speak of the complicated problems of administration or of wider spheres of culture contact, can be attained only by studying both the forms of the old institutions and psychological reactions among the people to the changes.

Turning to exchanges in the society—that is, purchases and sales, whether cash or kind is transferred—we may consider external and internal trade from the standpoint of whether it falls within a money, money-barter, barter, or gift-barter economy. We use these terms to designate the distinctions mentioned below. *External trade* refers to transactions with people belonging to groups outside or alien to the tribe, such as stores, farmers, and individuals of other tribes. *Internal trade* is largely local, but it may be interlocal when it occurs across the boundaries of the reserve, but between members of the tribe. *Gift barter* is reciprocal gift exchange. There is no exact economic equivalence. Mutuality, goodwill, and reciprocity are the primary considerations, but it is not the same as a gift, for a gift implies no return gift, but merely one-sided donations, such as presents to children. Out-and-out gift is *mpho* (from *hu fa*) and, while such gifts imply indirect mutuality, there is no expectation of a return gift. For our present purposes and in the table given below, they are left out of consideration; it would, for instance, be impracticable to distinguish between feeding one's household and giving them presents. From gift barter must be distinguished *pure barter*, in which the aim is an interchange of goods of equivalent value

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creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and re-alignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term mokoko or
613 *leloko* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[787] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhobo* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours
[476] and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

[562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[582] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhobo*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

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421 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship
571 and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable
[476] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily
[273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintain-
[177] ing social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes
571 the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the
431 form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new
571 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small
602 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even
421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and
571 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples.
431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went
731 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour
643 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies.
571 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a
[588] *thari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge loda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga mosadi a de a nthsidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*baduhulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

As you drive along the winding road on a visit to Mujaji's reserve, 361
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rings which reach almost up to the knee, suspiciously turns her back on 291
you. She wears a cloth of red salampore behind and before, knotted on 276
the shoulders; while from her neck dangles the ubiquitous snuff box on a necklet of plaited string, black with dirt, but holding three or four treasured heirlooms, large deep-blue or white beads and perhaps some small blue, red, and yellow ones of the kind that were brought from Rhodesia long before the European had come. A little further on you hear a shout, '*Makhuwa, Makhuwa*' (Europeans, Europeans), as a group of herdboys runs towards the road. The younger ones among them, mere toddlers playing outside their village, scurry away crying to their mothers, and scatter the chickens from the ash-heap as they do so. A herdboy, wearing nothing but his loin covering and an old tattered coat which was once his father's, shouts 'More Baas,' European words he has picked up from his elders; but the rest run joyfully after the car, rending the air with their shrieks.

The road begins to ascend steeply up the hill to the capital, but here, 487
if you wish to visit headman Raselaka, you must get out and walk. As you go in single file along the narrow footpath, bounded on either side by creeper-covered bush or long grass higher than your shoulders, you become aware of a strong smell somewhat reminiscent of turpentine. 137
In a few moments you discover its cause—the ripening fruits of the

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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Raselaka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Raselaka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*hu suma*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Raselaka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the last dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lɔsha* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaau*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khɔrɔ* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Pɛkɛla, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khirula* beer to their *tsɛzi* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*hu pɛbɛla*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mushiji khi le; gi y'ɔ sheva ga nama*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10*s*. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsɛzi*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

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482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263 this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' ('*U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinɔnyana a jia dithɔhɔ a fa vasimana*'). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lewai la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled *njugo* beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khɔrɔ*, the three men of the village are sitting by their 521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khɔrɔ*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies

to roast

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IV. CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE

(a) WORK-PARTY DE-COBBING MEALIES

(b) WORK-PARTY CARRYING HOME THE MEALIE CROP

[facing p. 33]

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VI. HOUSEWIVES, YOUNG AND OLD

(a) THE WATCHED POT (b) WATER AND VEGETABLES FOR HER HOME

[Facing p. 97]

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XIII. AT THE CAPITAL

(*a*) RE-BUILDING THE COURTYARD OF THE CAPITAL

(*b*) THE COURTYARD (KHORO), WITH A CASE IN PROGRESS

[facing p. 208]

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XV. BEER AS A SOCIAL STIMULANT

(*a*) BEER BEING CARRIED TO THE QUEEN

(*b*) A BEER PARTY

[facing p. 288]

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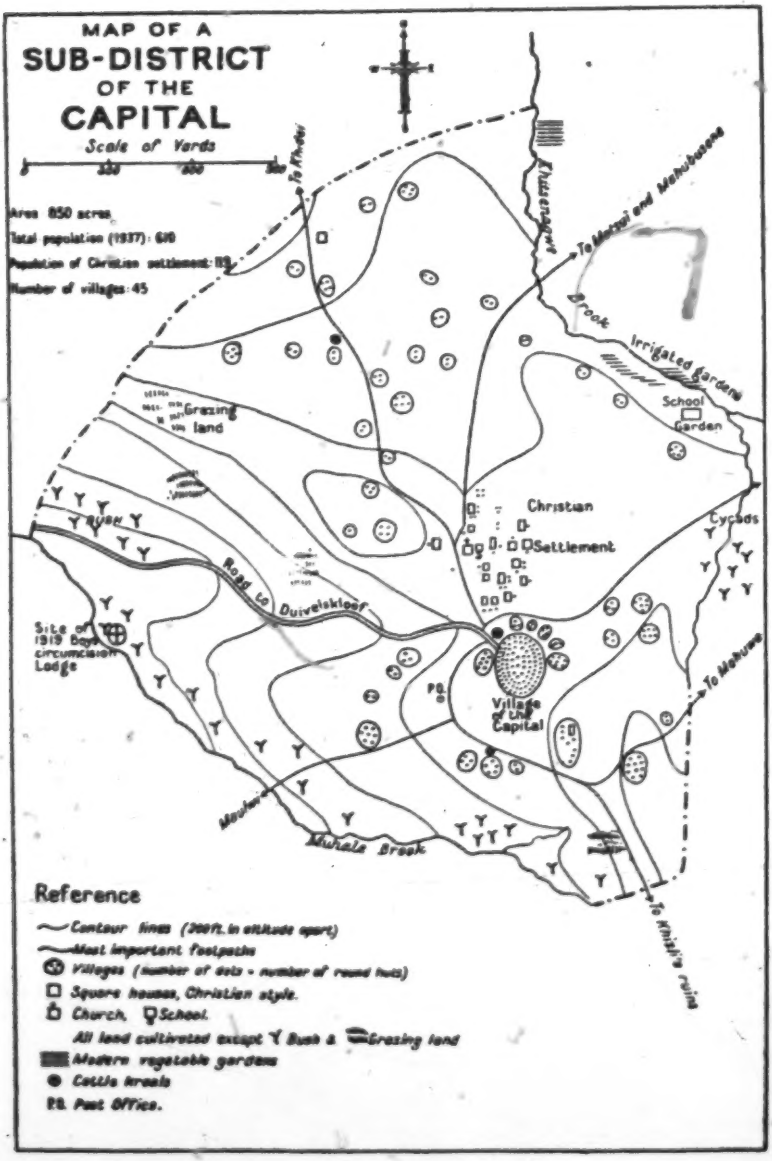

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CHAPTER II

A PICTURE OF EVERYDAY THINGS

A visitor's impressions of the manners and interests of the people—a glimpse of a village and its huts, of the preparation of food and etiquette in eating, and of the decorum of drinking beer—the evening scene, with its hearth fires, riddles, and stories—the seasonal calendar of activities.

As you drive along the winding road on a visit to Mujaji's reserve, you find yourself in a narrow valley between the two ranges of Vulovedu mountains, where flows the Mulodozi River, fed by countless streams from the bush-covered slopes above. It is the month of March. The mealies in the fields, visible on all sides through the bushy vegetation, stand dark green and high, appearing to grow right to the very doorsteps of the villages you pass. At first and to the untrained eye the country seems relatively empty, so well do the dwellings merge into the general view. On looking more closely, however, you see cluster after cluster of conical, thatched roofs peeping out from the bush on the hillsides, some of them perched on ledges like eagles' eyries. For the reserve is in reality very thickly populated. The villages are small, five to fifteen huts being the average size; a few large villages of from forty to eighty huts represent the old order of things, just as those of only two huts do the new. But the Lovedu village was never very large and never could compare, either in size or arrangement, with the great towns of the Tswana and of some Sotho.

As you go down a steep dip to cross a stream, a sullen-looking woman balancing a wide-mouthed basket on her head, her legs heavy with leg rings which reach almost up to the knee, suspiciously turns her back on you. She wears a cloth of red salampore behind and before, knotted on the shoulders; while from her neck dangles the ubiquitous snuff box on a necklet of plaited string, black with dirt, but holding three or four treasured heirlooms, large deep-blue or white beads and perhaps some small blue, red, and yellow ones of the kind that were brought from Rhodesia long before the European had come. A little further on you hear a shout, '*Makhuwa, Makhuwa*' (Europeans, Europeans), as a group of herdboys runs towards the road. The younger ones among them, mere toddlers playing outside their village, scurry away crying to their mothers, and scatter the chickens from the ash-heap as they do so. A herdboy, wearing nothing but his loin covering and an old tattered coat which was once his father's, shouts 'More Bass,' European words he has picked up from his elders; but the rest run joyfully after the car, rending the air with their shrieks.

The road begins to ascend steeply up the hill to the capital, but here, if you wish to visit headman Raselaka, you must get out and walk. As you go in single file along the narrow footpath, bounded on either side by creeper-covered bush or long grass higher than your shoulders, you become aware of a strong smell somewhat reminiscent of turpentine. In a few moments you discover its cause—the ripening fruits of the

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density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Ṭonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Rɔka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhɔpɔ, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigɔa, the Ɗgɔna and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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417 fear of preying animals or raiding enemies. Old Raselaka complains that
231 herdboys of to-day no longer tend cattle as they should. Cattle used to be taken to graze just after sunrise, at least when there was no summer dew, for the early dew in summer, though not in winter, is dangerous to man and beast. They were brought home to be milked at about 11
● [572] o'clock, when the boys would eat their breakfast, and were driven out again till sunset. To-day the boys like having their breakfast first, and it is not unusual in some areas to find cattle still in their kraals at midday, especially where the herdboys are attending school, a practice that seriously decreases their grazing time. Not one of the ten head of cattle in Raselaka's village is in milk. In fact, the cattle in Loveduland give hardly any milk at all, owing largely to over-population (over 75 per cent. of the land is under cultivation and certain areas are under forest) but
[262] also because of the poor quality of the cattle. But milk has never played an important part in Lovedu diet and many people find it nauseating.

361 You are eager to be shown the lay-out of the village and to watch some of the activities. As you pass through a gateway leading from the *khɔrɔ* to the huts, you hear Raselaka giving orders to the boys that a fowl is to be caught and killed for the visitors. The huts stand in two curved rows facing one another, sixteen in all. In a large old-style village like the royal kraal, they would surround the *khɔrɔ*, but here there are too few for that. A complete circle of huts still haunts the dreams of the ambitious doyen of a district. To one side of the line of huts is a tobacco garden,
251 while at the back is the *marala*, or storage enclosure, made of branches with a gate that can be closed against wandering goats. Here stand the large receptacles made of wood interwoven with grass in which mealies are stored after reaping, till dry enough for decobbing. But they are empty now and some are in need of repair. To one side stands a roughly
[273] made, unplastered hut full of beer-pots. Here beer is left to ferment and sometimes also served. A number of large green and yellow pumpkins,
[262] the sweet kind cultivated by Natives, have been placed beside the beer-pots, while a heap of golden, plumlike *morula* fruits with a cloud of midges above it testifies to the desire of some woman to make a little cider at home. But it is seldom that such cider is made at home; the place for it is in the open under the shade of the trees.

252 As you look along the space between the two rows of huts, a pleasant and busy scene meets the eyes. It is ten o'clock and cooking operations are at their height. Some are cooking outside in the courtyard; others prefer to cook in the kitchen hut. An old woman is spreading out her newly lifted monkey nuts, together with a few cobs of mealies which had fallen to the ground, to be sun-dried in her courtyard. Some freshly stamped mealie meal on mats and in baskets is also set out in the sun.
251 On an old piece of corrugated iron are lumps of a dark green substance. This is relish, cooked pumpkin and bean leaves, being dried and preserved for use in winter, when greens are hard to obtain. Apparently too much had been cooked for the corrugated iron, so the residue has been plastered on to the thatch of a hut. Roofs are useful also for other purposes; on one is a newly washed salampore cloth spread out to dry.

351 Each pair of opposing huts forms a separate household, its courtyard,

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264 woman has finished dishing up, she very often wipes out the pot with her fingers before setting it aside, for utensils are washed just before they are needed—not after use. To prepare the relish a little water is placed in
252 a wide-mouthed cooking dish, the pumpkin leaves and flowers are added and then put on the fire. Within a few minutes the spinach is sufficiently cooked. A handful of salt is put in, the ground monkey nuts are added, the mixture stirred once or twice, when it is ready to be dished up into small black earthen basins.

264 Serving food to guests is a ceremonious affair. The sleeping or reception hut is carefully swept out; the food is placed in it, often before the dust has properly settled, a mat is unrolled and the guests are called to eat. To your surprise, you discover that the host does not dine with honoured guests. A wooden dish of food has been placed in a double basket with a lid. Beside it stands the relish. Mukhadi approaches on her knees with a white enamel basin of water for the guests to wash their hands, then crawls away again, leaving the water to be used again after the meal. Before beginning to eat, the youngest of the visitors claps his hands saying, '*Ndau*.' The rest reply, '*Mortna*,' and the meal is begun. Each one, using his fingers, breaks a piece of a mealie meal cake, dips it in the dish of relish and eats it. There is no salt in the porridge, to make up for which the relish is very salt indeed. All eat from one bowl but there is nothing unhygienic in this. When finished you again wash your hands. Light beer, if there is any, may round off the meal.

There is no communal meal and no proper mealtime. Each wife places food for the husband in the reception hut of his chief wife and here he comes to eat any time he wishes. Later the remains will be fetched back to the hut whence it came. Food is not sent from one hut to another, except when special luxury dishes are made, known in general as *madzaga* and usually prepared outside of cooking hours. These are always shared. The younger children sit down to eat with the mother in the courtyard, but the herdboys, in a hurry to take out the cattle, seize several cakes, place some relish on them, and walk off. Metiane, aged four, does not want vegetable relish. He has seen meat prepared in the courtyard of his
861 friend Nagambi and so he refuses spinach. When his mother tries to coax him, he merely sets up a dismal howl; but he is neither severely scolded nor beaten as a European child in such a situation might be. Instead they try to pacify him, till at last the mother of Nagambi, seeing the fuss, brings him a small piece of meat, telling him to be quiet.

● 512 The cooking done, a general migration takes place, and the village, a hive of industry in the morning, becomes almost if not quite deserted. During the agricultural season one seldom finds people at home in the afternoons. They are all out in the fields. One woman, securing the reed door of her kitchen by means of a wooden stamper balanced against it on the outside, takes a hoe and is off to mound her *njugo* beans. Another is still busy with her weeding. A third, taking a calabash of food with her, goes to join her daughter, who left shortly after sunrise, to make *morula* cider under the trees in their field. It is a process involving considerable labour. Mamadomi is not going to the fields to-day. She wants to smear a fresh coating of dung over her courtyard and to go on with a basket she

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *hu thovola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mabudu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the maize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *vuthithi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *vuswa*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*hu seda*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seize hold of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mothers or to catch *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swaziae*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On [883] moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khɔrɔ* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels [786] and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however, 244 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in 221 much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides the seasons into three: *khilemo*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *leṭavula*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *maria*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

344 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February, 221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapidated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 825
It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to 515
urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance; on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives; further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut. To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Leṭavula, with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart [595]
from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342
and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khɔrɔ* and have a wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round. The former have their backs to the *khɔrɔ*, a framework of reeds as a door, and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleeping hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised [352]
platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [353]
mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg. The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted basket (*khirudwana*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart [373]
suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth, plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals, between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Leṭavula, newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too cold in winter.

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278 cure the symptoms, and whether for that reason and its psychological
757 effect or because of a truly curative value, men have great faith in the
755 medicines. There are undoubtedly ingredients in Lovedu medicines which cannot be empirically related to either symptom or cure, since they operate mainly by a technique of analogies which we relegate to the magical world. Such are animal products like hair, skin, excrement, and ovaries used in a variety of ways—for instance, for barrenness and indigestion; minerals like ironstone used for strengthening babies; and sea or river products, sand and shells, indispensable for keeping witches out of the village. But to Lovedu men and women the use of such ingredients in no way differs from the use of a herb: both are thought to have curative value and for them our distinction between magical and scientific treatments, between cause and effect and false analogy, does not exist. Just as a herb may have properties for curing disease, so, for example, the backbone of a python is effective in curing general debility or backache. The bone is pounded and the powder inoculated into scarifications along the back, by which means the immense power of the python is thus imparted to the patient. But note the sequel. So powerful is this medicine that the patient, when his time has come, will have difficulty in dying. His eyes will remain alive though the body is dead until once more the python powder is applied by being burned under his nose that he may inhale the smoke. This strengthening and the reversal of its influence are like injection and desensitization in our medical practice.

758 When we pursue Lovedu conceptions as regards the nursing and treatment of patients, we have once more to regard them from their
[515 point of view. Cleanliness and hygiene are very remotely related to health.
777] Flies are freely tolerated because it is unlucky to kill them, not because, as is held in some other tribes, abundance of flies means riches in cattle. Invalids are not given a special diet, so that instructions by European doctors that a mother should feed her ailing baby on vitamin-containing foods or fruits are ignored unless medicine is given to be mixed with the food. It is equally fatal to appeal to the curative powers of nature: an invalid will impute unwillingness to help, ignorance or even sinister designs, if you tell him that nature will heal him and give no medicine. It is medicine and medicine alone that is thought to heal. But even medicine is never allowed much time in which to do its curative work. If one drug is not effective within a week it will be changed for another. Often a number of medicines are used at the same time, so that if one is ineffectual the other may heal. In every case we attended we found Native treatment was being given at the same time as, and often to the detriment of, our own. Nor would our protests be of any avail. Even in hospitals there are secret chewings of herbs and surreptitious steamings. Though it is admitted that certain medicines may not 'agree' when used together, use of the wrong medicine is not thought to have any harmful effects. At the most, a medicine merely does not heal; it never definitely harms the patient. Inexactness in the quantity of medicine taken is accompanied by a laxity in the carrying out of doctors' instructions which, though of no consequence where Native medicines are used, may do immense harm if the medicines are European. A careful

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IV. CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE

(a) WORK-PARTY DE-COBBING MEALIES

(b) WORK-PARTY CARRYING HOME THE MEALIE CROP

[facing p. 33]

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482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263] this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' ('*U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinɔnyana a jia dithɔhɔ a fa vasimana*'). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lewai la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled *njugo* beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khɔrɔ*, the three men of the village are sitting by their fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a ● 521 spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khɔrɔ*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies
to roast

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to roast. 'Let's ask riddles,' intervenes Khiebe. 'Here's one: Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree (*thaiii*), the witches are dancing on the thorns.' 'Stupid,' scornfully rejoins Mudumi. 'We all know that one. Hailstones, of course, for they bounce as they fall on the grass.' After pondering a moment he challenges: '*Thaiii*, the ox of my father has entered the pool, I remain holding its tail.' Roars of derision issue from the rest, 'A porridge-twirler,' they answer almost all together. The spiked head of a twirler is like the horns of an ox; it is thrust into the pot of water, while one holds it by its handle. 'Here's something you don't know,' comes from Mudumpani. '*Thaiii*, the nest of the water bird hangs down over the pool.' The company is silent, then there are some guesses, but it is beyond them, and they give it up. 'The eyelashes, of course,' says Mudumpani, 'because they hang over one's eyes.' Once the ball starts rolling, riddles follow one another in rapid succession. 'The babbling of a brook' turns out to be a calabash cup, for down its long handle beer gurgles as you drink; 'They always stand looking at each other' are the doorposts of a hut; and 'The chief entering the crimson (muddy) pool' is sunset. It is impossible to capture the poetry of these riddles; you cannot render their alliteration or play upon words in English. But it is clear that these youngsters are well versed in them. The time when riddles are most popular is, however, when a wedding party is present and the young people have to entertain them in their hut. On such an occasion riddles provide a mild form of competition between the two parties, that of the bride and that of the groom.

The men have retired to their huts, whence they will not reappear. The women have eaten the evening meal informally round the fires and are just chatting. In a hut three girls are sitting by candlelight, one of them, who has been to school, writing a love-letter for her friend to her lover in town. 'Why are you throwing me over?' she asks. 'Why don't you write? Please send me a nice cloth and a blanket, but not one like that which you gave your wife!' In another hut some children have persuaded Mamujaji, an elderly woman, to tell them tales. She begins, '*Dgano-Dgano* (a story, a story).' They reply, '*Dgano*.' 'Once upon a time,' she continues, but before she gets further they again interject, '*Dgano*.' Then she goes on, 'There lived a boy who had sores all over his body.' '*Dgano*,' they repeat whenever the speaker hesitates or takes breath. 'One day when the girls went to fetch grass. . . .' This is the beginning of a story about a bird who gives away the girls who kill the boy. A marked characteristic is the frequent occurrence of a song and refrain, during the telling of the tale, in this case, '*Phogu, Phogu ya Dorwa*, &c. ('Bird, bird of the south'), so that what with the interjections and singing of the chorus of the refrain, the listeners appear to take as active a part in the story as the narrator herself. At the end of each tale there is a long-drawn-out '*Dgaaano*' and all spit into the fire. In the small villages of to-day story-telling has almost completely died out. Where there are only one or two present a story loses most of its charm, and there are many young men and women who know practically no stories, more particularly among Christians, whose parents prefer them to learn their lessons rather than tell them stories.

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than the chief wife, plays little part in a man's life; she is merely a female relative to whom a certain amount of respect and attachment is due. Often a woman's son marries daughters of several of her brothers. It is, however, only to the daughter of that brother who used her cattle that she has a right—has, as the Lovedu put it, an 'entrance' to his village.

In view of the position of sisters and brothers later in life, one would not expect great familiarity or freedom between them during their childhood. Brother and sister may talk freely to each other, but if they rollick together their parents will stop them. Hence the riddle, 'What is it that is at hand and yet beyond reach?' (*Kha ntsita khi e ma?*) The answer, 'The breast of my sister,' refers to the playful catching hold of the breasts of girls by young boys, which is taboo in case of a sister. In strong contrast to the free, yet proper, relationship between brother and sister stands the joking relationship between cross-cousins. Derived from the brother-sister relationship is that of the father's sister, who is accorded honour and respect by the children of the house she has established. The term *khadi* is used loosely to denote either father's sister or eldest sister, for it is the eldest sister who will take over the religious functions of the father's sister after her death.

A well-marked characteristic of Lovedu society, one that clearly distinguishes it from the strictly patrilineal Zulu, Xhosa, and Pondo, is the importance of the mother's side of the family. Nothing of interest or importance takes place without their presence; even at the annual harvest beer offerings given to the gods on the father's side, relatives on the mother's side, who are not concerned in the religious aspect of the ceremony, will be present for the beer and social amenities. Important in maintaining close links between a man and his mother's relatives are the bonds of interdependence between the families of a brother, and the sister whose cattle he used. The sister's son is a potential son-in-law, who will be accorded great honour in the household of his mother's brother. A man's mother may also be the *khadi* who has to go and make offerings in the mother's brother's household, and in her absence her son might officiate for her. Later, when a man is engaged to his mother's brother's daughter, there will be gifts of beer from the girl's family. They are thus bound together by a variety of links.

But the greatest of all bonds between a man and his mother's side of the family is conceived by the Lovedu to be one of love. There is a saying, usually quoted by women, '*Wa mma u sme; wa rare gi mabahataka*,' which, freely translated, means, 'Love lies on the mother's side of the family; ownership on the father's'. One's relationship with the mother's side of the family is modelled on that towards a mother and is much influenced by the petting and spoiling received at the hands of the maternal grandmother, with whom most children spend a few years of their life, generally soon after the birth of a younger brother or sister. Every child recalls with delight the good time he had when at his mother's brother's village with his mother's mother; how she treated him to tit-bits, how she scolded or beat only her son's children if her grandchildren quarrelled and fought. For, it is said, a woman loves her daughter's children (who only come on visits) far more than those of her

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present. Here was a legitimate human interest—not merely the idle 602
curiosity of a European or the recording of customs that might end in 123
police intervention.

The kin share your joys and sorrows, give support in your hour of need and advice in the affairs of life. When you are in trouble and have to pay a fine which you do not possess, it is your brothers who will come to your aid. On the marriage of your children, your brothers are called to hear the matter and to give their advice; when there is death your kin rally to your side. A widow is never faced with destitution; her husband's [736] brother will care for her, and to-day, when, as among Christians, this sometimes entails help in training the children for a career, it is often a heavy liability. In working parties or when meal has to be stamped for beer-making, it is the relatives living near who are most relied upon for their help. A woman whose husband is in town depends on her male kin to help her in the yearly renewal of storage receptacles, hut-building and ploughing. She will, where possible, reward them with beer, but this is by no means always done. People like living near their kin. An elder and a younger brother, one living near Tzaneen, the other in Ulovedu, both died. Then the grown-up son of the younger brother called the wife and family of the elder brother to come and build near them, saying that the children of his *ramuhula* would not know him if they lived so far away. Kinship, as we point out elsewhere, knits together the political system. But it is worth repeating that the kin are the core of the district and the bonds between districts; that, in general, the father's relatives live largely in the same district, the mother's or the wife's in some other area and visits and gifts of beer serve as an introduction to the districts in which they live; and that all the heads of districts, by virtue of having to send a daughter to 'marry' the queen, are linked to the capital by a kinship bond.

One would expect that, in a society like that of the Lovedu, with a 602
strong sense of kinship obligations, the position of orphans would not be 736
very different from that of other children. Yet the Lovedu feel the position of an orphan, any one wholly dependent on relatives for food and shelter, to be a peculiarly sad one. Hence the riddle, 'Little fountain [524] full of muck', and its answer, 'The heart of an orphan'; hence also the proverb, 'It takes a woman with a generous heart to keep an orphan well'. The smoky side of a fire is called 'the side where orphans sit', and if you sit chin in hand, people always say, 'Why are you so sad? Are you an orphan?' Even old women, those skilled and inveterate beggars, think that a sure way of enlisting your sympathy is to plead that they are orphans with no one to give them things.

It is said that orphans have to do harder work than other children and 736
have many a time to hear complaints that they eat too much. When the children of the house receive clothes as presents from relatives, the orphan gets little or nothing; and nowadays, while the children of the house may be sent to school, the orphan remains at home herding. None of our own personal contacts with orphans bore out these tales, and when we cited them as examples contradicting their statements, informants admitted that those cases did not bear out the general principle. Indeed, what impressed us most were the conscious efforts made,

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by 789
the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told 261
that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen 643
can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if 789
they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of 766
rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figthela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 821
'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, 754
spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering 766
(*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why [824]
witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *dere* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *hu pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts 821
of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, 527
after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khumtla*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

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821 has been reached), and we were told that in the old days men of import-
527 ance used to come and condole with (*hu cmela*) the chief on such a day, as though to sympathize with her in the frustration of her efforts. There are other holidays associated with rain. On the day after the first rain of the season has fallen no hoeing or fieldwork is to be done. Such a holiday is called *le-nkhi-nteme* (do not cut me), as if the earth, believed still to be hot, dislikes being broken up by the hoeing. Such a holiday is also observed after the rain charms have 'bitten' the new termites and first-fruits of the year and when, any time during the summer, rain falls after two of three weeks drought, it is called *muene* (guest or stranger) and the next day observed as a holiday, for one honours a guest.

766 Wrong burials which stop the rain are righted by the use of *mufugo*
821 medicine and the water obtained by squeezing the undigested stomach
789 contents (*musicane*) of a sheep down a hole made in the grave with a stick
842 and reaching the body. This is thought to disperse the 'wind' and cool the grave. The flesh of the sheep is eaten without salt. The conception is thus of a grave agitated by ghostly heat and wind, which may be 'laid' by 'cooling', or, as we might say, calming, in the treble sense often of pacifying [the ghost], modifying [the heat], and causing [the wind] to subside. *Mufugo*, the medicine so important in the removal of impediments to rain, has to be obtained from the queen and a specially appointed person is responsible for doling it out in bottles when needed. The office is not conceived to be hereditary, but it has been held by a Mudiga family for some time, being handed down by father to son. When the last official in charge of *mufugo* died, his son was an unmarried man too young for the responsibility of office. Some five years later (1938), when the queen decided that he should assume charge, he protested his youth, though he then had two children, fearing that after contact with the medicine he might forget to wash his hands before eating and thus be rendered impotent. In this he had the full support of his mother, who prevailed upon the queen to allow an older relative to undertake the work provisionally; but the present position is that, should this old man be away, the heir to the office will have to act. Whether *mufugo* is identical with the rain medicine of the rain-pots is not quite clear; but, whatever its ingredients may be, it is considered extremely dangerous, liable to rob men and women of their fertility, and great care is thus necessary when working with it.

789 Sometimes it is said that 'the country is not right' (*naha a e loge*) and
372 then there is a special ceremony in which all the fires in the country are put out with *mufugo*. No generally recognized set of circumstances lead up to such a line of action, nor is there any idea that the fires are defiled in any way. It is simply looked upon as a method of getting rain when there is drought, resorted to when the divining bones of the doctor declare it to be necessary. People sometimes say, 'Fires are put out to usher in a new year,' but this does not mean that putting out the fires is an annual ceremony, as it is, for instance, among the Pedi. The word 'year' must not be taken literally, just as it does not refer to an abstract period of time in the phrase, 'The year has been infected by *hu khoma*', when what is meant is that the rain charms have 'weakened' (*hu khoma*). In this ceremony

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X. MASQUERADE OF THE UUAHWERA

(a) STRUTTING OF THE UUAHWERA DANCE

(b) DANCE OF THE DUIKER

[facing p. 129]

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morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga dzwala ga fɔbja, ga vucla vuphabaleni*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise song of a district in Ulovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiṭhuleleni*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiṭhulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lencḋwa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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to roast. 'Let's ask riddles,' intervenes Khiebe. 'Here's one: Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree (*thaiii*), the witches are dancing on the thorns.' 'Stupid,' scornfully rejoins Mudumi. 'We all know that one. Hailstones, of course, for they bounce as they fall on the grass.' After pondering a moment he challenges: '*Thaiii*, the ox of my father has entered the pool, I remain holding its tail.' Roars of derision issue from the rest, 'A porridge-twirler,' they answer almost all together. The spiked head of a twirler is like the horns of an ox; it is thrust into the pot of water, while one holds it by its handle. 'Here's something you don't know,' comes from Mudumpani. '*Thaiii*, the nest of the water bird hangs down over the pool.' The company is silent, then there are some guesses, but it is beyond them, and they give it up. 'The eyelashes, of course,' says Mudumpani, 'because they hang over one's eyes.' Once the ball starts rolling, riddles follow one another in rapid succession. 'The babbling of a brook' turns out to be a calabash cup, for down its long handle beer gurgles as you drink; 'They always stand looking at each other' are the doorposts of a hut; and 'The chief entering the crimson (muddy) pool' is sunset. It is impossible to capture the poetry of these riddles; you cannot render their alliteration or play upon words in English. But it is clear that these youngsters are well versed in them. The time when riddles are most popular is, however, when a wedding party is present and the young people have to entertain them in their hut. On such an occasion riddles provide a mild form of competition between the two parties, that of the bride and that of the groom.

The men have retired to their huts, whence they will not reappear. The women have eaten the evening meal informally round the fires and are just chatting. In a hut three girls are sitting by candlelight, one of them, who has been to school, writing a love-letter for her friend to her lover in town. 'Why are you throwing me over?' she asks. 'Why don't you write? Please send me a nice cloth and a blanket, but not one like that which you gave your wife!' In another hut some children have persuaded Mamujaji, an elderly woman, to tell them tales. She begins, '*Dgano-Dgano* (a story, a story).' They reply, '*Dgano*.' 'Once upon a time,' she continues, but before she gets further they again interject, '*Dgano*.' Then she goes on, 'There lived a boy who had sores all over his body.' '*Dgano*,' they repeat whenever the speaker hesitates or takes breath. 'One day when the girls went to fetch grass. . . .' This is the beginning of a story about a bird who gives away the girls who kill the boy. A marked characteristic is the frequent occurrence of a song and refrain, during the telling of the tale, in this case, '*Phogu, Phogu ya Dorma*, &c. ('Bird, bird of the south'), so that what with the interjections and singing of the chorus of the refrain, the listeners appear to take as active a part in the story as the narrator herself. At the end of each tale there is a long-drawn-out '*Dgaasso*' and all spit into the fire. In the small villages of to-day story-telling has almost completely died out. Where there are only one or two present a story loses most of its charm, and there are many young men and women who know practically no stories, more particularly among Christians, whose parents prefer them to learn their lessons rather than tell them stories.

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881 Consider for a moment the situation as the boys stab the elephant?
● 583 As they do so, the old men, mature in their wisdom, kindly guardians of
867 the initiates, slowly and solemnly 'sing with signs' (*va rima zwega*). These *zwega* are often also an accompaniment of the songs of the boys, in themselves most exquisite poetry. Many of the 'signs' are unintelligible, e.g. 'You may bring me a skin cradle. I am carrying an infant, my little children'; or 'The guinea fowls are crying; they are scratching for food, my children.' The old men always greet the novices, *vana va ga* (my little ones), though to one another and to the shepherds they are *valzi* (witches). The old men also chant proverbs and sayings, warnings and advice, all manner of admonitions and encouragement, some stereotyped, some extempore. To enumerate them would be to enumerate the virtues that are esteemed and the vices that are condemned in the society. 'I told you, O novice, but you plugged your ears with plugs of wood' is a general admonition, reminding the boys that, when they were young, they often were disobedient and now their errors are being expiated. Young boys are often told that, when they go to the *vudiga*, their impudence and disobedience will make their trials harder. 'Beware', a man might say to a youngster who is unwilling to help him or an elder. 'The *vudiga* is not far off; you will find no one to lift the weight from your head.' The virtues that are inculcated in this way are merely those the boys have heard of a thousand times in their ordinary lives. Again, one must not imagine that the boys take more note of the words of the old men in the lodge than we do when we sing a hymn in church, but they know that those *zwega* and admonitions express the fundamental values and ideals in the society: generosity, respectfulness and obedience to the elders, helpfulness, and so on. 'Give your seat up to an old man, carry his bundle for him on the road, go with him further than he asks you, do not mock at the blind or cripple'—these are some of the things one old man may say, whereas another will condemn theft and adultery and extol mutuality and modesty, almost impersonally, it is true, but always beautifully, solemnly, and effectively. These things sink into the minds of the novices, not as so many individual precepts, but as part of the ritual of the lodge, all indivisibly united into one whole concretion of values and sentiments. A man will say that the *vudiga* is a wonderful thing, but he will be at a loss to tell you anything concrete that it teaches. For you cannot dissect out a precept here and an example there—it is all one, like life itself.

881 We may now, before proceeding to adult education, touch upon a few
831 aspects of the *vudiga* and the *khoba*. Besides breaking the girl's attachment to the things of her childhood, the *khoba* stresses the importance and dangers of sexual maturity. But it can hardly be said that the *vudiga* is much concerned with the sudden emergence of a capacity for true sexual experience. Both institutions help us to understand the meaning and methods of attaining social adulthood; but they belong to different cultural backgrounds and are derived from different cultural sources. They are not counterparts of one another. The *khoba* is indigenous, the *vudiga* is foreign. We cannot here study the manner in which these two institutions, as well as the *vyali* and *vuhwera* (two further initiations for boys and girls), have merged with the different cultures in neighbouring tribes though the varying acceptance or rejection or

CHAPTER VIII

FERTILITY AND THE DRUM CULT

The setting of the sacred drums in a mystical cult—initiation into the secrets of the whistling ancestors—calendric observances connected with fecundity, masks, and mummeries.

794 BESIDES the girls' puberty ceremony and the circumcision of boys, there are other initiation ceremonies among the Lovedu. One is the *vyali* (often looked upon as the women's counterpart of circumcision because of its regimentation), contemporaneous with which is the boys' *vuhwera*, consisting largely of masked dancing; another is the *gomana* for men. These are closely interwoven with a fertility and rain cult which, because of its association with sacred drums, one may call the drum cult. Their educational object, never very strongly marked in Bantu initiation schools, pales into insignificance before the ceremonial. Indeed the *gomana* as a 'school' is only an aspect of *gomana* ceremonial as a whole, the primary function of which is to secure rain. The *vyali-vuhwera-gomana* complex is characterized by esoteric masks, mummeries, and mysteries and by a category of values which we may term the 'mystical philosophy' of the Lovedu. We shall give merely a brief picture of the complex, because, at the time of writing, the first *vyali-vuhwera* held for thirty-five years is still in progress and our ideas as to its true meaning are far from being settled.

794 796 The sacred drum cult has many ramifications. The *zwidajani*, supposed to be ancestral spirits coming to earth to take part in *gomana* singing and drumming of the sacred drums, have become incorporated into other aspects of the culture. They appear in the bush near the village whenever a harvest offering has been made in the families of royal relatives; they come at the installation of a new district head and at the death of close relatives of the queen. [533] On these occasions they join in the singing and dancing of *lengu* songs, songs associated with the *vyali* of men and which, in addition to the above-mentioned occasions, are employed also when women dance for rain. The type of instrument by means of which the *zwidajani* whistle or bleat out their songs and messages is used also by the Bird, the ruling spirit of the *vyali*. [776]

534 778 Drums are much used in Lovedu life; they are played in the *guha* dance to the accompaniment of reed pipes, they are important in all initiations except circumcision, they are beaten for days at the dancing of possessed people, and it is significant that the public recognition by the queen of a new district head at his installation consists in the handing over of a drumstick (*khiba kha gwa*). Drums are of two types: the long cylindrical drum played with the hands as it lies on its side and the *gwa*, a rounded drum with handles, played by means of a drumstick as it stands in an upright position. The sacred drums (*digomana*) of the tribe are of the *gwa* type, but, unlike ordinary *gwa* drums, are played by hand, not with a drumstick. They are four in number, each with its special

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office-bearers of the *vyali*. It is significant that medical treatment is not confined to initiates, but includes, not only the 'owners' or holders of the 'school', but in many instances also all the older men and women present. It is done to make the ceremony a success. After their treatment, the initiates may not wash until about ten days have elapsed, when the 'mother' of the 'school' takes them to the river. From this time the novices, except in the case of pregnant women, are allowed no covering over the shoulder or body. Their loin-coverings should consist of hard, unworked skins, but in the 1939 *vyali*, owing to the difficulty of obtaining skins, European cloth was allowed. 881 [292]

From now the *vyali*, held in the *khoro* of the district head or chief, will continue for a period of a full year. Except on a few special occasions, however, all the activities are confined to the evenings and early mornings, leaving the initiates free to carry on their ordinary work at home for the greater part of the day. Most of the initiates sleep at home and married women become pregnant and have their babies during the year of their initiation without any inconvenience.

One of the most important activities of the *vyali* is the singing and drumming every morning and evening during the whole period of the initiation. Some of the songs are related to the stage of the initiation, different stages being characterized by different songs: thus after the medical treatment marking the official opening in about September a new song that has not been practised previously is begun, and later, when summer fruits are plentiful, a song is sung in which this abundance is mentioned. There is a cluster of songs associated with bringing the singing to a close each evening, when the *khoro* has to be closed by the girls, and again in the early morning, when the gate is opened. Most of the songs consist of a simple phrase repeated over and over again, the words of which are meaningless to the singers, and frequently, even where the song is long, only a small portion of it is repeated. There are songs consisting of praises of the queen, well-known district heads, and their areas, and a very important one in praise of the chief girl of the *vyali*. One song sung by the 'shepherds' refers to girls who enter only towards the end of the initiation, pointing out how inferior this is to full initiation, while another exhorts initiates to pinch and otherwise torment such girls. *Mburetlo* songs, which are accompanied by dancing and begun in about December, are the main feature of the singing after the Bird, the pivot of the ceremony, has arrived (April). They are very similar to *lenge* songs sung for rain, associated with the *vuidjoni* spirits, and are believed to be identical in function. There are also *lenge* songs in the *vyali*, and it is significant that among the Nareni there is each year a woman's counterpart of the *gomane* drumming in which *lenge* songs are sung. If any initiate is seduced during the period of initiation, special songs of derision are sung in which she and her family are mentioned by name. Where the songs have no dancing accompaniment, they are sung to the clapping of hands until the arrival of the Bird, when two flat pieces of wood are used. 881 533

Initiation is considered to be a time of hardship for those who undergo it. The singing every evening, sometimes as late as eleven o'clock and 881

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241 782 where they will pour and to carry the beer in the *khirudwana* basket used in honour of the gods. The occasion is one of joy. The women have already in all likelihood sung *lenugu* songs special to the occasion amid joyous trillings while preparing the beer and, since in addition to the special beer of the gods much ordinary beer will have been prepared, a wide circle of relatives, including those of the wives, will have been invited.

When the queen held her *thugula* ceremony in August, 1938, Ḍiḍi was despatched at eight o'clock in the morning to fetch home Magovo, the cow dedicated to the queen's mother, for the harvest giving should take place fairly early in the day, though in practice the rule is often observed in the breach and we have seen ceremonies take place after midday. As it is not easy to drive home one cow of a herd, all were driven and put into the *khɔrɔ* where every one had gathered. When Magovo's hind legs had been tied, the chief wife of Mulogwane, deceased brother of the chief to whose family the queen is *khadi*, appeared carrying in a basket a calabash of beer and the queen's mother's beads (*mudala*, the well-known 'beads of the water'). Pouring some of the beer in a wooden platter, she handed it to the queen, who, holding the beads in her hands, placed it before Magovo with the words, 'Here is beer, Magovo of Muhale (one of the earliest kings), beer of the new corn. We say, Stop this epidemic (winds) to which you have exposed us. Here, too, are your beads. We see neither people (subjects) nor riches; we see only that poverty which you have left for us.' The cow sipped a little of the beer, whereupon all prostrated themselves in greeting (*hu lɔsha*), while one or two women rent the air with their joyous trillings. Sometimes (but it was omitted on this occasion) the beads are placed round the neck of the cow and left there for the whole day.

The dedicated cow having been untied, all now repaired to the courtyard of the chief wife of Mulogwane, where they sat round the shrine, the queen and sons and daughters near by, wives further away, while the small children were made to kneel on the lower side of the shrine, hands together and palms up. Pouring out beer on the mound, the queen said a prayer similar to the previous one, adding that the gods must tell one another and not leave any one out. Then, drinking a little herself, she placed the calabash on the ground for the next person to take up and drink. Each one in turn placed the gourd on the ground for the next to take up, till all the relatives had drunk, when it was returned to the queen. She drank once more, saying, 'He who gives to the gods must not remain hungry,' and laid the calabash upside down on the mound. The small children lapped up the beer from the ground, and trilling and *hu lɔsha* marked the end of the ceremony.

241 782 Now pots of beer for the crowd that had gathered were brought out and general drinking began. After a while the men took out the drums and ●533 began dancing an old dance, the *matagwa*. Thereafter the women began 535 the sacred *lenugu* songs, to which men and women danced in a ring in the courtyard of the chief wife. The queen herself beat the big drum. It was now near sunset. Suddenly a wail like the bleating of a sheep was heard; another, then another, in the direction of the bush behind the

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village. It was the *zwidjajani*, ancestral spirits come to join in the joy and revelry of the living. They opened the next song and joined in the singing of the women, all in the whistling language which people make out by its tone. Later more beer was brought out and when the *zwidjajani* began a new song no one took any notice. 'If you are drinking beer, what are we to drink', came the wails of the *zwidjajani* and a pot of beer was brought to the bush by councillors. Dancing and singing continued till the small hours of the morning, when the sounds of the *zwidjajani* disappeared in the direction of Maulwi, the burial grove of the dead queens, and the revellers, happy and drunk from beer of the *thugula*, retired to bed. The spirits visit only important members of the royal group and a few other families, but beyond this there are no differences between the harvest giving of the queen and that of other people.

Ritual killings of all kinds are insignificant by contrast with the beer offering. There are, first, killings specially for the ancestors, but they are so rare that many people have never seen them. Secondly, there are occasions when the killings, clearly ritual, are not thought of as an offering or sacrifice, because nothing is given to the ancestors. And, thirdly, there are killings, not associated with ancestors or religion, in which small pieces of meat may nevertheless be set aside to 'tell' (*hu suma*) the gods of some event or to propitiate them. *Hu suma* is a conception somewhat different from our 'offer' or 'give'; it has two connotations as used in ordinary life: it is either merely to inform a superior or, by extension of this idea, to send him a share of something good one has, such as a leg of an animal slaughtered or a calabash of the beer one has brewed. In approaching the gods, sometimes one and sometimes the other conception is uppermost.

The killing which most clearly contains the conception of an offering and the primary purpose of which is propitiation of the gods is the slaughter of a black sheep for rain at the grave of a royal ancestor: the victim is immolated, small pieces of meat cut from all parts of it are set aside for the gods, and all the bones are collected and buried in the grave, together with the stomach contents. Equally stressed, however, is the eating of the meat without salt by the assembled crowd. At the installation of a district head, a beast, referred to as a *thugula*, is killed and, in so far as it is killed in a special manner and morsels of meat set aside for the gods to be cooked and later eaten without salt by children below the age of puberty, it is the vicarious submission of a gift to the ancestors. But the major portion of meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones collected, for a hind leg is sent to the queen. So little is the 'goat of killing' in marriage ceremonial regarded as an offering or sacrifice that we sought for it in vain in the context of a killing for the ancestors. Yet pieces of meat are laid on the shrine and a prayer offered, though the rest of the meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones kept. Still further removed from an offering is the goat killed on a death to provide a skin for covering the body: its meat is eaten without salt, and all who partake of it must sleep in the hut of the deceased, but nothing is given to the ancestors and no prayer is offered. On the other hand, though the *lelopo* doctor, when killing a goat to treat a patient, sets aside pieces of meat

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782 for his ancestors, this killing, primarily medical in purpose, is not to propitiate and has no religious significance.

An interesting though unusual killing among the Lovedu is the 'bringing home' of a spirit. Maborɔmɔ, an uninherited widow living with her three children in a village of relatives, had had much illness in the family which, after consultation with many doctors, was attributed to her husband's brother Pheduli. Pheduli had been stabbed to death in a Johannesburg compound and was now complaining, 'I want to be brought home with a head of cattle.' All his relatives were asked to be present and contribute their share of corn, because 'We are placing a beast to be Pheduli'. On the day of the ceremony a young black and white bull-calf was caught and held, and, when beer (*muphaba*) was poured down its throat, the *khadi* uttered a prayer, saying, 'Drink and tell all the other spirits these matters.' Then they repaired with the same calabash to the courtyard, where all the children were called to sit near: the *khadi*, praying for health, poured the beer on a spear, battle-axe, and horn which had belonged to Pheduli, and the children drank what was left in the calabash, each one placing it in turn on the ground. The doctor, who, supervising his side of the ceremony, had been busy in a hut preparing his medicines, now came out and asked that the dedicated calf again be caught. Mixing a powder, said to consist of *mufera* and other medicines to make spirits forget, he told the *khadi* to smear it on some of the hairs at the end of the tail and to tie a knot. He himself then smeared the whole tail and body. Repairing to the courtyard where the *thugula* objects still lay, the doctor took out a bag of powder, which he shook up to 'smoke' the objects in its dust. Then he dug a hole where the beer had been poured.

Meanwhile the meat of a goat which had been killed was cooking in a pot. Before the killing (which we did not witness), medicine, we were told, had been smeared on the goat while the doctor uttered the words, 'Sleep, sleep here, and look after your people.' The meat was eaten without salt by the relatives as well as a few others who were present and the bones carefully collected. A dog seized hold of one and was chased by all till the bone was retrieved. Having placed the bones in the hole, the doctor inquired, 'In which direction do the Lovedu look when buried?' The *khadi* pointed to the north. Then, taking the head of the goat, he placed it facing north on top of the bones and said, 'We people all look in that direction.' He took out medicine, which he gave to the *khadi* to pour on the bones, smoked them with his powder, and ordered that the hole be filled with the stomach contents mixed with earth. The *khadi* then beat down the earth and made a small mound. Dancing and the [533 singing of *lesugu* songs now began and continued all night till at dawn the 535] *khadi* took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) thrice, saying, 'As for us, we are going, we are returning home. And you, may you remain in peace.' In the beer that was provided for this festive occasion was put some medicine, 'the powder of death', generally used after a death, lest people *khuma*; for the burial of the goat symbolizes the burial and bringing home of their ancestor, just as the dedicated goat symbolizes the immortality of his spirit.

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794 shown how to dance in possessed fashion, all, it was said, lest when her
755 spirit left her she should be lazy and not know how to work. Betty
535 walked as in a dream with a wooden, expressionless look and at times appeared so exhausted that we feared she would not be able to lift the stamper when imitating stamping. This mime-show is not performed in all initiations, nor is a goat always killed, for the methods of doctors differ considerably and the patient's relatives may have no goat. Often the patient is set to dance and treated with medicines till she falls down with the spirit upon her.

794 It was now three o'clock in the afternoon, and, the initiation being
755 complete, the doctor thought it time that the spirits departed. She
535 ushered the possessed into the hut, where they all sat down, offered them
533 each a pinch of snuff, took a rattle and began her farewell song, the whole company (for the hut had filled with spectators) joining in the refrain. Next the initiate sang her farewell song, mentioning what she wanted as her accessories—several white cloths, a woollen cap, and a spear to hold when dancing. When all had finished singing, they took off their *zuithomo* (clothes), which their attendants (for each possessed person has some one to help him when his spirit appears) put into bundles to take away, and lay down to sleep. After three minutes the doctor grunted and groaned as departing spirits are apt to do, sat up and began dressing in everyday clothes. The others followed her example and went outside. The patient, but a short while before so exhausted, came smiling out of the hut and scolded the people for letting her oversleep in this shocking manner (appearing to have no knowledge of her initiation). Then all washed their faces and urinated in the hedge, as women do on rising in the mornings.

794 Initiation into the cult is said to make the person well again, and all
755 into whose history one inquires claim to have been cured. Betty herself
784 had no further trouble. If, however, they become ill again, it may be a second spirit, for many people have three or four. There is, however, no further initiation; the second spirit is merely called upon to manifest itself. A second or third spirit may take possession without causing any illness, merely announcing its arrival and making known its wants when the person is possessed. After initiation the spirit manifests itself when it has some complaint or desire, when the person has broken some taboo, or when specially induced by dancing or prayer. A possessed person has to keep certain taboos: he may never eat such firstfruits as pumpkin leaves or green mealies, *morula* fruits or beer made of the newly-harvested corn without medicine given him at his initiation and renewable every year or every two years; any new thing undertaken, as when a possessed woman becomes pregnant, must be reported to the spirit. Some *malɔpɔ* may not be beaten with a green stick, lest the spirit descend upon them; others may not touch European medicine. Many of them run away from Europeans even when not actually possessed, and one man had to keep his books securely locked in a suit-case lest his wife should see them and become troubled by her spirit. The very mention of the word *lelɔpɔ* in the presence of some may cause the spirit to come. Observances are not the same for all and taboos to be observed depend largely on the doctor who

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does the initiation. There are no special burial rites associated with the cult. There is, however, a vague belief that injury to a snake in the village may in some cases harm a possessed person, an interesting belief in view of the fact that there is so little trace in Lovedu religion of the Zulu idea that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in snakes.

There is a special relationship between a possessed person and the doctor who initiated him: every year when the medicine needs renewal, beer or *morula* cider is prepared, the doctor, who comes with a number of disciples and attendants, is called and there is a great dance of the possessed often lasting several days. This is 'dancing for medicine' (*ku vinela tshidi*). Some possessed people have to be specially doctored before drinking the first *morula* cider and the *morula* season is always a time of *lelɔpɔ* gatherings; others are required to contribute corn at harvest time for a large *lelɔpɔ* dance at the home of the doctor. These gatherings, at which a goat may be slaughtered in addition to the cider provided, add greatly to the prestige of the doctor. There is sometimes considerable jealousy between *malɔpɔ* doctors, who, with those initiated by them, may form rival schools. Some doctors refuse to allow their followers to dance with those initiated by other doctors without special permission. At one seance, at which there had been some unpleasantness, the doctor smeared some powder into incisions on the neck, tongue, crown, and sides of the heads of her disciples. Then, taking some medicated water in her mouth, she squirted (*ku phasa*), saying, 'I "place" you. Don't you dance any more. I don't like dancing every day without my special permission. Any *lelɔpɔ* who dances where you are dancing will break her leg or be badly hurt.' The remainder of the water was given them to drink.

An interesting feature of the cult of possession is that many people when the spirit is upon them speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thovɔlɔ or Kharanga. Investigation into this matter, however, shows that this is not as startling a phenomenon as it might appear. When possessed, a person for the most part sits silent unless he is a doctor. If he speaks at all, this is in monosyllables, for all his wants and messages are conveyed in song. *Lelɔpɔ* songs are stereotyped and known to many because the uninitiated have to join in the refrain when rattling the accompaniment. In these songs there is usually a number of foreign words, though many consist purely of meaningless sounds, such as '*We le wee eva o wee wee wee wana wee*'. Often peculiarities in the pronunciation of vowels are interpreted as Thovɔlɔ. When the refrain begun (*ku ruma*) by the possessed person has been taken up by the chorus, he continues with the song or interpolates his own words, usually Sotho with a few foreign words interspersed, till he wishes to stop. In this way he makes known his wishes. It quite frequently happens that no one understands the gibberish of the possessed person, and doctors generally have an attendant who interprets what they wish to convey. There are, however, numerous well-known words in general use by people when their spirit is upon them—for instance, *mufoto* or *mooto* for *lefɔla* (snuff), *bula* or *mula* for *meetse* (water), *ea ga mbaya* for *ea ga ntiya* (they may beat me), *kaya* for *kae* (home). But many possessed people speak pure Sotho, and it is recognized that a newly initiated person may not

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794 533 192 know Thəvəb. The Lovedu themselves are not critical, and the usual reply when one expresses any doubt about the genuineness of the possessed or the possibility of fraud is, 'If they were not really possessed how could they speak a strange tongue?'

794 It is not our purpose to discuss the psychology of possession among the Lovedu. We should, however, point out that it is in no way associated with abnormalities of character or with crises in the life of the individual. Its symptoms are not of a nervous nature, such as indicate *ukuthwasa* among Nguni; there are, except when the spirit descends upon them, no twitchings; uncontrollable hiccups are unknown; members of the cult are not hysterical or mentally unbalanced nor can they be distinguished in their daily activities from others. There is no change in the personality of the individual when his spirit is upon him, although some of them sing in a low voice when possessed by a man and others dance in a peculiar way. Nor is there any difference to be seen between one possessing spirit and another in the same individual: when his second spirit comes upon a possessed person, it often continues the conversation where the first spirit left off, and the only indication of its arrival may be its own announcement in a song or perhaps gulping movements and a gentle falling back of the patient. Finally, of interest psychologically was the farewell dance of all *malɔpɔ* just before the *vyali* initiation for girls in September, 1938. Their songs and dances were taboo during the period of the 'school' as they were not allowed to compete with those of the *vyali* which had not yet ended in October, 1939. We must not conclude from this or from the fact that Christians do not become *malɔpɔ* that possession is imposture. There are wide avenues for fraud, but most *malɔpɔ* are genuine victims of mass-suggestion. The cult, though open to men, is confined largely to women. It is not associated with gifts of prophecy or the finding of lost objects, and there are no revelations concerning the Beyond.

The bearing of the possessed when not dancing is quiet and dignified and detached in contrast to the diabolical manifestations of the possessed in Europe in the Middle Ages. It appears to be neither a paranoic nor a compensatory phenomenon. We dare not relate trance experience with neuroses or psychoses, for we need to orientate ourselves, not from our own, but from a wider relativistic psychology or psychopathology; the mental reflects the cultural configuration and the disposition of drives in the mind must be viewed relatively to the disposition of forces in the culture. The whole cult among the Lovedu is remarkably stereotyped; behaviour under the influence of the spirit, the songs, the things demanded by spirits, conform to a type. Even the possessing spirits themselves are stereotyped, being almost always grandparents.

It is our impression that if any one in the least degree suggestible were made to dance without sustenance for several days in the noise and excitement of seances, he would be liable to fall down exhausted and respond in the traditional manner to the attentions of the women. But not all initiations are successful. In one case witnessed by us, the young woman quite obviously did not want to become possessed: she danced in a half-hearted manner and, under the pretext of tending her baby, kept

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643 bring with them in addition dancing performers (*gɔsha*) to please her and
789 to evoke her pity at the sorrowful sight of people dancing in summer when
535 they ought to be ploughing. The movements of this dancing do not
821 differ from those of ordinary dancing, but the music consists of *lenugu* songs sung also at the annual harvest ceremony, on the death of important royal people, and at the girls' initiation 'school'.

643 The most renowned of all dancing for rain is the *legɔbathale*, a special
789 kind of *gɔsha*, the mourning dance of a section of Thovolo people living
535 under one of the district heads, Maculana. It is more dignified, its move-
533 ments slower and more stately, and its drumming more subdued than in an
821 ordinary *gɔsha*. So lightly are the drums struck that the clear, silvery, varied tones of the reed pipes ring out like the peal of bells. Only two drums are used, and none but those who have lost at least one parent may perform, and it is begun in the dim light of the dawn before sunrise, when, after a short spell, it stops and is resumed later in the day. When some one person has greatly angered the queen, and drought is believed to be due to her displeasure on this account, the married women from all the villages in the royal neighbourhood assemble every morning after cooking to dance, singing, 'We are being killed on account of a bogyman in skins' (*re vulaiwa gi Madikadyana di velevedana*). Grandmothers nurse the babies and encourage the younger women with their trillings and dancing movements. The dust rises high and by sunset they are black with dirt and sweat; but next day and the next they come again, sometimes for as long as a week, till rain falls or continued drought makes it clear that some other cause is operating as well. The great hardship this dancing entails (for nursing mothers who perform have no time to feed their babies) is thought to melt the heart of the queen. Too much rain, as well as too little, is laid at the door of the queen. On one occasion, when it had rained almost incessantly for six weeks, the chief councillor said in the presence of the queen, 'Fat does not fill the pot' (*makhura a a dale bija*), meaning that there can be too much of a good thing—a hint to the queen to regulate things better.

643 There is no belief that is stronger in the tribe even to-day than that
789 in the power of the queen to transform the clouds. This does not, how-
821 ever, mean that they do not recognize the regularity of the seasons. People know that the month of February is generally the rainiest in the year; that the month *Morenane* (October), when the Southern Cross sets just before bedtime, is the time when the first rains are approaching, and no one would *lova* rain in winter any more than Europeans would organize a day of prayer for rain in that season. Yet if rain does not come at its proper time or the season is generally bad, it may be said, 'The queen has not changed the hoeing season [i.e. the year] nicely' (*a va fedula ledzema ha vutse*); for if the cycle of seasons is considered inevitable, whether the new year is brought in propitiously or otherwise is in the hands of the queen.

643 Though renowned as the greatest rain-maker in South Africa, Mujaji
791 never works alone. She always has a rain-doctor, of whom there are many in the tribe, to work with her. She chooses any renowned doctor, but may change him for another if people complain that the rain is bad—

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177 duplicity and ingratitude, suspicion, and attempts to take advantage of
797 kindness. These were construed as barbaric traits that had to be uprooted. There appeared, in addition, to be an unusually large number of anti-Christian practices: the tribal justice, proceeding upon no fixed principles, seemed corrupt; there were periodical smellings-out of witches; people believed in the divinity of the queen. Dancing and drumming were obnoxious, not merely because they were 'heathenish din', but also because of their association with the idolatry of the *digama* and the 'schools', the sexual laxity at the *gisha* dances and possession by spirits. There were also mendicant minstrels who played the xylophone (*dibila*) [533] and sang for their food and lodging, whose songs did not always express Christian sentiments. One, for instance, not long ago, used to sing, 'Christians are cheats who put us to sleep before we eat [referring to grace], so as to kill us unawares', and another's song rang more crudely: 'The husbandless woman climbs to the roof of the hut; she urinates and the rats fall down in a faint'.

Early Church policy laid down what should be outlawed on mission-owned farms: wife-purchase, shrines, *digama*, rain-making, witchcraft, divination, 'strengthenings with medicine', the consecration of weapons, and other repugnant customs. It stamped as particularly reprehensible theft, sexual offences, opposition to the Church, and, later, migration to seek employment in the sinful towns. The sanctions with which it can enforce obedience upon a self-governed estate include refusal of such privileges as baptism and confirmation, public denunciation in church, various penalties, such as road-making and catechism classes, and even expulsion from the mission station. Natives believe that the whole system is served by a network of espionage, and the intrinsic difficulties of the situation have been immensely increased by the fact that financially the mission station largely relies upon the contributions in fees and work of its tenants. On one occasion a self-constituted committee of disaffected tenants in Johannesburg, who were in arrears, accused the mission of capitalistic exploitation and of robbing the Natives of their country, and drastic action was necessary.

177 The Christian attack upon the marriage pattern and especially polygyny
795 has led to many subtle reactions. Devout Christians of the old order still
184 refuse to accept cattle, but surreptitiously pocket money payments which by the nature of the case can be used to subserve personal, not social, ends. The Church no longer sets its face against *munywalo*, but seeks to turn it into a kind of dowry, and Christians call it 'thanks'. The Christian's freedom of choice of a mate weakens the reciprocities and emphasizes independence and materialism at the price of the patterns of co-operation and long-range mutuality. A Christian often marries a non-relative, but cannot easily escape the complex net thrown over the whole social structure by the cattle exchanges. He may have to face the opposition of those relatives whose displeasure may cause illness to him or his family. If he marries a second wife, his cross-cousin, he is excommunicated, and he will be unable, even on his death-bed, to secure the final consolation and blessing of the Church unless he sets aside his pagan wife. Polygyny, the inheritance of wives, and beer are so deeply rooted in

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431 some day reciprocate and the old man again 'thanks' him with beer given in his honour. And this is an essential aspect of these gift exchanges. The most striking illustration is in respect of *munyualo* (bride-price). The *tuzi*, it is said, never completes *munyualo* payments (*munyualo a u ftle*); even in his old age he must still respond to the call for assistance from his relatives-in-law; and they in turn never cease bringing him beer. But whatever he gives falls into the *munyualo* and must be returned should the marriage be dissolved; the chain linking the parties into relations of reciprocity has snapped.

574 The *gosha*, essentially a dance performed by the young men of one or
535 more areas, provides the setting of an interesting interchange of goodwill
471 and of commodities. The main object is undoubtedly recreational, and the main participators are not kin, but members of a territorial unit. The district head is not necessarily involved, except as far as he must know what goes on in his district. The old Lovedu word *lutbo*, a musical
•[54] entertainment, emphasizes its salient features: youths, blowing on reed flutes, dance round in a circle to the accompaniment of four drums beaten by girls. There is much preliminary practising under the leadership of the dance-master (*malogwani*), but in the actual performances leadership is not marked and changes continually as one performer after the other takes his stand in the centre of the ring of dancers. The artistic aspect, the making of the sets of reeds, their tone compass, the rhythmic counterpoints and the various melodic and harmonic sequences of sound may be dismissed in a sentence: close by, one is reminded of the pealing of bells thrown into ever new combinations by complex steps and movements; at a distance one listens as if to an *ensemble* of brass instruments strongly supported by drums. We are concerned with the socio-economic aspects only.

171 A slight comparison with the Venda *matangwa*, a word also used by the Lovedu (*matagwa*), is instructive. A Venda creditor wishing to collect a debt calls the dancers, gives them some work (such as the building of a hut or the repairing of a fence), and sends them to the recalcitrant debtor. There they stay feeding at the expense of the debtor and of his neighbours until the debtor pays. But the beast that the debtor pays is slaughtered and consumed by the performers, the creditor receiving only a small part. Apart from using the *matangwa* to enforce payment by debtors, the Venda also send such dancers to express sympathy when there has been a death and in that case there is a return visit to get back the beast slaughtered. It has also other uses not relevant to our present purpose.

574 Among the Lovedu the *gosha* is somewhat different. Private individuals
535 send it to friends or relatives to express sympathy or to notify a death as
431 well as to celebrate the occasion of the latter's marriage or setting up a new home; and there are special rules for each kind of *gosha*. The *gosha* of condolence, for instance, lasts one day, drums are not allowed if the deceased is of a foreign tribe, and refusal of the entertainment is impossible. Generally speaking, a *gosha* entails special food and lodging arrangements, food for the visitors being collected from households in the district which also provides sleeping quarters. The old rules designed

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CHAPTER VIII

FERTILITY AND THE DRUM CULT

The setting of the sacred drums in a mystical cult—initiation into the secrets of the whistling ancestors—calendric observances connected with fecundity, masks, and mummeries.

794 BESIDES the girls' puberty ceremony and the circumcision of boys, there are other initiation ceremonies among the Lovedu. One is the *vyali* (often looked upon as the women's counterpart of circumcision because of its regimentation), contemporaneous with which is the boys' *vuhwera*, consisting largely of masked dancing; another is the *gomana* for men. These are closely interwoven with a fertility and rain cult which, because of its association with sacred drums, one may call the drum cult. Their educational object, never very strongly marked in Bantu initiation schools, pales into insignificance before the ceremonial. Indeed the *gomana* as a 'school' is only an aspect of *gomana* ceremonial as a whole, the primary function of which is to secure rain. The *vyali-vuhwera-gomana* complex is characterized by esoteric masks, mummeries, and mysteries and by a category of values which we may term the 'mystical philosophy' of the Lovedu. We shall give merely a brief picture of the complex, because, at the time of writing, the first *vyali-vuhwera* held for thirty-five years is still in progress and our ideas as to its true meaning are far from being settled.

794 796 The sacred drum cult has many ramifications. The *zwiḑajani*, supposed to be ancestral spirits coming to earth to take part in *gomana* singing and drumming of the sacred drums, have become incorporated into other aspects of the culture. They appear in the bush near the village whenever a harvest offering has been made in the families of royal relatives; they come at the installation of a new district head and at the death of close relatives of the queen. On these occasions they join in the singing and dancing of *lesugu* songs, songs associated with the *vyali* of men and which, in addition to the above-mentioned occasions, are employed also when women dance for rain. The type of instrument by means of which the *zwiḑajani* whistle or bleat out their songs and messages is used also by the Bird, the ruling spirit of the *vyali*.

[533] [776]

●534 778 Drums are much used in Lovedu life; they are played in the *gɔsha* dance to the accompaniment of reed pipes, they are important in all initiations except circumcision, they are beaten for days at the dancing of possessed people, and it is significant that the public recognition by the queen of a new district head at his installation consists in the handing over of a drumstick (*khiɔba kha gɔma*). Drums are of two types: the long cylindrical drum played with the hands as it lies on its side and the *gɔma*, a rounded drum with handles, played by means of a drumstick as it stands in an upright position. The sacred drums (*digomana*) of the tribe are of the *gɔma* type, but, unlike ordinary *gɔma* drums, are played by hand, not with a drumstick. They are four in number, each with its special

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name, and are kept at present in a village beside the bush in which the last three rulers lie buried. Their keeper is a descendant of Malegudu, eldest son of Mugɔdɔ, who fought with Mujaji for the throne. These drums are not to be seen by the public, nor are people, except inmates of the royal district, supposed to pass anywhere near there. In appearance and decoration they are no different from ordinary drums, but they are made in a special way and it is said that the maker 'will see them with his eyes but never hear them with his ears' (i.e. he will be put to death when his work is done). The largest is *phaṭaṭɛ*, which stands about 4 ft. high; next in size is *ṭaŋga*; then comes *pekahare*; while the smallest and most important of all is *raŋwedi*, to which is attributed powers even of locomotion, because in 1892, when Albasini set fire to the royal village, it was the only one of the *gomana* drums that was not burnt. While all four *gomana* drums are said to contain a human skull instead of the stone that one usually finds inside it, *raŋwedi*, the smallest, has the facial skin of a human being placed (in strips, it is said) under the resonator of ox hide and has, smeared on the outside, the body dirt of the person (said to be always a chief councillor or other important person of royal blood) killed for its manufacture. This drum is thought to be closely associated with the welfare of the tribe. Should the chief have occasion to escape from enemies, she should take with her this drum, and it is said that, when the heir to the throne receives instruction in the use of rain medicines just prior to the death of the ruling chief, she must be sitting upon it. In some of the neighbouring tribes the sacred drums are pierced on the death of the chief.

The care of these sacred drums, involving periodic smearing with fat and ochre to keep out weevils and moths, renewal of the skin resonators, building and repair of the hut in which they are kept, is the work of a special section of people, those of Ravothata, whose totem is *ɖou* of Vulebye. Vulebye is in Phalaborwa, where this drum cult is much stronger than among the Lovedu. These Ravothata are also responsible for closing the *vyali* initiation at the capital when they come at its end with their weird-costumed dancing performers, the *magɔgɔbya*. Thus once again the *gomana* and the *vyali-vuhwera* are linked into a common complex. The sacred drums, played only on special ceremonial occasions and by men, not women, who are usually responsible for drumming, are looked upon as gods (*vedimo*). The praise of *phaṭaṭɛ*, the largest, is 'Leg of *phaṭaṭɛ* of Muhale [the old chief]; if it is not a god we can throw it away rattling to the pool' (*Goto la phaṭaṭɛ a Muhale hɛ ŋga ve a se mudimo re ga laṭa re khogolosa ra isa madivení*). The Thavina and Nareni, tribes to the south of the Lovedu, offer to the sacred drums the first-fruits, and everywhere their beating is associated with rain and the agricultural year. Not only are the drums gods, but their sound is thought to be very pleasing to the *zwiɖajani*, those ancestral spirits who, when the drums are sounded, come and sing and dance. The knowledge that their part is played by initiated men does not appear to detract from their importance in the eyes of those who are in the secret. The instrument used consisted in the old days of the tibia of a human being with a feather inserted (and there is reason to believe that some of these are still extant) but to-day

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they use mostly two pieces of wood slightly concave on the inside in which a piece of sinew or reed is temporarily inserted. The language being tone-bound, messages and songs can be understood when whistled. Not all ancestral spirits, but only those of the Lovedu proper and of some of the important groups, such as the Khaha and Nareni, are thought to be able to visit the earth as *zwidjani*.

The most important feature of the drum cult was the beating of the sacred drums in an enclosure near the village, usually in the afternoon and evening on six successive days twice every year: in the spring just before the sowing and in winter after the harvest thanksgiving. The spring drumming was preceded by propitiation of the royal ancestors by means of a libation on their graves in Ḍaja Forest, where the earlier chiefs lie buried. There was a special procession which no one was to see on pain of death, the Mulodozi River had to be crossed at a special spot called *Khiṭaba-vakololo* (washing place of great people) and it is maintained by some that a black ox was also slaughtered. The district head at Ḍaja, who was responsible for clearing a way to the graves, had to plant near the royal graves a little of every seed cultivated. The people would then see, it is said, which grew best and would plant much of that. The *gomana*, the beating of the sacred drums, 'was the chief thing that had the power of asking rain from the ancestors'. The sounding of the drums at harvest-time was a thanksgiving. The first harvest *gomana* after the circumcision took the form of an initiation, in which the neophytes were introduced into the drum ritual and the secret of *zwidjani*, and received cuts on their faces as a sign that they had passed through it.

Though the sacred drums are still kept and the Ravothaṭa people are still called to repair the hut in which they are placed, the regular beating of *gomana* drums has fallen into disuse. The last *gomana* initiation held officially by the queen in the tribe was in 1892, just before the accession of the present queen. It is difficult to account for this lapse when among neighbouring tribes the cult is still fully carried out. Some say the reason lies in the ritual murders that are associated with the drums, but since it is an accepted principle that a sheep may satisfactorily take the place of a human being and, moreover, this difficulty must somehow have been overcome in other tribes, this reason does not appear good enough. Possibly the cult was introduced from the south and had not become sufficiently assimilated or taken deep enough root to survive the lethargy induced by European contact. Perhaps the rain-making powers of the queen herself made it largely unnecessary. It is not impossible that it will suddenly spring back to life, as did the *vyali* in 1938–9 after a lapse of over thirty years.

Though the queen herself now holds no *gomana*, the institution is not dead. Elements such as *zwidjani* have taken permanent root and the queen has allowed a stranger, Rasekwalo, a rain doctor of the *kwena* totem who came to live on European-owned land under her jurisdiction, to hold a *gomana* with, of course, his own drums, and in 1929, when he came to ask that boys from the royal village should be allowed to attend the initiation, she gave her consent. He holds one *gomana* a year, receiving

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Though made by men or women, there is something almost super- 881
natural about a *gɔma*: its manufacture is called 'giving birth to' (*hu* 778
dɔmala digɔma) and though, for example, in the case of a dancing *gɔma*, every one knows that some person is playing the part, this in no way detracts from its importance. Many of the *digɔma* are masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, or leaves. Some are mummeries with a meaning attached; others are simply interesting or wonderful objects. One *gɔma*, *dau* (lion), consists of a sound made by passing the hand down a stick on a piece of hide held over a pot. These *digmɔa* are traditional in initiations, but very often new ones are invented and, since different regiments or areas come on many ceremonial occasions with their own *digɔma*, there may be a mild competitive element in the showing of *digɔma*, especially in *khɔba* and *vyali*. Laws taught in initiation ceremonial are also referred to as *digɔma*. But the greatest of all *digɔma* are the [534 ●
gomana drums, which are looked upon as gods and are associated with 776
the ancestors and religious ritual. *Digɔma* vary from laws or mummeries 781]
to semi-gods. The element of awe, so conspicuously absent in Lovedu religious practices, is found in their attitude towards *digɔma*—not that there is any display of awe towards them or in their presence, but that in referring to some of them people talk as though of something awesome or god-like. Even the *zwidajani*, ancestral spirits, who come to earth when [769]
gomana drums are played or at religious ceremonies, are thought of as *digɔma*, which in this manner become part of religion itself.

The greatest *gɔma* of the *vyali* is *khiudogani* or *khiudogala*, referred to also as the great Bird of Muhale or of Rhodesia who, like most *digɔma*, is believed to come from a pool in the river. It is a *gɔma* of the men and manifests itself only when there is moonlight, returning, it is said, to its pool when the moon is dark. But it is always there, secreted in its enclosure. The girls have to sing whether it is there or not, and often, though the moon is dark, it whistles its directions and commands. It consists of a light, semicircular framework about 4 ft. high, over which are put strings of the *muga* thorn tree (*Acacia rehmanniana*), which have been placed in water to become black. Surmounting it all is a small head crowned with an ostrich or other feather. It is seen only occasionally, when it comes dancing into the *vyali* courtyard at night, and, in spite of bright moonlight, its black colour makes it difficult to discern it clearly. It speaks and sings by whistling through an instrument similar to, but larger than, that used by *zwidajani*, made of the leg-bone of cattle.

This Bird is the ruling spirit of the *vyali*. It has many praises used by the girls in its honour. Coming as it does when the green foods of summer are being eaten and the grass is long, it is the embodiment of plenty and has daily to receive from each initiate summer foods and beer. All the time it is there every one in the area who makes beer has to bring one calabash to its enclosure. If this is not observed the person may be fined. The Bird regulates the whole procedure of the *vyali*, ordering which songs have to be sung, telling the girls when to dance, when to stop singing, what to do. At times it even gets angry and then, if it is dancing, it may stamp out the courtyard fires. Any infringement of the rules of the school are referred to as 'breaking the ribs' (*hu rɔva letagori*)

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778 or back of the hut, as among Zulu-Xhosa, but a shrine in the courtyard of the chief hut. Lowveld shrines vary from family to family but are easily recognizable. A shrine may consist of a mound of earth, a stick and river pebble, a spot where a thithikwane lily has been planted or a long stick planted in the earth like the Shangana-Tonga shrine. The contents of these shrines also vary within a general pattern: the Lobedu royal family place the bones of a sacrificial goat or ox in the mound; other families bury two black river pebbles and a piece of a special kind of antheap, and there are many further variations. Always there are, in addition, charms given by the doctor to prevent the ancestors from causing trouble. Instead of a shrine, or even along with it, one may find a beast or goat dedicated to the ancestors, usually bearing the name of one of them, which will at all important offerings be made to drink of the beer given to the spirits.[1] Important national offerings, especially supplications for rain, are made at graves of deceased chiefs or the sacred wood in which chiefs are buried. Great importance is attached to objects, especially old beads, hoes, spears that have once belonged to the ancestors. These are handed down from generation to generation, are placed beside the shrine when an offering is made or may even be used instead of a shrine in a beer offering. Old beads are peculiarly important for ensuring the health of any one wearing them and are used in the curing of many illnesses caused by neglect of ancestors. Sacred drums 778 are to be found in every tribe; these are the *komana* drums, thought ●534 to be inextricably bound up with the welfare of the tribe as a whole. Among the more southerly tribes of the area, these drums are smeared with the first-fruits when the chief eats the first-fruits, beaten on all important occasions such as the harvest offering and pierced on the death of the chief.

782 The officiator in important offerings is generally the father's sister or, if she be dead, the eldest sister in the family; but if she lives too far away the head of the family himself may officiate. In general, the officiator calls on ancestors both on his father's and on his mother's side and there may even be two shrines, side by side, one for the father's line, one for the mother's. There is no evidence of any differentiation between the four lines of grandparents to the exclusion

[1] The Venda pour the beer on the beast.

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i.e., telling the medicine, without any set phraseology, what to do, is important. Day wizards are chiefly men and it is said that, owing to the facility of obtaining bad medicine in towns and from foreign tribes to-day, this type of witchcraft has greatly increased.

In everyday life, however, a person is called a witch, whatever methods he has used, and in an accusation of witchcraft there is never any discussion whether the culprit is a day or night wizard. Moreover, there is in the minds of ordinary people considerable confusion about the type of witchcraft associated with each class, and it is possible to live among Lowveld people a long time without coming upon these distinctions. The night wizard is thus in Evans-Pritchard's terminology the witch, the day wizard the sorcerer; and the great distinction between sorcery and legitimate magic lies not in method but in intention.

SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF BEER AND THE DANCE. It would be a mistake in discussing the main features of Lowveld society to leave out of count the social importance of beer and the use of the dance or *gosha* as a social institution, though neither is confined to these tribes. Beer, apart from its religious value, plays a part in social and economic life. It is continually being carried from one group to another, acting as a bond between people and establishing friendly relations. In the Lowveld, in contrast to the Highveld, it is still of greater importance than money; while people may refuse to attend working parties for money, they will flock to one where beer is served. The *gosha* is a dance in which women do the drumming while men playing reed pipes dance in a circle round the drums. It is, however, much more than a dance. It is an institution for maintaining friendship and reciprocity between groups, a way of showing sympathy on the death of a relative and the means by which subjects approach their chief for rain in time of drought. A *gosha* is often sent by one chief to another in the Northern Transvaal.

SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN LOBEDU CULTURE AND THAT OF OTHER AREAS. The Lobedu culture complex represents a close blending of two cultures, that of the Lobedu who came south from somewhere in Rhodesia when the empire of Monomotapa was breaking up, bringing

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Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudontoli*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ku rula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *muukhoma* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass, which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gosha*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law. Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *madulahae* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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431 some day reciprocate and the old man again 'thanks' him with beer given in his honour. And this is an essential aspect of these gift exchanges. The most striking illustration is in respect of *munywalo* (bride-price). The *tsizi*, it is said, never completes *munywalo* payments (*munywalo a u ftle*); even in his old age he must still respond to the call for assistance from his relatives-in-law; and they in turn never cease bringing him beer. But whatever he gives falls into the *munywalo* and must be returned should the marriage be dissolved; the chain linking the parties into relations of reciprocity has snapped.

574 The *gosha*, essentially a dance performed by the young men of one or
535 more areas, provides the setting of an interesting interchange of goodwill
471 and of commodities. The main object is undoubtedly recreational, and the main participators are not kin, but members of a territorial unit. The district head is not necessarily involved, except as far as he must
[53] know what goes on in his district. The old Lovedu word *lucho*, a musical entertainment, emphasizes its salient features: youths, blowing on reed flutes, dance round in a circle to the accompaniment of four drums beaten by girls. There is much preliminary practising under the leadership of the dance-master (*malogwani*), but in the actual performances leadership is not marked and changes continually as one performer after the other takes his stand in the centre of the ring of dancers. The artistic aspect, the making of the sets of reeds, their tone compass, the rhythmic counterpoints and the various melodic and harmonic sequences of sound may be dismissed in a sentence: close by, one is reminded of the pealing of bells thrown into ever new combinations by complex steps and movements; at a distance one listens as if to an *ensemble* of brass instruments strongly supported by drums. We are concerned with the socio-economic aspects only.

171 A slight comparison with the Venda *matangwa*, a word also used by the Lovedu (*matagwa*), is instructive. A Venda creditor wishing to collect a debt calls the dancers, gives them some work (such as the building of a hut or the repairing of a fence), and sends them to the recalcitrant debtor. There they stay feeding at the expense of the debtor and of his neighbours until the debtor pays. But the beast that the debtor pays is slaughtered and consumed by the performers, the creditor receiving only a small part. Apart from using the *matangwa* to enforce payment by debtors, the Venda also send such dancers to express sympathy when there has been a death and in that case there is a return visit to get back the beast slaughtered. It has also other uses not relevant to our present purpose.

574 Among the Lovedu the *gosha* is somewhat different. Private individuals
535 send it to friends or relatives to express sympathy or to notify a death as
431 well as to celebrate the occasion of the latter's marriage or setting up a new home; and there are special rules for each kind of *gosha*. The *gosha* of condolence, for instance, lasts one day, drums are not allowed if the deceased is of a foreign tribe, and refusal of the entertainment is impossible. Generally speaking, a *gosha* entails special food and lodging arrangements, food for the visitors being collected from households in the district which also provides sleeping quarters. The old rules designed

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to prevent promiscuity among young boys and girls are no longer in 574
evidence, and complications are liable to arise where there is a *gosha*. 538
The economic aspect of the *gosha*, except where it originates in a visit 431
of condolence or is sent to supplicate for rain, is that the host, whether he himself originally invited the dancers or not, may send back a 'revenge' *gosha* to get back the beast he killed for the performers. He gets back very little, only the *masamo*, perhaps a leg of the beast, and the performers do not work for him to compensate him for what they have eaten. The *gosha* is not conceived of as a debt-collecting institution, it never originates in a debt, and once it is set into motion, its real function is to maintain reciprocal relations. A man may start the chain of reciprocity by inviting a *gosha* from elsewhere; on the other hand, a party of dancers out for merriment sometimes descend upon any one they like, but he may refuse the entertainment as too costly or for other reasons. To notify the host that a *gosha* is coming is usual; but a man whose *gosha* has been accepted by another may stop (*ha thiva*) the latter from returning the compliment (and getting back his beast) by sending *khirula* beer; he will do so, for instance, when he has no beast to kill or is reluctant to part with one.

The *gosha* may be a cumbrous instrument to effect exchanges of commodities, but it throws the social concomitants of these exchanges boldly into relief, magnifying them to such an extent that the gift exchange is completely obscured. This is in accordance with Lovedu conceptions, for they have a great dislike of anything that is clearly and primarily a commercial transaction. The *gosha* stresses the interchange of goodwill; the guests, drawn perhaps from three or four areas, come to display their skill for the delectation of their hosts; and the latter, hurriedly collecting their dancers, come forth with their drummers and *ensemble* of flute-players to challenge their guests. First the one party, then the next give their performances; it is a social gala occasion and the competition is carried on in the friendliest spirit. The spectators are the judges: an old man passing gives his verdict, perhaps after having heard only one set of performers; an old woman, after a dance of ecstasy (*ha pebela*), sets the crown, be it merely a leg-ring or necklace, upon the head of her favourite performer; and when the next party dances, the verdicts are reversed and the honours paid anew. In the end neither party is victor or vanquished. The object has been self-expression, without stress upon individual performance, and entertainment in which the competitive element is present merely to heighten the enjoyment. The boys and girls of the competing areas intermingle and there are [832] many lovers' intrigues; the girls give their favourites cloths to wear as if they were knights; it is truly an occasion for the renewal of the ties of friendship, ties between relatives and ties between districts. The reciprocity is generally at long range, for distant districts are brought into relationship. Resting upon a relationship between two individuals, it draws into its sphere, through the dancing, food, and sleeping arrangements, whole territorial units.

The most impressive of all the gift exchanges, however, involves the 431
two groups of people between whom, by reason of a marriage, brides 583
are exchanged against cattle (*munywalo*). This exchange is as far

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VII. ADOLESCENCE

(a) REALISTIC PLAY-COOKING IN THE MANYWANE

(b) A TROUPE OF YOUTHFUL DANCERS

[facing p. 112]

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a hole is hollowed out so as to be deep enough for her to sit in (if possible 881
the water should reach the neck) while a fire is kindled for the other girls,
at whose pleasure she remains in the water, uttering her wail. If the girl
has a good friend among the old women, she may free the initiate from [431]
going to the river after the first morning by a gift of snuff to the elder
girls. This is called 'lifting the weight' from the girl (*ku rula*). They
return home about eleven o'clock in the morning, when they have their
meal. After this the elder girls return to their homes or do as they please,
while the novice and her friend remain in their hut. They sleep if they
can, for at night they get little chance to do so. During the initiation
the girl undergoes harsh treatment at the hands of the older girls. She
'pays', by being beaten, for going to sleep, for waking up and on the
slightest pretext. At night her blankets are taken away and used by the
older girls, while she lies exposed with no fire to warm her. Not only is
she allowed no relish with her porridge, but she may also be given filth
to eat. One girl's menstrual blood was put in her porridge, which she
immediately vomited up; sometimes a frog is given them to eat and one
of us has seen initiates made to eat sand as relish. If she asks for water,
the elder girls may clear the nose into it before it is given. All this harsh
treatment is looked upon as good discipline.

Initiation at puberty includes instruction in rules connected with 881
the new stage of life the girl is entering upon. She is warned that she 864
has reached maturity and must be careful, in sex play with boys, to avoid
becoming pregnant. She is advised also not to have more than one lover
at a time, lest there be difficulty in establishing the paternity of her child
should she have one. In the old days she was at this stage given a
calabash doll which at her marriage was carried in a basket by the wedding
party. If she was not virgin, the calabash was pierced. This custom has,
however, fallen into disuse. The girl is taught the rules connected with
menstruation: not to enter a sick-room while menstruating, not to enter [841]
a cattle kraal, not to sleep with men during her menses. If she has not
enlarged her *labia minora* properly, she is severely scolded or punished
by having hot, roasted sesamum put on them. In one case the elder girls
inserted a mealie cob in an initiate to show her the dangers of intercourse,
hurting her so badly that she was unable to walk properly. Her parents
complained to the queen, who imposed a heavy fine on each of the elder
girls responsible. There is no teaching connected with marriage. An
initiate must be respectful to her elders: she is told that if people older
than herself are in a hut she must greet (*bsha*) on entering. She is taught
in a song to honour and obey her mother. Most of the teaching is in the
form of songs or mummeries. The dancing that takes place every night
when the women come consists largely of movements in a bent position 881
on the haunches, with arms held above the head for better balance. Some 535
of the dances are associated with the lessons of the initiation: two girls,
one with a cloth passed between the legs to represent the loin covering
of a man, dance facing each other; the 'man' dances with a lighted fire-
brand between the legs, the girl wears a cloth which makes her look
pregnant. Another dance consists of movements in which legs are held
close together, and sometimes crossed, symbolic of the manner in which

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535 male advances can be prevented from becoming dangerous. These are *digɔma*, secret things or mummeries.

The last night of the ceremony is devoted to dancing and the showing of many *digɔma*. It is *khilalawemi*, the night when one sleeps standing—that is, does not sleep at all, though, since people just take a nap any time they feel tired, the name is somewhat exaggerated. All the women of the area who wish to attend gather either in the village, from which men will be debarred, or at a secluded spot somewhere near, bringing with them mealies and nuts to roast and eat while there. There is a great deal of dancing and singing. The greatest *digɔma* are shown at about 3 a.m., after a period of comparative quiet that sets in towards midnight, when most of the people begin to doze around the fires, and these continue until dawn, when disguised figures come dancing in. Each mummery has its own meaning, but this is not clear to the initiate, who does not even see many of them. In the morning, while the girls are at the [302] river, the hut of seclusion is swept and freshly smeared. On her return, after having her head shaved along the sides and back, leaving a circular top, which is a form of hairdress much liked by girls and associated with ritual occasions, the girl is anointed with fat and, except when she is of the royal family, also with ochre. She is given three skins to wear, a [292] frontal covering, a rear covering, and a skin to wear over the shoulders like a cloak. Round her neck is a thick collarette of beads. When dressed, the girl has respectfully to salute the assembled company of women in the courtyard by lying down on one side, palms held together. Now follows a few days during which the novice speaks to no one and walks with bent head, fists clenched and held to the breast. She is taken by the [431] elder girls to greet various relations, who must *nosa* her by means of a small gift before she can rise. A month or more after the ceremony a grand beer-party is given by the girl's parents for the women of the area, [571] who, at a spot near which men are not allowed, have a dance of *digɔma*, specially disguised figures. When the novice has been through the requisite number of ceremonies, she is taken to the queen or the wife of the district head to be beaten with a stick as a sign of her graduation.

881 Boys' initiation (*vudiga*) is much more spectacular than the *khɔba*. Typically it is held by the whole tribe every twelve to fifteen years, but some district heads occasionally do not wait for the authority of the queen. The last *vudiga* upon a national scale was in 1919, but since then there have been local lodges, such as the one held by the district head Maunadala in 1937. The interval of more than twenty years is not considered extraordinary. Sometimes in the past there were delays, especially in the latter half of the reigns of queens, because, so it is said, they wished to postpone their ritual end, which coincided with the fourth initiation after their accession. In 1938–9 the *vyali*, or girls' initiation, was revived after thirty-five years, partly as a preliminary to the next boys' initiation; and if within a year or so there is a *vudiga*, it will be the third of a reign that has already lasted forty-three years. There are other reasons for the present delay. The *vudiga* involves an immense organization, brings all public activities, such as the courts, to a standstill, upsets the economic routine, and concentrates energies upon one supreme

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881 they sleep by the 'mother' of the lodge (*maḑala*) near the fire. Those a little older set their traps and catch mice, which they roast by the *khisibe* fire; but relish and wild fruit is usually forbidden to them and they may not, though they often do, drink water. Sick boys, elsewhere subjected to hardships and taunts, are nursed and given soft food, not the hard *khivonclo* of the novices. The novices who go out to hunt certainly resent the malingering of the lazy ones (*magɔtha*), who are strong enough, but stay at home on this or that pretext. But the true spirit of the *vudiga* is seen, not so much in the beatings that the shepherds (*medabi*) administer, for they are beaten as much as if not more than, the novices, but in the actions and attitude of the older men. There are *medidi*, one regiment senior to the *medabi*, who are never beaten, but may be fined; and older than they are the old men (*vakhalabye*). They are kindly greybeards, some of them officials of the lodge and some who do no work (*vuṱaliziṱd*). Some of them constantly intercede for the young and weak boys who are threatened with punishment or trials beyond their strength or endurance, or 'stand for' those deserving novices who had been obedient or generous or respectful in their childhood. Above all, these old men, mellow with age and mature in wisdom, conditioned to a culture founded upon compromise and easy relations, not only restrain excesses, but add to the beauty of the performances by chanting their refrain of sayings and proverbs, encouragements and admonitions. It is they, not the shepherds with their whips, that give the tone to the proceedings.

The stage after this period of seclusion is called the 'change' (*hu fedulthwa*). The boys sit by the fire facing the rising, not the setting, sun, as was the case in the previous three months. Of course, we must not expect precision: the 1919 fire ran north-south, not east-west; the ideal always gives way to the practical, for the east-west disposition was rendered difficult, though not impossible, by the slope of the ground. In other respects also it was the spirit not the letter of the law that determined various arrangements. After the 'change' life is somewhat different in the lodge. The boys used to do homage (*lɔsha*) to a *morula* tree near the fire as if it were their ancestor (grandparent). But the tree
[778] mysteriously withers and, after the change, is replaced by a pole (*murakadu*). No teaching is done from either tree or pole as is the case in other tribes, but it is associated with a whole series of ritual acts. After the 'change' no longer shepherds but women bring the food; boys perform within sight of women; some of the food taboos are raised, but
[262] relish, though always brought, is forbidden and still thrown into the refuse heap. Apart from these and many other changes, we must also mention the visit by the novices to the village in order to 'beg for salt'. Then they sing the praises of salt, the seasoning virtues of which they now fully appreciate, having gone without it for so long. But on their return the pole has gone; their grandparent has died.

And now we press on to a day of great doings. The novices go out to
[535] 'scratch [as fowls do] for food', only this means a spectacular dance before the women. That night, the last night in the lodge, it is *khilalaswemi*, the night of standing, though many quietly doze off or escape to rest in the bush near by; there is none of the concentration we expect on

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IX. MASKED DANCERS OF RAVOTHATA

[facing p. 128]

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X. MASQUERADE OF THE UUAHWERA

(a) STRUTTING OF THE UUAHWERA DANCE

(b) DANCE OF THE DUIKER

[facing p. 129]

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881 of feathers to shade the head girl. After much dancing, cloths are tied round the initiates in the manner common to the possessed. This ceremony foreshadows the end of the initiation and indicates to the whole country that it is drawing to a close. The last month is devoted to
881 dancing: every area that is holding a *ɔyali* sends its initiates to dance
●535 before the queen, some coming with *vuhwera*, others without. Last of
778 all come the people of Ravothata with the *magɔgɔbya* and it is their performance that closes the 'school'. The *magɔgɔbya* have more imposing
[292] costumes even than the *vuhwera*, characterized by the stuffed baboon and duiker that surmount them. After a number of important *digɔma* have been shown, there is a grand finale one night (*khilalawemi*), when the Bird hangs its head sideways and says, 'My head aches and I know my end has come.' A *gɔma* of the women, the Butterfly (*khiruruwele*), dressed in leaves, comes dancing in at the girls' entrance to tease and chase the Bird. Before sunrise, when the Bird has returned to its hut, some of the initiates (those who have come for a short time only) may be taken to 'touch the Bird', a terrible ordeal. Then next morning they are all taken to the river, where they are shaved and given new clothes to wear. They are now 'things from the rubbish heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), like boys after circumcision: they walk in a bent position, may not speak freely, receive gifts, and at night ask riddles (*dinyebo*) specially associated with initiations. The enclosures are burnt. After a final washing in the river the initiates return to ordinary life and activities. A small operation is performed on initiates at the river on the last day. Among some tribes
[304] it consists of defloration, but among the Lovedu it is said to consist of a cut above the clitoris which is so small that it causes no pain or inconvenience.

881 At the time when the initiates make preparations for the arrival
292 of the Bird (February–March), the boys of those areas that have the
535 *vuhwera* as well are taken out into the bush every day to learn how to weave the elaborate costumes associated with this initiation. These are of two types: a light one, said to be for hunting, and a heavy one. Both costumes have skirts of loose-hanging grass, flung out in a circle by the gyrations of the dancer, as well as comely waist, arm, and leg bands and under-skirts of woven grass. The light costume has in addition broad shoulder bands crossing over chest and back and a mask resting upon the shoulders, veiling the face and open at the top. The heavy costume is far more imposing. Besides a woven waistcoat, there is an immense covering for head and shoulders, rising to a crested summit, flanked by what gives the impression of scales arranged in rows or projecting wings, and fronted by a snout like that of a crocodile. The dance reminds one, now of the prancings of a male bird courting its mate, now of a lizard convulsively shaking its whole body as it rests upon a rock. The lizard-bird suggests a weird dragon-like mythical monster, but its appearance belies its functions and qualities, though perhaps not the mystical meaning of the *digɔma* of the 'school'.

[778] The enclosure for *vuhwera* boys is made beside that for the Bird. Here, after having being beaten with medicated sticks, the boys spend their time, except when out hunting or dancing, their food being brought to

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the *vyali* courtyard by their sisters. They are taught a few 'laws' or formulae associated with the *vuhwera*, but their main activities are learning to make the elaborately woven costumes and later to dance in the *vyali* courtyard. Towards the end of the initiation they spend most of their time going about to dance, accepting invitations from other district heads and paying their respects at the royal village. They do beautiful movements to the drumming of their own *vyali* girls. Only two dance at a time and, while they dance, attendants (*medabi*) stand near by supervising. The masked boys may whistle out the tune to which they wish to dance or may beg snuff by means of whistling (for this is their only means of conversation during their initiation). When they dance well, women and girls come to give them gifts of leg- or arm-rings. The *vuhwera* is a kind of finishing school, an initiation into the secret of what the Bird is and how the costumes are made. It is almost as though this is an esoteric art, the preservation of which has become the main function of the *vuhwera*. A person who enters the *vuhwera* enclosure may be required to display his skill at weaving and in 1939 a man who was unable to weave (and thus showed himself to be uninitiated) was heavily fined. The fact that there is no *vuhwera* held at the royal kraal, whose boys used in the old days to go for this initiation to Khaḑa or to the *Tzaneni*, a section of the Khaḑa, suggests that the institution is a more recent adoption than the *vyali*.

It is not easy for a European to appreciate the meaning and value of such institutions as *vyali* and *vuhwera*. Most of their features cannot be explained by the Lovedu themselves. They are the result of a long, historical development which, in the absence of all evidence, may never be unravelled. The *vyali* has many aspects. One of the most important is that of a crossing or initiation similar to circumcision. The initiates are often called *vawedi* (crossers) and initiation may be referred to as 'to cross over' (*hu ʋɛla*). It is conceived as a period of hardship, a crossing for which medical treatment and ancestral blessings are essential. Respect for those older than oneself is emphasized: the initiates must be humble; but older people, especially the old men who remain in the Bird's enclosure, live royally on the beer and delicacies brought daily by initiates. There is emphasis, too, on the importance of the rank of district heads and chief, and the learning of praises of all the areas, followed towards the end of the initiation by inter-district visits, is an important feature.

Intermingled with and overshadowing the *vyali* as an initiation is the *vyali* as a fertility and rain cult, related to the *gomana* drum cult and serving the same purpose. The *vyali* lasts a year, a full agricultural cycle, and some of its stages are associated with the seasons: the typical *vyali* dress of the girls cannot be plaited till the grass has grown long; the Bird arrives only when there is plenty of food. The singing of *vyali* songs is believed to bring rain. Even before the rains of the summer of 1938–9 had fallen, it was said in Ʊulovedu that the year would be one of plenty on account of the *vyali*. These expectations were more than realized, for not only was the summer rainy, but even the winter, which is normally dry, was exceptionally wet. Stress is laid in the *vyali* on grass and vegetation: the girls wear plaited bandoliers of grass which are said by

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241 where they will pour and to carry the beer in the *khirudwana* basket used
782 in honour of the gods. The occasion is one of joy. The women have already in all likelihood sung *lesugu* songs special to the occasion amid joyous trillings while preparing the beer and, since in addition to the special beer of the gods much ordinary beer will have been prepared, a wide circle of relatives, including those of the wives, will have been invited.

When the queen held her *thugula* ceremony in August, 1938, Ḍiḍi was despatched at eight o'clock in the morning to fetch home Magovo, the cow dedicated to the queen's mother, for the harvest giving should take place fairly early in the day, though in practice the rule is often observed in the breach and we have seen ceremonies take place after midday. As it is not easy to drive home one cow of a herd, all were driven and put into the *khɔrɔ* where every one had gathered. When Magovo's hind legs had been tied, the chief wife of Mulogwane, deceased brother of the chief to whose family the queen is *khadi*, appeared carrying in a basket a calabash of beer and the queen's mother's beads (*mudala*, the well-known 'beads of the water'). Pouring some of the beer in a wooden platter, she handed it to the queen, who, holding the beads in her hands, placed it before Magovo with the words, 'Here is beer, Magovo of Muhale (one of the earliest kings), beer of the new corn. We say, Stop this epidemic (winds) to which you have exposed us. Here, too, are your beads. We see neither people (subjects) nor riches; we see only that poverty which you have left for us.' The cow sipped a little of the beer, whereupon all prostrated themselves in greeting (*hu lɔsha*), while one or two women rent the air with their joyous trillings. Sometimes (but it was omitted on this occasion) the beads are placed round the neck of the cow and left there for the whole day.

The dedicated cow having been untied, all now repaired to the courtyard of the chief wife of Mulogwane, where they sat round the shrine, the queen and sons and daughters near by, wives further away, while the small children were made to kneel on the lower side of the shrine, hands together and palms up. Pouring out beer on the mound, the queen said a prayer similar to the previous one, adding that the gods must tell one another and not leave any one out. Then, drinking a little herself, she placed the calabash on the ground for the next person to take up and drink. Each one in turn placed the gourd on the ground for the next to take up, till all the relatives had drunk, when it was returned to the queen. She drank once more, saying, 'He who gives to the gods must not remain hungry,' and laid the calabash upside down on the mound. The small children lapped up the beer from the ground, and trilling and *hu lɔsha* marked the end of the ceremony.

241 Now pots of beer for the crowd that had gathered were brought out and
782 general drinking began. After a while the men took out the drums and
533 began dancing an old dance, the *matagwa*. Thereafter the women began
535 the sacred *lesugu* songs, to which men and women danced in a ring in the courtyard of the chief wife. The queen herself beat the big drum. It was now near sunset. Suddenly a wail like the bleating of a sheep was heard; another, then another, in the direction of the bush behind the

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village. It was the *zwidajani*, ancestral spirits come to join in the joy and revelry of the living. They opened the next song and joined in the singing of the women, all in the whistling language which people make out by its tone. Later more beer was brought out and when the *zwidajani* began a new song no one took any notice. 'If you are drinking beer, what are we to drink', came the wails of the *zwidajani* and a pot of beer was brought to the bush by councillors. Dancing and singing continued till the small hours of the morning, when the sounds of the *zwidajani* disappeared in the direction of Maulwi, the burial grove of the dead queens, and the revellers, happy and drunk from beer of the *thugula*, retired to bed. The spirits visit only important members of the royal group and a few other families, but beyond this there are no differences between the harvest giving of the queen and that of other people.

Ritual killings of all kinds are insignificant by contrast with the beer offering. There are, first, killings specially for the ancestors, but they are so rare that many people have never seen them. Secondly, there are occasions when the killings, clearly ritual, are not thought of as an offering or sacrifice, because nothing is given to the ancestors. And, thirdly, there are killings, not associated with ancestors or religion, in which small pieces of meat may nevertheless be set aside to 'tell' (*hu suma*) the gods of some event or to propitiate them. *Hu suma* is a conception somewhat different from our 'offer' or 'give'; it has two connotations as used in ordinary life: it is either merely to inform a superior or, by extension of this idea, to send him a share of something good one has, such as a leg of an animal slaughtered or a calabash of the beer one has brewed. In approaching the gods, sometimes one and sometimes the other conception is uppermost.

The killing which most clearly contains the conception of an offering and the primary purpose of which is propitiation of the gods is the slaughter of a black sheep for rain at the grave of a royal ancestor: the victim is immolated, small pieces of meat cut from all parts of it are set aside for the gods, and all the bones are collected and buried in the grave, together with the stomach contents. Equally stressed, however, is the eating of the meat without salt by the assembled crowd. At the installation of a district head, a beast, referred to as a *thugula*, is killed and, in so far as it is killed in a special manner and morsels of meat set aside for the gods to be cooked and later eaten without salt by children below the age of puberty, it is the vicarious submission of a gift to the ancestors. But the major portion of meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones collected, for a hind leg is sent to the queen. So little is the 'goat of killing' in marriage ceremonial regarded as an offering or sacrifice that we sought for it in vain in the context of a killing for the ancestors. Yet pieces of meat are laid on the shrine and a prayer offered, though the rest of the meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones kept. Still further removed from an offering is the goat killed on a death to provide a skin for covering the body: its meat is eaten without salt, and all who partake of it must sleep in the hut of the deceased, but nothing is given to the ancestors and no prayer is offered. On the other hand, though the *lelɔpɔ* doctor, when killing a goat to treat a patient, sets aside pieces of meat

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782 for his ancestors, this killing, primarily medical in purpose, is not to propitiate and has no religious significance.

An interesting though unusual killing among the Lovedu is the 'bringing home' of a spirit. Maborome, an uninitiated widow living with her three children in a village of relatives, had had much illness in the family which, after consultation with many doctors, was attributed to her husband's brother Pheduli. Pheduli had been stabbed to death in a Johannesburg compound and was now complaining, 'I want to be brought home with a head of cattle.' All his relatives were asked to be present and contribute their share of corn, because 'We are placing a beast to be Pheduli'. On the day of the ceremony a young black and white bull-calf was caught and held, and, when beer (*muphaoa*) was poured down its throat, the *khadi* uttered a prayer, saying, 'Drink and tell all the other spirits these matters.' Then they repaired with the same calabash to the courtyard, where all the children were called to sit near: the *khadi*, praying for health, poured the beer on a spear, battle-axe, and horn which had belonged to Pheduli, and the children drank what was left in the calabash, each one placing it in turn on the ground. The doctor, who, supervising his side of the ceremony, had been busy in a hut preparing his medicines, now came out and asked that the dedicated calf again be caught. Mixing a powder, said to consist of *mufera* and other medicines to make spirits forget, he told the *khadi* to smear it on some of the hairs at the end of the tail and to tie a knot. He himself then smeared the whole tail and body. Repairing to the courtyard where the *thugula* objects still lay, the doctor took out a bag of powder, which he shook up to 'smoke' the objects in its dust. Then he dug a hole where the beer had been poured.

Meanwhile the meat of a goat which had been killed was cooking in a pot. Before the killing (which we did not witness), medicine, we were told, had been smeared on the goat while the doctor uttered the words, 'Sleep, sleep here, and look after your people.' The meat was eaten without salt by the relatives as well as a few others who were present and the bones carefully collected. A dog seized hold of one and was chased by all till the bone was retrieved. Having placed the bones in the hole, the doctor inquired, 'In which direction do the Lovedu look when buried?' The *khadi* pointed to the north. Then, taking the head of the goat, he placed it facing north on top of the bones and said, 'We people all look in that direction.' He took out medicine, which he gave to the *khadi* to pour on the bones, smoked them with his powder, and ordered that the hole be filled with the stomach contents mixed with earth. The *khadi* then beat down the earth and made a small mound. Dancing and the
[533 singing of *lesugu* songs now began and continued all night till at dawn the
[535 *khadi* took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) thrice, saying, 'As for us, we are going, we are returning home. And you, may you remain in peace.' In the beer that was provided for this festive occasion was put some medicine, 'the powder of death', generally used after a death, lest people *khuma*; for the burial of the goat symbolizes the burial and bringing home of their ancestor, just as the dedicated goat symbolizes the immortality of his spirit.

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771 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-
794 Tonga and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion.
177 Among Shangana-Tonga, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult
753 is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body' and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolatela was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthwasa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature.
[828] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwasha in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), or *munchchche* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit
755 wishing to manifest itself, a *lelɔpo* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known as the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the
794 spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.

785 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to
535 enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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possessed, they often say they have come to 'play' with the others and they may even cause slight ill-health on this account. Hence quite often when a possessed person does not feel well, he will ask for the drums, saying he must dance. *Lelɔpɔ* dancing consists of fast movements of the foot to the accompaniment of drums or tambourines and rattles. At a seance of *malɔpɔ a zwikwe*, those who speak *Thɔvɔlɔ*, the large hemispherical *gɔma* drum is used in addition to the conical drums. All are, however, beaten with the hands, the elbows being placed on the drumskin in a peculiar manner. *Malɔpɔ*, who speak Sotho or Lovedu, use only the conical drums in the ordinary manner.

If the dance has a great fascination—after a seance one finds even small children practising the steps—the dress worn by the possessed adds to the attraction. Cloths of different colours are worn round the waist and tied at the back; round the legs are usually leggings of the outer shell of the *dituzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) fruit filled with pebbles to rattle as one dances; on the head is a cap of fur or brightly coloured wool or a head-gear of black feathers, while very often a spear, battle-axe, or stick is brandished in the hand. These are the *zwithamo* of the spirit, worn only during possession. The nature of the dress of each possessed person has been indicated by the spirit itself, and people do their best to comply, lest the possessed person dies. Once at a seance the spirit of a woman asked that a beast or, failing that, a goat be 'placed' for him. 'We'll do our best,' the relatives replied, 'but remember we are poor and it is a matter that will take time.' The spirit, angry at this unwillingness, retorted, 'If you don't comply, I'll take away my person [in whom I manifest myself] and go and sleep with her. Tell Makhade (elder brother of the possessed who learnt the profession of doctor from the spirit) I'll take away my profession from him.' 'We'll do our best,' urged the relatives, 'but don't go away in anger.' In spite of this power, possessing spirits have nevertheless to take cognizance of public opinion and the desires of royalty. The spirit of the wife of a royal relative asked for a man's loin-cloth, which women possessed by male spirits occasionally wear, but he refused to allow it on the grounds that for a woman to wear man's attire is unbecoming. An old woman therefore addressed the spirit, saying, 'People here don't like it,' and the spirit was satisfied.

A short description of an institution which contains all the elements of an ordinary seance must suffice to illustrate some of the main features of the cult. When the doctor, called to conduct the initiation, has arrived with his or her attendants, drums are fetched from the district head, and other disciples of the doctor invited to be present. Nothing can, however, be done before the spirit of the doctor descends upon her. To allow this, they retire to a hut and lie down as if to sleep, while an old woman puts down some pinches of snuff on the ground and calls upon the spirits to come. In a few minutes the doctor groans and quivers and the spirit signifies its arrival by a song of greeting. It calls for its *lelɔpɔ* clothes and the doctor is dressed. Soon the spirits of her attendants also arrive and treatment, which consists in making the novitiate dance, is begun.

When Betty was being initiated, we arrived early one Saturday evening, attracted by the noise, to find a picturesque scene. It was winter and

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794 five little fires had been lit in the vicinity of the courtyard of Betty's hut.
755 In the centre were three women dancing to the music of drums and
●535 rattles. We sat down by the nearest fire and found ourselves with a group
786 of old women. For people had arranged themselves, naturally as is their manner, in age-groups round the various fires; young married women at one, small boys at another, girls above the age of puberty at a third. The dust rose high; what had sounded pleasant enough at a distance became, as one sat in its midst, an almost unbearable din; while in the flickering and uncertain light of the fires the dancing took on a frenzied effect that lent to the scene a wildness and weirdness seldom met with except in travellers' tales of darkest Africa. Never again in our frequent attendances at *malɔpo* dancing did we recapture that first sense of weirdness so largely due to its novelty and our own ignorance. That night the dancing stopped at 1.30 a.m. but by dawn it had begun again, continuing with intervals of rest during the whole of Sunday and Sunday night. Betty danced most of the time; if she rested too long, the women urged her on, saying, 'How do you expect the spirit to come out if you don't dance?' All this time she was being treated with medicines: black powder mixed with butter fat was smeared on her legs, white froth of medicine churned with a porridge stirrer was applied on various parts of the body, some being administered also internally, and infusions were given her to drink. No food was eaten either by Betty or by the women whose spirits were upon them; the very sight of porridge makes some *malɔpo* vomit and the only sustenance allowed while dancing is beer, if there happens to be any.

Late on Sunday afternoon they called her mother's brother to try to induce the spirit to manifest itself, for doctors had indicated that the troubling spirit was on the mother's side. Taking a calabash of water in his hand, the mother's brother knelt near the dancing girl and spat mouthfuls of water out on the ground, saying, 'Come out, spirit, that this person also may be well. She remains ailing, and when we go to doctors they tell us it is a spirit. Come outside that this person can be well [cool].' Sometimes, instead of *hu phasa* with water, mixed grains of all kinds are thrown over the dancer and the words used are, 'We are giving you everything to come.' It may even be that something, which can be overcome only by magical means, is holding back the spirit, as when, on one occasion, the spirit was said to be bewildered at the cross-roads, not knowing which to take. All the roads except that leading into the village were magically 'barred' and the spirit, thus guided, came straight in and manifested itself. Difficult as it is for a spirit to come on the first occasion, once initiation has taken place, it becomes a simple matter. To make a spirit manifest itself, a person has only to dance in the manner of the cult or to lie down while some one calls on it to come. The spirit may also come of its own accord at any time without being induced.

794 Early on the Monday morning Betty, showing signs of exhaustion,
755 began to stagger in her dancing, and people knew the spirit must be near. Her movements became more frenzied, she put up her hands to her head and dragged her feet uncertainly, and then fell to the ground. Several women who had been expecting this, caught and carried her, still quivering and groaning, into the hut. 'Good day, grandparent. Come nicely,

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grandparent,' they kept saying. After a few moments Betty began a song, 794
one usually sung on the arrival of a spirit, giving the name of the spirit 755
upon her—namely, Mamaile, her mother's mother. Those present sang the refrain to the accompaniment of rattles. Staggerings and fallings, groanings or growlings are always signs of an approaching spirit; sometimes the possessed person runs away for a short distance. A goat was now brought into the hut. Its body was smeared with medicine, some was poured down its throat and, after the patient had breathed hard into its mouth, it was taken out and killed. Under supervision of the doctor, small pieces were cut from all parts and placed in a bowl, while the stomach contents and portion of the liver were set aside to be used in curing the patient. The experts say that the sickness from which the ancestor suffered before its death and which presumably causes the patient to suffer, goes into the goat. Before proceeding further, the doctor took the bowl of meat to the hut entrance, where, after setting aside half of it, she placed it with a little snuff on the ground, praying to her spirit. Later this meat was roasted and eaten by small boys. The stomach contents were smeared on various parts of the body of the patient; the small pieces of meat were roasted, mixed with a black powder, and administered on the end of a stick to all four of the possessed people present.

The doctor now busied herself charring chips of various kinds of bark in a basin in which some of the goat's liver had also been put. With this the patient was smoked three times under a blanket till she coughed and spluttered. This took a considerable time, during which the other possessed women sang songs in turn. Mabelowa, who is possessed by a man, called for her pipe in which some hemp was put and evinced great astonishment when her fellow wife, her attendant when she is possessed, struck a match to light it. This was a European innovation unknown in the days of her spirit. Similarly, when a potato was brought, all the possessed women examined it with wonder, asking each other whether it was edible. While the meat of the goat was being cooked with medicine in three pots for those present, the possessed women sat outside on a mat, an honour accorded to their spirits. They sat, silent and dignified, saying nothing. A fowl was killed in order that its leg might afford a medicine bag for the patient and the chips of bark used in smoking were ground to a powder to be used by the patient when eating of the first-fruits. It might be mentioned that the doctor carried home with her the hind leg, shoulder, and breast of the goat as her share, while the other meat was regarded as a reward to the crowd for its share in dancing and singing.

For some time people sat and talked to their friends while the doctor 794
worked with her medicines and the possessed women sat quietly in the 755
shade. Suddenly we became aware of a kind of pantomime in which the 535
initiate, directed in song by the doctor, was made to play-act all the work of women. She went to fetch water and wood about 20 yards from home, swept the courtyard, imitated hoeing, the stamping and winnowing of mealies, cooking and dishing up, finally serving food in the correct manner to the small boy whose mother she had married (Betty had married her father's sister). Last of all she was taken to the drums and

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794 shown how to dance in possessed fashion, all, it was said, lest when her
755 spirit left her she should be lazy and not know how to work. Betty
535 walked as in a dream with a wooden, expressionless look and at times appeared so exhausted that we feared she would not be able to lift the stamper when imitating stamping. This mime-show is not performed in all initiations, nor is a goat always killed, for the methods of doctors differ considerably and the patient's relatives may have no goat. Often the patient is set to dance and treated with medicines till she falls down with the spirit upon her.

794 It was now three o'clock in the afternoon, and, the initiation being
755 complete, the doctor thought it time that the spirits departed. She
535 ushered the possessed into the hut, where they all sat down, offered them
533 each a pinch of snuff; took a rattle and began her farewell song, the whole company (for the hut had filled with spectators) joining in the refrain. Next the initiate sang her farewell song, mentioning what she wanted as her accessories—several white cloths, a woollen cap, and a spear to hold when dancing. When all had finished singing, they took off their *zwiṭhamo* (clothes), which their attendants (for each possessed person has some one to help him when his spirit appears) put into bundles to take away, and lay down to sleep. After three minutes the doctor grunted and groaned as departing spirits are apt to do, sat up and began dressing in everyday clothes. The others followed her example and went outside. The patient, but a short while before so exhausted, came smiling out of the hut and scolded the people for letting her oversleep in this shocking manner (appearing to have no knowledge of her initiation). Then all washed their faces and urinated in the hedge, as women do on rising in the mornings.

794 Initiation into the cult is said to make the person well again, and all
755 into whose history one inquires claim to have been cured. Betty herself
784 had no further trouble. If, however, they become ill again, it may be a second spirit, for many people have three or four. There is, however, no further initiation; the second spirit is merely called upon to manifest itself. A second or third spirit may take possession without causing any illness, merely announcing its arrival and making known its wants when the person is possessed. After initiation the spirit manifests itself when it has some complaint or desire, when the person has broken some taboo, or when specially induced by dancing or prayer. A possessed person has to keep certain taboos: he may never eat such firstfruits as pumpkin leaves or green mealies, *morula* fruits or beer made of the newly-harvested corn without medicine given him at his initiation and renewable every year or every two years; any new thing undertaken, as when a possessed woman becomes pregnant, must be reported to the spirit. Some *malɔpɔ* may not be beaten with a green stick, lest the spirit descend upon them; others may not touch European medicine. Many of them run away from Europeans even when not actually possessed, and one man had to keep his books securely locked in a suit-case lest his wife should see them and become troubled by her spirit. The very mention of the word *lelɔpɔ* in the presence of some may cause the spirit to come. Observances are not the same for all and taboos to be observed depend largely on the doctor who

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does the initiation. There are no special burial rites associated with the cult. There is, however, a vague belief that injury to a snake in the village may in some cases harm a possessed person, an interesting belief in view of the fact that there is so little trace in Lovedu religion of the Zulu idea that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in snakes. 794 755 784

There is a special relationship between a possessed person and the doctor who initiated him: every year when the medicine needs renewal, beer or *morula* cider is prepared, the doctor, who comes with a number of disciples and attendants, is called and there is a great dance of the possessed often lasting several days. This is 'dancing for medicine' (*hu vintla tshidi*). Some possessed people have to be specially doctored before drinking the first *morula* cider and the *morula* season is always a time of *lelɔpɔ* gatherings; others are required to contribute corn at harvest time for a large *lelɔpɔ* dance at the home of the doctor. These gatherings, at which a goat may be slaughtered in addition to the cider provided, add greatly to the prestige of the doctor. There is sometimes considerable jealousy between *malɔpɔ* doctors, who, with those initiated by them, may form rival schools. Some doctors refuse to allow their followers to dance with those initiated by other doctors without special permission. At one seance, at which there had been some unpleasantness, the doctor smeared some powder into incisions on the neck, tongue, crown, and sides of the heads of her disciples. Then, taking some medicated water in her mouth, she squirted (*hu phasa*), saying, 'I "place" you. Don't you dance any more. I don't like dancing every day without my special permission. Any *lelɔpɔ* who dances where you are dancing will break her leg or be badly hurt.' The remainder of the water was given them to drink. 794 535

An interesting feature of the cult of possession is that many people when the spirit is upon them speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thɔvɔlɔ or Kharanga. Investigation into this matter, however, shows that this is not as startling a phenomenon as it might appear. When possessed, a person for the most part sits silent unless he is a doctor. If he speaks at all, this is in monosyllables, for all his wants and messages are conveyed in song. *Lelɔpɔ* songs are stereotyped and known to many because the uninitiated have to join in the refrain when rattling the accompaniment. In these songs there is usually a number of foreign words, though many consist purely of meaningless sounds, such as '*We le wee eva o wee wee wee wana wee*'. Often peculiarities in the pronunciation of vowels are interpreted as Thɔvɔlɔ. When the refrain begun (*hu suma*) by the possessed person has been taken up by the chorus, he continues with the song or interpolates his own words, usually Sotho with a few foreign words interspersed, till he wishes to stop. In this way he makes known his wishes. It quite frequently happens that no one understands the gibberish of the possessed person, and doctors generally have an attendant who interprets what they wish to convey. There are, however, numerous well-known words in general use by people when their spirit is upon them—for instance, *mufoto* or *movoto* for *lefɔla* (snuff), *bula* or *mvula* for *meetse* (water), *va ga mbaya* for *va ga ntiya* (they may beat me), *kaya* for *hae* (home). But many possessed people speak pure Sotho, and it is recognized that a newly initiated person may not 794 533 192

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CHAPTER XV

THE RAIN CULT

The rain-queen in her sphere of safeguarding the seasons—technique of transforming the clouds—evils that cause 'heat' and act as impediments to rain—'cooling' rites counteracting the 'heat' of the earth.

As the centre of the agricultural cycle, rain is the focus of many human interests; as the elixir of life, it is one of the ultimate bases of man's sense of security; and as a manifestation of celestial grace, it is the supreme justification of the divine right of the queen to rule. The queen is primarily not a ruler, but a rain-maker, and men rely for their security, not on regimentation, armies, and organization, but on the queen's power to make rain for the tribe and to withhold rain from its enemies. All ultimate reliances are based upon the magico-religious world, and rain-making and its cult are an important part of that world. The rain cult is not composed of a few magical passes made by the queen; it is a whole complex of institutions with ramifications through many aspects of tribal life. The cult is not confined to measures taken to secure rain in times of drought; its observances must be kept at all times and a good year involves as much care on the part of the queen as a bad one. 794 789 643

The chief actor in the rain cult is the queen. During life, she is not merely the Transformer of the Clouds, but she is regarded as the changer of the seasons and guarantor of their cyclic regularity; when she dies, the seasons are out of joint and drought is inevitable. Her very emotions affect the rain: if she is dissatisfied, angry, or sad, she cannot work well, and in 1934–5, when the first rains did not come till December, the drought was attributed to her being upset at her daughter's liaison with a commoner. Her rain-making is not confined to dramatic ceremonies in time of severe drought; it is conceived of as continuous care throughout the summer. Furthermore, the Lovedu do not attribute every fall of rain to some special activity or volition on the part of their queen, but rather believe that the queen exercises some general control or care which ensures a good season. 643 789 821

Such being the powers of the queen, she is the person to be approached when there is no rain, not only at the beginning of the season, but any time during the summer in a country in which three weeks' drought might ruin the maize crop. There are various ways of doing this. Great councillors or important relatives may approach the queen in person, saying, 'The people are crying,' and asking her to help them. When there was no rain, Mugwena, related to the queen through his mother, used to walk near the queen's hut complaining, in a voice calculated to reach the royal ears, that it was a bad thing for the chief to kill his people by withholding rain. When the first summer storm of 1937 opened with much lightning and thunder, the two chief councillors mentioned informally to the queen at beer that they hoped she would ward off wind and thunder and give them a good year. Heads of districts approach the queen (*ba loea*) with a gift, usually nowadays of £1 or £1 10*s*., and very often 643 789 535 821

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643 789 535 821 bring with them in addition dancing performers (*gɔsha*) to please her and to evoke her pity at the sorrowful sight of people dancing in summer when they ought to be ploughing. The movements of this dancing do not differ from those of ordinary dancing, but the music consists of *lesugu* songs sung also at the annual harvest ceremony, on the death of important royal people, and at the girls' initiation 'school'.

643 789 535 533 821 The most renowned of all dancing for rain is the *legɔbathɛle*, a special kind of *gɔsha*, the mourning dance of a section of Thɔvɔlɔ people living under one of the district heads, Maɓulana. It is more dignified, its movements slower and more stately, and its drumming more subdued than in an ordinary *gɔsha*. So lightly are the drums struck that the clear, silvery, varied tones of the reed pipes ring out like the peal of bells. Only two drums are used, and none but those who have lost at least one parent may perform, and it is begun in the dim light of the dawn before sunrise, when, after a short spell, it stops and is resumed later in the day. When some one person has greatly angered the queen, and drought is believed to be due to her displeasure on this account, the married women from all the villages in the royal neighbourhood assemble every morning after cooking to dance, singing, 'We are being killed on account of a bogyman in skins' (*re vulaiwa gi Madikadyana di vɛlɛvɛdana*). Grandmothers nurse the babies and encourage the younger women with their trillings and dancing movements. The dust rises high and by sunset they are black with dirt and sweat; but next day and the next they come again, sometimes for as long as a week, till rain falls or continued drought makes it clear that some other cause is operating as well. The great hardship this dancing entails (for nursing mothers who perform have no time to feed their babies) is thought to melt the heart of the queen. Too much rain, as well as too little, is laid at the door of the queen. On one occasion, when it had rained almost incessantly for six weeks, the chief councillor said in the presence of the queen, 'Fat does not fill the pot' (*makhura a a ɗale bija*), meaning that there can be too much of a good thing—a hint to the queen to regulate things better.

643 789 821 There is no belief that is stronger in the tribe even to-day than that in the power of the queen to transform the clouds. This does not, however, mean that they do not recognize the regularity of the seasons. People know that the month of February is generally the rainiest in the year; that the month *Morenane* (October), when the Southern Cross sets just before bedtime, is the time when the first rains are approaching, and no one would *lova* rain in winter any more than Europeans would organize a day of prayer for rain in that season. Yet if rain does not come at its proper time or the season is generally bad, it may be said, 'The queen has not changed the hoeing season [i.e. the year] nicely' (*a va fedula ledzema ha vutse*); for if the cycle of seasons is considered inevitable, whether the new year is brought in propitiously or otherwise is in the hands of the queen.

643 791 Though renowned as the greatest rain-maker in South Africa, Mujaji never works alone. She always has a rain-doctor, of whom there are many in the tribe, to work with her. She chooses any renowned doctor, but may change him for another if people complain that the rain is bad—

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

is very difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things we quite naturally compare, such as objects of craftsmanship, achievements of individuals, or other elements of culture. They do not share our interest in analysing out parts of a culture complex in order to compare them, and they generally regard the complexes—for instance, two different types of dance—as wholes incommensurable with one another. Of course, they do compare things, but as regards economic goods they are chiefly concerned to be favoured equally with others. 'What are you stinting me of?' is a common phrase implying, 'Am I not, equally with others, entitled to share in your generosity?' A child, asking us for sweets, often says, 'Give me *also*', for he is begging for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors, the prayer is quite often phrased in such terms as 'Give us *also*' or 'Let us have health *like others*'. When a son had just been initiated as a doctor, his father prayed simply, 'Let him also be able to heal nicely,' and when a son was ill in town, the words, despite the competitiveness of town conditions, were 'We say, let him be "cool", Mother, and in his work let him be like others.' To stress, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with, or greater than that of, others is evidently improper. |8|

Competition is not always eliminated. Doctors are not conceived to be rivals for a limited clientele, but they are said to 'try' one another: cultural definition diverts attention from the objective social situation of a limited number of customers, in which competition is discouraged, to the magical sphere, in which the fantasy of competitive strife is permitted. But the most striking arrangement that limits competition is the socially recognized, albeit not rigidly prescribed, hierarchy which defines men's status according to seniority or rank. 'Robes may be passed on [to strangers], never royal rank'; or, again, 'What becomes worn by age is clothes, not noble rank', because a nobleman can never lose caste or position. Younger brothers are taught to defer to their elder brothers, and in spite of displacements of district heads, it is hardly conceivable that commoners can oust royal relatives. Where the rivalry is fiercest, as among councillors at the capital, it is part of an institutional conflict and may not be openly displayed.

Dancing and music relieve the monotony of life, there is adventure in illegitimate sex relations and in the outlawed activity of witchcraft, but it is beer which provides the predominant recreation. Both beer and dancing belong to the co-operative, reciprocity pattern, whereas witchcraft is essentially competitive and anti-social. Unlike the Shangana-Tonga, the Lovedu dislike display in dancing, except in the esoteric dancing of initiation and the individualistic dancing of adherents of the alien cult of possession. Dancing, like beer, has other than recreational significance, and it is the manner in which beer has been integrated with diverse aspects of the culture that we may profitably consider. [535]

Beer is the humanly satisfying element, even the justification of many actions; it is a recognized means of maintaining prestige and hence of achievement; and, as the medium of goodwill exchanges, it also subserves secondary. No occasion, whether social or ritual or religious or economic, |8| 273

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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i.e., telling the medicine, without any set phraseology, what to do, is important. Day wizards are chiefly men and it is said that, owing to the facility of obtaining bad medicine in towns and from foreign tribes to-day, this type of witchcraft has greatly increased.

In everyday life, however, a person is called a witch, whatever methods he has used, and in an accusation of witchcraft there is never any discussion whether the culprit is a day or night wizard. Moreover, there is in the minds of ordinary people considerable confusion about the type of witchcraft associated with each class, and it is possible to live among Lowveld people a long time without coming upon these distinctions. The night wizard is thus in Evans-Pritchard's terminology the witch, the day wizard the sorcerer; and the great distinction between sorcery and legitimate magic lies not in method but in intention.

SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF BEER AND THE DANCE. It would be a mistake in discussing the main features of Lowveld society to leave out of count the social importance of beer and the use of the dance or *gosha* as a social institution, though neither is confined to these tribes. Beer, apart from its religious value, plays a part in social and economic life. It is continually being carried from one group to another, acting as a bond between people and establishing friendly relations. In the Lowveld, in contrast to the Highveld, it is still of greater importance than money; while people may refuse to attend working parties for money, they will flock to one where beer is served. The *gosha* is a dance in which women do the drumming while men playing reed pipes dance in a circle round the drums. It is, however, much more than a dance. It is an institution for maintaining friendship and reciprocity between groups, a way of showing sympathy on the death of a relative and the means by which subjects approach their chief for rain in time of drought. A *gosha* is often sent by one chief to another in the Northern Transvaal.

SOME COMPARISONS BETWEEN LOBEDU CULTURE AND THAT OF OTHER AREAS. The Lobedu culture complex represents a close blending of two cultures, that of the Lobedu who came south from somewhere in Rhodesia when the empire of Monomotapa was breaking up, bringing

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

to roast. 'Let's ask riddles,' intervenes Khiebe. 'Here's one: Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree (*thaiii*), the witches are dancing on the thorns.' 'Stupid,' scornfully rejoins Mudumi. 'We all know that one. Hailstones, of course, for they bounce as they fall on the grass.' After pondering a moment he challenges: '*Thaiii*, the ox of my father has entered the pool, I remain holding its tail.' Roars of derision issue from the rest, 'A porridge-twirler,' they answer almost all together. The spiked head of a twirler is like the horns of an ox; it is thrust into the pot of water, while one holds it by its handle. 'Here's something you don't know,' comes from Mudumpani. '*Thaiii*, the nest of the water bird hangs down over the pool.' The company is silent, then there are some guesses, but it is beyond them, and they give it up. 'The eyelashes, of course,' says Mudumpani, 'because they hang over one's eyes.' Once the ball starts rolling, riddles follow one another in rapid succession. 'The babbling of a brook' turns out to be a calabash cup, for down its long handle beer gurgles as you drink; 'They always stand looking at each other' are the doorposts of a hut; and 'The chief entering the crimson (muddy) pool' is sunset. It is impossible to capture the poetry of these riddles; you cannot render their alliteration or play upon words in English. But it is clear that these youngsters are well versed in them. The time when riddles are most popular is, however, when a wedding party is present and the young people have to entertain them in their hut. On such an occasion riddles provide a mild form of competition between the two parties, that of the bride and that of the groom.

The men have retired to their huts, whence they will not reappear. The women have eaten the evening meal informally round the fires and are just chatting. In a hut three girls are sitting by candlelight, one of them, who has been to school, writing a love-letter for her friend to her lover in town. 'Why are you throwing me over?' she asks. 'Why don't you write? Please send me a nice cloth and a blanket, but not one like that which you gave your wife!' In another hut some children have persuaded Mamujaji, an elderly woman, to tell them tales. She begins, '*Dgano-Dgano* (a story, a story).' They reply, '*Dgano*.' 'Once upon a time,' she continues, but before she gets further they again interject, '*Dgano*.' Then she goes on, 'There lived a boy who had sores all over his body.' '*Dgano*,' they repeat whenever the speaker hesitates or takes breath. 'One day when the girls went to fetch grass. . . .' This is the beginning of a story about a bird who gives away the girls who kill the boy. A marked characteristic is the frequent occurrence of a song and refrain, during the telling of the tale, in this case, '*Phogu, Phogu yo Dzoma*, &c. ('Bird, bird of the south'), so that what with the interjections and singing of the chorus of the refrain, the listeners appear to take as active a part in the story as the narrator herself. At the end of each tale there is a long-drawn-out '*Dgaaano*' and all spit into the fire. In the small villages of to-day story-telling has almost completely died out. Where there are only one or two present a story loses most of its charm, and there are many young men and women who know practically no stories, more particularly among Christians, whose parents prefer them to learn their lessons rather than tell them stories.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

VALOVEJU

•539 1. *khetĩhava kha valoveju khe ʃholehhile gua leĩagoni la vokhalaga. ga ʃhao e rehho hhê motho wa voloveju a khe lotĩha va re : " mmalo, moloveju, mmalo makhalaga, motho wa leḑaža, motho yo a voahho vokhalaga !" hhabê ge " ʃigolovê za hha—mohhale." va re tĩhava kha voloveju khe gwa hhôna.*

2. *va re khosi ya hhôna e vê e nêe varwa va vaveli. hhundonu yo momyê a ʃhiwa bula. ga morahho yo mohholo a thaméla khelo kha yo mothokho. a ya hho hhobela bula hho monnahhavô. hhundonu moratho wahhvê a hhana hho mo ʃha bula. mohholo a mo zohhéla ga marumô. moratho a tĩhava, a leva thogo yeeno ya hhejimo, a wéla molabô wa levêbê la vokhalaga. mo zeleni va arohhana zwiriba zwi zwivili. khe khemyê kha leva thogo ya vorwa. kha ahha gua vyaḑali e vehho khetĩhava kha mamavolo. le vôna ge " ʃigolove ža maḑaži."*

3. *hhundonu valoveju vona va vê va khe nyaga šagô la hho nakha le le vehho le mavu a hho nakha, le nahho le zwiolo. va vê va khe ṫoméla masohhana hho va êda bele hho nyaga leĩagô le le vyažê. hhundonu vôna ya re hhê va ʃhirile leĩagoni la važwêḑa va khumana leĩago—šagô le le vehho le merula le zwiolo gwa thogo ya vogwažaži vya thava ye momose a ahhilwêhho " medingen " e lehho gua khumeloni.*

4. *vôna va khumana hho ahhile khetĩhava khe tshemyê khe khe vižwahho kha hha—kheoôga. hhundonu vatho vao va vê va kha zeve mollô. va vê va khe ʃa zwiʃewa zwôṭhe zwa vôna zwi kha abeewa. va zwi ʃa vyayê ga zwiphôôfhôlô.*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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5. *valoveɮu va va vuẖisa hhore va phela vyani nḑê le mollô. va hha —kheôga va re : " mollô ge eni? o ɮiyani? "—valoveɮu va re : " re ôra mollô le hho abea zwiḷewa ga wôna. ge hhe va fha zwiḷewa zwe zwi abiilwê-hho ga wôna. hhundonu hhê va lle, va ḑwa zwi khe ḑefha. va lôba va hhobêla mollô hho valoveɮu. va rada hho abea ga wôna le hho ôra. hhe o phimile va voêla hhabê hho hhobêla mollô. hhundonu va khe diya ga wôna.*

6. *zweeno valoveɮu va vê va khe ɮuméza lešagô le voḑêle vya lôna. zweeno va rada hho le vosa. fhêla va sidwa ga hhovane va khumane le no veenyi. zweeno va ɮiya maanô a hho ɮiya ndwa hhore va phaḑêlê va hha-kheôga mo lešagoni.*

7. *hhundonu va hhobola hhore marumô a vôna e ga va mollô. ge hhê va khe laêla vaṭhaṅga hhore va ziyê zwisa zwa mollô. va montẖha meze ya hhakheôgo ga hho fhesa lešagô hore mollô o ḑo fhesa le meze hho thihi le vatho. vaṭhaṅga va ɮiya vyaẖê. mollô wa swa mathogoni aao, wa fhesa meze. va hha—kheôga va vê va e gozeni e kholo. va gwa mezeni va ẖava. zweeno va ṭhôga mo va ga gwahho hhôna hhovane mollô o thigile lešagô gamoga.*

8. *va vamyê va namêla ɮithavana, vaa thuswa ge mafhiga a mahholo, mo mollô o sidwahho hho fhiṭha hhôna. va vamyê va naméḑe mere. vôna va swa gamoga, ga hhovane maanye a vê a lelefhile hahholo, hhovane ho vê hho kheso ha swa hho ḑohha mathomoni. vatho va vanži va fa lefu la ẖoro. hhwa pholohha va khe gathe fhêla. le hhundonu vatho vao hha veso vaa va khetẖhava. molôgô wa vôna hha o eso wa ḑala hho tshwana le melôgô e memye.*

9. *hhundonu lešagô la va la valoveɮu hho isa le momose. valoveɮu va khumana lešagô lavô ga hho zwi lwêla ga mollô.*

10. *hhabê va re mo leêdoni la hho gwa gua vokhalaga valoveɮu va ile va ṭhophêhha gudu hhe va khumane lešagô le le omilêhho e khe lešagô la maazi. melabô e mehholo e vê e hholê le vôna. va nyaga maazi a manži, va a ẖaya. khosi ya vôna va re o ile a khêtha masohhana hhore a nyagêlê khetẖhavâ maazi. yêna a ya navô. va a nyaga. hhundonu va a ẖaya.*

11. *va re yena khosi o vê a tshwere khekhobo khe a khe fhilwêhho hho vobabaahhwê kha hho nesa bula. ge hhê a khe lega hho nesa bula hôna môôwô. ga morahhonyana hha na bula e kholo, ya ḑaza melabô le meeli. hhê va voêla gua megoveni va fhiṭha va ṭhabile ga maaḑa. vatho va vôna maazi a hho nwa le hho abea zwiḷewa. va re e vê e moṭhôlô wa bele wa khosi yêêwô hovane gua vokhalaga hho vê hho khe nesa vobabaahhwê.*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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12. *leina la khosi e lôvilêhho vokhalaga ya bele ge magaphele. ge yêna yo a žerehho šago la va hha—khebga ga hho lwa ga mollo. khosi ya voveli ge mohhale. hha hho zevye zwezwinži zwahhwê.*

13. *khosi ya vorarô ge "kheale kha mmamohhale a leḏaza." ge kherêdô khahhwê. yêna o nesiže bula hho tshwana le vo—makholo—ahhwe.*

14. *khosi ya vone ge "phedola—khefhedola—maru—a—ḏaža." ge kherêdô khahhwê. va rêdwa ga maru, va re : va fhedola maru hho nesa bula.*

15. *Yena phedola o vê a nêe ṅwanavô e vehho mohholwane. ê ile hhê khosi a e khaufhi le hho ḏohha, a fha morwa yo mothokho lenaga la bula. fhêla vatho va vê va khe a zwi zeve hhore khosi e mo fhile naga la vohhosi. zweeno va hhobola hhore khosi e mo fhile naga la vohhosi. zweeno va hhobola hhore va ḏo khumana yo a veho le leina le lehholo la vohhosi hhore e ḏo va yêna e a tshwerehho naga la bula. leina la yo mohholo e vê e maḏaže, la yo mothokho e vê e makhoba. hhundonu va re "khosi ge maḏaze! o ḏo ḏaža melabô ga maazi a bula. hhê e le makhoba ge hhore o ḏo khoba melabô, hhundonu va ṭhôga maazi." ge hhore va khe thakhalêla maḏaže hhore e vê khosi yavô.*

16. *zweeno va phaḏêla yo mothokho hhore a ḏohhê lešagoni la volovelu. yêna a ḏohha le khethôpha khe khe mo fholofhêḏêhho. a rodohhêla gua ḏeḏolo, a fhiṭha nareni, a yaa lula thavaneni ya khevela.*

17. *zweeno gwa volovelu maḏaže a sidwa ge hho nesa bula. lešagô la hhôna la va lešago la ležaži le ḏala ga mažaži. ga gua hha khevala bula e na ga mažaži ga memyaahha yôthê e le lešagô la mavêle ga hhovane hho vê hho khe na bula.*

18. *zweeno vakhômaana va volovelu va thôma hho lla le hho veleela ga hhe va khe a zeva hore makhoba ge yêna va mo fhilêho naga la bula.*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

539 hhundonu va lagana hhore a vižwê a voêlê hhaye e vê khosi. gê hhê va khe romêla va vamyê va vôna hho mo hhobêla hhore a voêlê volovelu a ḑê hho va khosi.

19. yena a hhana a re : " le mphaḑêḑe ṅga se ṭhwê ṅkha voêla hhôna." ge hhê va khe mo phêhhêlela. hhundonu a re : ṅga voya vyani ? mohholowaga a ga mbolaya." zweeno va re : " re ḑo liya maanô hhore re mo phaḑêlê." hhundonu a lumêža, a ḑohha navo. hhe va khe fhiṭha gua nareni hha lezwalô va mo siya hhôna.

20. vôna ga hhovane va khe liya ga khephiri hho khosi maḑaže—hhe va khe fhiṭha mozeni wa valovelu, va ya hho khosi va re : zeva, makhoba ṅwaneno o gwile ga marumô, o nyaga ho hhu volaya, o hhôna zeleni, o ya ḑa. ê gwa ! u ḑohhê hore a khe hhu khumanê ! " khosi maḑaže a re : ṅga ḑohha vyani ? vaṭhaṅga va ḑo ndwêla, ge ḑo va fhênya." ge hhê va khe mo habelêža. va re : " yêna o ḑa ga marumô a manži, re ḑo sidwa. ê gwa khosi, u khuḑê, re re hhê re khe lwa navô, le hê va khe re fhênya va khe ge va volaya le wêna." hhundonu khosi ya hhana.

21. ge hê vakhômaana va vamyê va khe hhomêla morahhô va viža khosi makhoba hhore a no va a khe vaḑamêla. hhê a sa ḑe a e khaufhi, va voêla habê hho khosi maḑaže, va mo zivisa hhore momose o sa ḑe a e khaufhi. " ê gwa, e yo khuḑa re re hê re khe lwa navô va khe ge va hhu volaya." ge hhê khosi maḑaže a khe lumeža. a gwa mozeni wahhwê a lula lesolini. vosihhu khosi makhoba a zêna moženi vakhômaana va ya hho zivisa khosi ya vôna hore : monnahhenu o žene mozeni ga lira. o ya hhu zoma ga vohhale, zohha re ḑo hhu sudisêža gua thaveni ya levaga.

22. ge hhe khosi a zohha, a ya thaveni yêêwô. mo zeleni ya hho ya gua levaga hho vê hho nêe molabô o va rehho ge moḑazwi. molabô ôôwô o vê o kha lumêlêlwa hho wêlwa ge likhosi. zweeno e vê e khe re hhê khosi e ga o wêla, e ga se ṭhwê e kha vosa khetšhava. o ḑo va a tšhinyaḑe ga hho wêla malabô ôôwô. hhundonu hha liyêhha hhê a sa dê a o wêḑe va mo voža khore : zeva ga hhovane u wêḑe molabô o khe a lumêlêlwahho hho wêlwa ge khosi, momose u ga se vê khosi yesu.

23. va mo ḑohhêla hhôna, va ya hhaye, va vorwa ge khosi makhoba. hhundonu va mo vea leina la vo—makholo—ahhwê phedola—khefhedola—

•539 *maru—a—ḏaža. a vosa lešagô, a nesa bula vyayê ga babaahhwê. vatho va mo rada ga maaḏa ga vaga la bula.*

24. *mafhêlêloni a vohhosi vyaahhwê yêna o vê a nêe morwa. hhundonu morwa yôwô a mo phelisa vyayê ga tshiwana, a mo ṭhôya, a mo liya vyayê ga lehholu. hhahholo a vê a khe liya hhore vatho va khe lemohhe hhore khosi e ḏo mo fha vohhosi vyaahhwê. ṅwaana yôwô o vê a ahhêḏwe ndô hholê le moze, a lula hhôna. o vê a khe re hê a khe ya hhaye a khe a žene khoroni babaahhwê o vê a mo liyêde zela e thokho ye e kha zevyehho ge motho. hhabê o vê a khe re hhê moyanayo a khe ḏa hhare hha vatho ga zela yôna yêwo, khosi a mo thivêla. leina la ṅwaana yôwô va re ge " mogôdô wa leḏaža, mogôdôthamo di mesimo," hhova "volaô vya tšhoma le vatho" hhova "mogôdô —mme—a—phedola—khefhedola—maru—a—ḏaža."*

25. *zwirêdo zwêo zwi lumile gudu vohosini vyaahwê. yêna e vê e khosi ya maaḏa le busô e thada, hhovane o vê a khe volaya vatho. hhabê o vê a khe volaya valoi le zwiṭhôḏôlô le va va khumanwehho va khe aba maaga. gaṭholoni yaahhwê o vê a khe a diisa hho volaya vatho. va vamyê va vê va hhogwa lithamô, va vamyê o vê a khe va hhogêlêla mafhiga, va va phôsêza ga voliveni.*

26. *hhabê mogôdô e vê e motho wa hho ṭhalefha mešumoni yaahwê. khe khe ga vônwahho le momose mešumoni ya voṭhale vyaahhwê ge meahhô ya meragô ye a e ahhilêhho ga voṭhale vyo voholo. mo šagoni motho hha a khumane meahhô e tshwanahho le yaahhwê. mo meahhoni yêwô hho khumanwa khelulô kha lefhiga khe khe veḏilwêhho zwa voze—voze. ê vê e khelulô kha khosi mogôdô. va re : o vê a khe lula hha khôna, hhe a khe ôrêla ležaži. le khona khe a magaža, khe veḏilwe ga voṭhale vyo vo-hholo. fhelo fhao e vê moze wa mosada, leina la hhôna va re ge levyeni. (va vamyê va re : meahô eya e ahhilwe ge kheale babaahhô mogôdô.)*

27. *meṭheni ya khosi mogôdô madona a maveli ahhwe a ve a vaga lešagô. hhundonu hhê khosi a khe romêla vaṭhanga vaahhwê hho lamola phabanô yêo vôna va khumana hho zohhile ndwa. hhundonu va hhomêla hhaye hho zivisa khosi. zweeno khosi a gwa ga nnosi hhê a khe fhitha thaveni ya mmanobi a arola malira zwiriba zwi zwivili hho thiga meze ya madona aao. hhe a khe vôna hhore khosi e ḏile hho lwa navô va fyêhha hhore va ḏo volawa. hhundonu va lova monye wa vôna. va nša vanyana va vavili, va hhobêla hhore khosi a va tshwarêlê votšhinyi vyôwô. hhundo-*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

539 *nu khosi a leža naga ya hho khovaganša malira aahhwê. hhe malira a khovagane fhelo hhothihi va vožwa hhore e fhêde. hhundonu khosi a žia naga yaahhwê ya marumô, a e leža, a phêbêla. malira gamoga a a zosa zwirêdô zwa hho rêda khosi, va re : " mogôdô thamo di mesimo, mogôdô o fhala ga naga la bula. ê le mogôdô mme a phedola, a re : ge vôlaya motho, o a volaya ; a re : ge a phelisa, o a phelisa.*

28. *ge hhê khosi a žia lerumô laahhwê a phêbêla, a khe ṭhava fhase, a suba vogwažaži. a voža malira a re : " gua vogwažaži hho ḍo gwa litšhosi ze lintsho. le ḍo lwa le žôna, hhundonu le ḍo li fhênya. ge moga a ṭhava fhase hhabê a suba voṭhwažaži, a re : gua voṭhwažaži hho ḍo gwa lomênô le le khuvelu, hhundonu lôna le ḍo le fhênya hho isa le hho isa.*

29. *hhabê khosi mogôdô a lwa le khašane morwa wa babaahhwê. hhundonu khašane a šavela gua lešagoni le le vižwahho tshwale. hhundonu va va mo viza hhore a ḍê a lule šagoni le lemyê le le vižwahho moluveni mo hho zohhilêhho monna o momyê e vehho mamadêba, morwa wa khašane yo a khumanêhho mafhogo a molimo gua Port Elizabeth yo a khumanwêhho a khe lwa le letšhwifhi meṭheni ya morudi knothe le Reuter. a va a volawa ge khosi ya voveli ya mosali e vehho masalanavo ga vaga la êvaṅgeli.*

30. *mogôdô o vê a nêe varwa va vaveli. hhê va khe vaga vohhosi vya babavô vohhosi vya fhiwa moroli waahhwê e vehho khosi ya mosali možaži wa bele. likhaizali za a ragwa šagoni ge moṭhôlô wa lehhabana le khesa kha mollô zwi zwi vehho zwi khe lugiswa ga melemô ya hho phaḍêla vatho šagoni.*

31. *hhundonu khosi ya va možaži, a vosa lešagô la valovelu zwa voze vyayê ga babaahhwê. le yêna a volaya va va tšhinyahho e lehho valoi le mahholu le va maaga. a nesa bula vyayê ga babaahhwê, a lovya ge mahhosi a gwahho hholê ga makhumô a mehhuda—hhuda le managa a liḍou ai gwahhe hha mazulu, hha sekhukhuni, hha ramabulana le hha ṅguṅgunyane.*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

•539 32. *ga vaga lêô kherêdô kha khosi možaži khe re : " možaži mma —la—khovêla, mošava—nḏoni, ge lala zela, ge moṭholohhaḷi, khe na molodi. ge mphaga wa ḏou, mmakhweleni wa khehhaḏeni ; o ḷa ṇama, mošava nḏoni.*

33. *khosi ya voveḷi e vê e mmasala—navô. leina lêwô o le fhilwe ga va va hhwilêhho hhê a khe vewa vohhosi hhundonu le yêna o vosiže vyayê ga ḷikhosi že ḷimyê. kherêdô khahhwêr khe re : " mmasala—navô, u abê voya. wa aba mbê, khetšhava khe ḏo balagana. ê le khosi khethubuḷi kha vokhalaga khe ilehho : ' vatho khe va rone (ge hhore : hha ge rade vatho). ga fheža ga hho gwa kheso ga moṭhana, ga re : vatho, ṅwaeni!'— khehhoḷi, mma va ndeva mariža, ndevêlêlê ga belo ya leṭhôyô."*

34. *mohhumahhaḷi yôwôô o vê a nêe ḷikhomu ža ḷitshaḷi že ḷi hhamiwahho. hhundonu ḷikhomu žêwo di vê di khe vižwa voṭhabô vya mosada. ḷi vê di khe hhamiwa ge mokhômaana yo a khêthêdwêhho hho ḷi hhama. hhe ḷi hhamilwe morwaḷi wa mafhi o vê a khe re hho rwala, a a isa ga hhaye, e re hhê a khe ṭhagana le vatho, vôna va gwadame ga ḷikhuru hho isa hhê a fhirile.' ê vê e mokhwa wa hho hhodisa zwiḷewa zwa khosi. ê re he motho a ga êma ga maodo hhê mafhi a khe fhera khaufhi hhahhwê, e vê molado o mohholo. khomu zêwo ḷi vê di khe a ḷula šageni lethihi le khomu ža moze, ḷi vê ḷi khe ḷula ḷii nosi.*

35. *hhabê khosi mmasala—navô o vê a ṭhoile vaḷumeḷi. moḷumeḷi o vê a khe a ḷumêlêlwe hho žêna ga mozeni wa mosada. hhê moḷumeḷi a nêe dava hho e isa mosada, o vê a khe ḷula nḏê hha moze ga fhase hha more, a romêla mafhogo ga khevaga gua mosada.*

36. *khosi khesêthwane yo a vosahho momose le yêna a vižwahho možaži ge khosi ya vorarô ya mosaḷi. yêna o nesa bula. o amohêla vaḷumeḷi hho žena khoroni le mozeni waahhwê o thakhalêla thudô. hho vile hho ahhilwe gêrêgê mo khoroni ya mosada. vana va mosada va žêna khegôlô ga daêlô yahhwê.*

539 37. *khosi khesethwane mo mosada hha a ɮumêlêlê hhê motho a ga žêna a abere zwiêda maodoni—hhê motho a khe vadamêla khôrô o tshwanêḑe hho gola zwiêda a zwi siyê mônô nḑê hha khôrô, a khôna a tshe žêna ga khoroni.*

mathômô a mmuôô wa ɮikhosi ža vasaɮi gua voloveɮu.

1. *khosi ya mafhêlêlô wa monna ge mogôdô. o ve a nêe varwa va vaveɮi e vehho malegudu le kheêbe. hhundonu masohhana aao a vê a vaga vohhosi vya babavo, yêna a kha phela. hhundonu va vê va nêe khaižaɮi ya vôna, va vê va khe re ge možaži. ge hhê vohhosi vo khe fhiwa yêna hhore e vê mmusi wa khetshava. ɮikhaižaɮi žôna ža phadêlwa.*

2. *hhê motho a khe fhiwa vohhosi voloveɮu o vê a tshwanêḑe hho fhiwa khesa kha mollô le khetshobo kha maazi. zweeno va re va ile va fha khaižaɮi khesa le khetshobo hhore a zwi isê hha malegudu, khaizaɮi yo mohhololo. hhundonu va re va vê va zwi ɮiyile ga mṭhôlô ya melemo ye e rêhho hhê motho a khe e levêlêla ga maaṭho, a ṭhagama ṭhôhhô. hhondonu a va vyayê ga mophêgô, a ḑohhêla maɮulô, a gwa, a ya šagoni le lemyê, a ɮula hhôna.*

3. *va re malegudu hhê a vone khesa le khetshobo a dohhêla lešago la vobabaahhwê a ya gua zwêḑa, a hhwêla hhôna. le kheêbe morwa yo mothokho yo a vagilêhho vohhosi le yêna o ɮiyilwe vyazê ga yo mohholo. a ḑohhêla lešagô, a leva thogo ya thôvôlô ; hhundonu a hhwêla hhôna.*

4. *ge hhona vohhosi vya fhiwa moroɮi wa mogôdô e vehho možaži wa mathômô. yena a bêba moroɮi wahhwê e vehho masalanavô. yêna a ladêla mmaahhwê vohhosini.*

5. *masalanavô o vê a khe na ywaana hho isa vokhêgoloni vyaahhwê. moga o vê a nêe moratho wahhwê wa mosaɮi. yêna o vê a fhilwe vaana vaveɮi. ṅwaana wa bele e vê e mosimana, wa voveɮi e vê e monyana. va khêtha ṅwaana wa monyana yo a vižwahho khesêthwane hhore e vê khosi. ge yêna možaži a kha vosahho le momose.*

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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ing. It is said that this was the first miracle of that chief, for in Mashona- 773
land his brother had produced the rainfall.

12. The name of the first chief who left Mashonaland is Magaphele. 173
It was he who took possession of the country of Kheoga by fighting with fire. The second chief is Mohale. There is not much known about him.

13. The third chief is "Kheale kha Mmamohhale a Leḏaža."[17] This is his praise-name. He produced rainfall just like his fore-fathers.

14. The fourth chief is "Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a—ḏaža."[18] [551]
This is his praise-name. They praise them on account of the clouds, they say: "They transform the clouds so that the rain must fall."

15. He—Phedola—had a son who was the first-born[19] When the 173
king was about to die, he gave the younger son the rain-horn. But the 643
people did not know that the chief had given him the horn of chieftainship. They thought that they would find that he who had the great name of chieftainship[20] would be he who had received the rain-horn. The name of the eldest son was "Maḏaže" (the Filler) that of the younger one was Makhoba (the Finisher). Therefore they said: "Chief is Maḏaže! He will fill the rivers with rain-water. As to Makhoba that means he will empty the rivers, so that we shall have no water." Therefore they proclaimed Maḏaže their chief.

16. They drove the younger brother away so that he had to leave 173
the Lovedu-country. He left together with the troop which trusted in him. He went upwards and came to "Nareni"[21] and settled on the mountain of Khevela.[22]

17. Now in Loveduland Maḏaže was not able to produce rainfall. That country was a country of sunshine and hunger without intermission. There at Khevela rain was falling continuously every year; it was a country of corn, for the rain was falling.

18. Then the head-men of Loveduland began to cry and to complain that they did not know that it was Makhoba who had been given the rain-

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[17] Unknown names

[18] "Transformer—clouds are filled."

[19] —and therefore heir to the Crown according to the law.

[20] See [19]

[21] "At the Buffalo" name of the country in the South of Loveduland from the name of the tribes living there. They praise the buffalo.

[22] Near the confluence of the Selati-and Olifant-river.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263] this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done ● 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' ('*U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinɔnyana a jia dithɔhɔ a fa vasimana*'). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lewai la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled *njugo* beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khɔrɔ*, the three men of the village are sitting by their 521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spiritedl account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khɔrɔ*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies
to roast

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men,
588 and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
644 or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the
[565] village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the
[171] Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage,

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *noeji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mosha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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241 annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according
[311] to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material
241 factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient
464 as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such ex-
241 pedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the
476 essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

231 Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd
[422] and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *munywalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the
[262 Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food
782] only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or
● [554] even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939) 1943
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that they are called the *kwevo* of Tshazi. Their history also dates back 571
to the earliest times, when they were Tshazi quite unrelated to the 565
kwevo. They are now and have been since the time of Khiali (*c.* 1740) 619
the great maternal uncles of the royal group. They have their distinctive
praise-titles and also a distinctive laudatory response. If one of the Mavulana 571
is called by his superior he answers by prefixing his words with the 565
praise *moni*. These laudatory responses (for which there is no generic 554
name) are found only among a few groups. The Ravothaṭa say *zemula*,
the Crocodiles of Vudupi *myagani*, the *kwevo mulemyazi*, the Dipanyika 619
ntpya, some Venda (those from Twsale) *sigo*, the Khaḍa *khentlo*, and the
Lions of Magwale *maan*. This laudatory response honours both the
speaker and the person addressed; and it occurs sometimes in the great
praises of the group—for instance, 'Mavulana of Vutshazi! At Makhifaja,
the place of pasturing, we pasture our cattle in autumn; at Ḍaja it is that
the cattle graze in spring. We are *moni*.' A specific response does not,
however, belong to the whole group. You may hear a *kwevo* say *mule-
myazi*, but, after all, the Tswale also call themselves *kwevo*, and they say
sigo, while the Mahasha, who are *kwevo rathole*, may answer *mulovedu
rathole*, and a Crocodile of Vudupi, *vudupi vya mamyaka*.

The cluster, such as all the Pigs or all the Elephants, never has one common praise-title. One does not even find a common praise for many groups or sub-groups, such as the Crocodiles, say, of Vudupi; and the same is true of most of the groups. The members of some of the groups and sub-groups use common praise-titles, but the really live praises, those that stir people and stand as a symbol of their unity, are the district praises. They are taught in the *vyali* initiation and are sung when beer is brought by the district to the queen. The district praise may or may not coincide with the praise of the sub-group or lineage of the head of the district. The Mudiga of Madumani, for instance, one of the sub-groups of the Mudiga, identify themselves closely with the royal group, but their distinctive praise-title refers to the mountain of their district, just as the distinctive praise of the Mudiga of Mareroni, another district, refers to the place name as well as to a forebear to whom the district was originally given. In addition, both Madumani and Mareroni have the old Mudiga praise, 'You are hemmed in [by lions]' (*le a digwa*). The local district praise is far more alive than the group or sub-group praise, if it exists at all, in the case of people living in the district who are not Mudiga, but Crocodiles or Elephants or Lions and so on. It is thus far more usually a locality than a group praise, though, with regard to the people of the lineage of the head, it often is both. The exquisite poetry of these praise-names cannot easily be rendered in English, '*Vuuga vya uuga bula ea na*', the praise of Levibi, we may translate as 'When it thunders at Vuuga, the rain rains', but we cannot recapture the rumbling of the *u*'s nor the pattering of the *a*'s.

Let us look more closely at the Crocodiles. They are by no means 571
a real group at all. At Matsui, where one of them is a district head, they 619
are very closely linked to the royal nucleus; the mother of Matsui was a
relative of Mamujaji the mother of the first Mujaji, and it is at Matsui
that the cow Mamujaji, belonging to the head of the district, is dedicated

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Generally speaking, a man's prestige increases as he grows older; but, on the one hand, as his age disables him, practical control gradually passes out of his hands, and, on the other, there is the conflict for position, mentioned elsewhere, between the old and the middle-aged in the royal family. A grand old man like Mavulana is more genuinely respected than the greatest of the royal councillors, and people humble themselves more graciously before him than before even royalty itself. But he lives far from the capital, some five miles over stony places and up a difficult hill, and it is not he, but his sons, who conduct the business of the district with the queen; and of them it is not the chief, but the eldest son, who started earliest on this business and is gradually establishing himself as the next head after the death of the father. In every walk of life, in the supreme councils of the queen, in the struggles for succession to headship of districts, among the wives of a polygynous household, among siblings in a village, the same phenomenon repeats itself. The society values age and experience, sagacity and diplomacy; the claims of age and seniority are validated in kinship terminology, in the precedences accorded the elder brother or sister with regard to priority of marriage or in the initiation ceremonies; but on the whole it is the values of the society rather than its institutionalizations which emphasize the importance of seniority. The society also stresses the hierarchy of rank, such as the status and rights of the chief son, the position of the great wife, and the pre-eminence of the cattle-linked sister, though she be the younger sister. But at the very core of the society there is uncertainty: the heir to the throne is not determined by rigid rules, based upon seniority or legal precedences, and the councillors are involved in a conflict which throws into confusion, at least, the principle of seniority. The total configuration of the society cannot wholly rely upon these devices without damaging the foundations of the sacred kingship. The uncertainty of the succession is the guarantee that the queens are queens by divine decree.

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with the *vyali*, but beginning rather later when the grass is sufficiently long to be used for the elaborate costumes worn. As in the case of circumcision, the *vyali*, though of national importance, is held locally by various district heads. Only those heads whose ancestors traditionally have held the *vyali* are allowed to hold it, and control is exercised by the fact that permission (literally, *khiso kha mullo*, or firebrand) has to be obtained from the queen by all those wishing to hold a *vyali* by payment of £1. One finds considerable variation from one district to another. In some the *vyali* only is held, their boys having to go elsewhere for initiation into *vuhwera*; in others *vuhwera* is held simultaneously with the *vyali*, while everywhere there are variations in detail according to the doctor responsible for the initiation or the religious habits and desires of the headman holding the initiation. Hence it is that, while at the royal village men of the last regiment (*mangue*—Leopards) were in 1939 considered too young to be allowed to enter the enclosure of the girls or the place where the old men sit with their wonderful Bird, in many of the districts they were not debarred at all. At the great opening ceremony, when the gods of whoever holds the school are approached for their blessings, those of the royal *vyali* were merely 'cooled' by the spurting of water and a prayer, whereas those of Relela were propitiated with beer brought to the family graves in the depths of the forest. And while at the royal village the initiates were smeared with the stomach contents of a head of cattle killed by being shot, for those of Relela the tail fat of a sheep ritually killed with a medicated knife was used, the stomach contents being mixed with medicine for strengthening the enclosure. The doctor at the royal ceremony carried all the meat of the slaughtered beasts away on donkeys for his own private use, but at Relela the assembled company, including men, ate the meat with medicine. The institution is sufficiently flexible to allow for changes in keeping with modern needs and modern ideas: six European nails were allowed in the construction of the hut of the Bird, a stipulation being made that they should not be visible, loin cloths of material took the place of hide in many areas and other, more far-reaching innovations differentiated the 1939 ceremony from those in olden days. All the 'schools' do not open simultaneously: months after the queen's *vyali* had begun in 1939, district heads were sending to ask permission to hold theirs, while even in the queen's own *vyali* new initiates were joining as much as five months after the opening. In a society where time is unimportant this is not unexpected.

It is not possible here to give a detailed account of *vyali* ceremonial. Only a few of its most important aspects and main functions will be touched upon. Considerable emphasis is laid in the *vyali* on age and rank. The initiates have to be very respectful towards old men and women, greeting them in a special manner (kneeling and clapping with hollowed hands) whenever they pass them. This general pattern is exactly the same as that found in the *vudiga*, the boys' circumcision. The last initiated regiment is to some extent in authority over the novices. Yet the initiates themselves vary in age from small girls of seven or eight to married women. Indeed, in the 1939 *vyali*, held after a lapse of thirty-five years, it was found necessary to divide the initiates into two distinct

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881 regiments. Each local *vyali* has its office-bearers, whose rank above that
554 of the rest is emphasized in a number of ways. Chief among all initiates is the *mulwet*, the nearest relative of the chief or district head. She represents all the initiates, just as the queen represents the whole tribe, and so intimate is the bond between the *mulwet* and the others thought to be that witches wishing to harm the whole 'school' may do so through her, and in 1939, when a snake appeared in the courtyard of initiates at the royal village, the chief initiate only was 'doctored' and the snake disappeared. She is distinguished from the rest by a special kind of dress and is always given good things to eat by another office-bearer, her 'dog', whose duty it is also to run before her, barking, when the rest are given work to do or are taken to the veld. Another office-bearer is the 'shade' of the chief initiate; towards the end of the initiation, she holds a branch above the latter's head to keep off the sun. There are some half a dozen office-bearers among initiates, as well as among the women in charge; they sit at specially prepared fireplaces and their precedence is recognized in all ceremonial.

881 The *vyali* is of such importance that during the year that it lasts it
754 overshadows everything else. All men's attention, all men's energies, are taken up by the *vyali*, to which everything else becomes subsidiary. Even in the *khoro*, the forum of the men, only essential cases are dealt with. All marriages are held up: any one having the temerity to take a bride to his home during the *vyali* must pay a fine of one head of cattle and a goat. To such an extent are the attention and interest of the whole country focused on the *vyali* that no rival ceremonial is tolerated. There may be no dancing other than *vyali* dancing, no singing of songs other than those sung in the *vyali*. Even the dancing of possessed people is prohibited, a taboo communicated to the various possessing spirits at a large farewell dance of all the possessed in the area just prior to the opening of the *vyali*, when they are ordered not to manifest themselves and told that none of the usual taboos of the cult will be observed for the next year. It is customary, too, before the opening of the *vyali* for each district head to bring a farewell *gosha* dance to the royal village, but this was omitted in 1938 owing to the length of time it would require. The flexibility of Lovedu rules is illustrated also in the permission which the queen gave in 1938 to people on a European farm who wanted to hold a *gosha* for Christmas, to do so, though for one day only. These rules bind even the spirits who, during the *vyali*, never come to sing and whistle when there is a harvest offering.

881 There is a period of preparation lasting about a month or six weeks in which the initiates are taught some of the songs they are to sing, the manner in which they have to greet their elders, and the way in which debarked wood will have to be collected. Only after this preparatory schooling does the official opening take place. On this occasion the doctor in control of the 'school' strengthens the girls for the initiation by means of special medical treatment and reinforces the courtyard of the chief or district head, where the initiation is held, against the entry of witches who may wish to harm the girls. The initiates are ritually beaten with medicated sticks as at the *gomana*, precedence being [illegible] to the

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643 connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
588 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
634 District heads *lova* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
789 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
648 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Vulovedu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*hu lova*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Tonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
588 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of
[31] marriage and *munywalo*; the *munywalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
588 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
837 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own hut (and in the old days a cow into the bargain) and be allowed to co-habit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private councils of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Vaṭanoni* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *vaṭanoni*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads.

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *muṭanoni* to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. Only some of the *vaṭanoni* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *vaṭanoni* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves Mujaji and they are described as 'the heads of Muhale', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing.

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noblemen she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *munywalo* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *munywalo* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *munywalo* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.'

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

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634 to the queen. A Ṭalɛrwa group came from the west in Khiali's reign
563 (c. 1740), had a *muṭanoni* at the capital and were given a large district.
571 Malematsha, a son of the *muṭanoni*, having married a daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the next chief, was given half the district, the other half being ruled by the Ṭalɛrwa head. By these arrangements the Ṭalɛrwa line became *vamakhulu* of Malematsha, whose son succeeded to the whole area in 1895, when the Ṭalɛrwa ruling family left as the result of famine. The Malematsha are *vaḍuhulu* of the royal Lovedu. At Bagoni, which was originally given by Mujaji I to her younger brother, Murwatsɛṭa, there now rules Mukupi, daughter of Murwatsɛṭa's son. Mukupi had been the wife of Mujaji II, but, as there was no living male heir, she was released by the queen so as to enable her to rule the area. The true heir, son of the girl whom Mukupi's brother, had he lived, would have married (for the girl was the brother's cattle-linked cross-cousin), is now about forty-five years of age. It is doubtful whether he will ever succeed, for Mukupi is an ambitious and important woman, a district head who, like the queen, has no legal husband, but several wives; she is related to the queen and her councillors in a dozen ways, the most important being that she is *mukhadi* of the queen and was wife of Mujaji II. Relɛla has a long history, but we need go no further back than the time when it was entrusted by Mujaji I to Mathogani, daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the chief, and *muṭanoni* of Mujaji I. Mathogani married first Rampi and, after his death, Muhotɛla, Rampi's brother. Kwathi, son of the latter, who was given a *muṭanoni* by Mujaji II, for reasons we need not here consider, usurped the headship. Segɛte is a district given by Mujaji II to her wife Makhivasɛ, who was daughter of a Venda chief, and, as Makhivasɛ had no issue, she was succeeded by her sister's son, the sister having married a direct male descendant of the elder brother of Mujaji I. This elder brother, Malegudu, had a daughter, Magɔvo, who became *muṭanoni* of Mujaji II. Mujaji III made Magɔvo head of Maulwi, and Magɔvo's son, Mugɔdɔ, was the man who was chosen to raise the next heir to the throne. A son of Mugɔdɔ by his chief wife (not the queen) is now district head at Maulwi. These are but some of the cases, much simplified, that give us an idea of the manner in which districts originate and become linked up with the queen and the royal group.

634 The district is a political and a territorial unit, often very small in size,
571 and usually having a distinctive praise. The size varies from half a square
554 mile to nine square miles, the average in the congested reserve being under one square mile. Originally the districts were larger, but, as European occupation advanced, the old districts were divided and subdivided to make room for the heads that were ousted. The praises, already mentioned elsewhere, are generally praises of the group or subgroup of the head. At Maunadala, though he migrated from Naji, near Tzaneen in the south, to the tribal farm Khinobɛlwa to the north of Ṽulovedu, they still sing, 'Crocodile of Mugazi, outcast (*murɔka*) of the rain water,' because his people had no rain-making magic; when Mahubusana brings beer, the praise runs, 'At the kitchen-hut of Magwala of Khodini, where potatoes are eaten,' though Mahubusana now rules near the capital, having long ago left Khodini, to the south of Ṽulovedu;

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and at Khimarrla one may hear, 'You are drunk, you of Maleakhotho, you who are habitual smokers of hemp.' Not only have sub-groups and even lineages distinctive variations upon perhaps a common praise of the group, but there are different praises appropriate to different occasions. 634 571 554

Owing to patrilocal marriage, the patrilineal kin tend to form the core of a district. These cores were perhaps more distinct in the distant past, for it is quite clear that, for instance, the districts of the Mudiga lay towards the east, while those of the Mahasha clustered together in the north-west. But members of the Mudiga and Mahasha were always scattered throughout the tribe and never co-operated as groups in any political situation. We must not think of co-operating patrilineal groups, for 'A man has influence and fortune where he has relatives-in-law'. The core of the district may be the brothers, father's brothers, and their sons in the district, but generally the mother is a link with one outside district and sisters and daughters marry into others. There is seldom a numerical preponderance of the lineage of the district head in the territorial unit, their number and solidarity depending upon a large number of factors: length of residence or of headship, the homogeneity of diversity, size, dispersion or concentration of the group that immigrated and was given a district, agreement within the group, and so on. 634 571

We may take Matsui as an example. The head, a Crocodile, and his male forebears have ruled the area for over a century. Matsui is at one point immediately adjacent to the capital, but it is also near a whole chain of old Crocodile settlements, which 150 years ago extended from Mamaila in the north to Ubudupi in the south. The district is largely a valley area and thus avoided by the Lovedu royal group, but extensively occupied by the Shangana-Ṭonga since about 1840. The population is 22 per cent. Crocodile and 14 per cent. Lovedu; 47 per cent. of the people belong to foreign groups or sub-groups, with whom intermarriage is not wholly disapproved, and 17 per cent. Shangana-Ṭonga. The Crocodiles are patrilineal kin and the Lovedu are relatives-in-law of the head, but the links with the Shangana-Ṭonga are those of neighbourliness, some friendship, and some economic interdependence. Of the intermarriageable foreigners, 20 per cent. are related in some way to the head, being mostly relatives of the line of 'messengers' (*diduna*) of the district head. It is generally felt that the messengers should not be patrilineally related to the head because of possible conflicts, but their alliance with the head is usually a close and long-established one. In the case of Matsui, the links are not only through the capital where the group of the 'messenger' used to be officials, but also through the district head's brother, who is the *muduhulu* (cattle-linked sister's son) of the 'messenger'. In other districts, of course, the dispositions are different: on the hills, for instance, there are no Shangana-Ṭonga and few of the more or less outcast *varɔka*. The diversity of the groups is very great, as we have indicated elsewhere, but the manner in which they have been interwoven into the royal group, chiefly through the districts, is even more impressive.

The patrilineal core of the district is no more important than the link through the bilateral kin, especially through mothers and sisters and daughters and the cattle-chains forged by them with other areas and with 634 562

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strengthens the tendency towards cunning and duplicity (which safe- 157
guard the secrecy of the rain charms) and has given rise to the impression among Europeans that the Lovedu are cowardly and deceitful, lacking the manly qualities of their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga. Foolish valour is discredited, for 'It is at the home of the coward that the porridge bowl is not thrown away': he lives to eat another day. The prestige of a 562
queen as ruler also maintains the high status of women in a patrilineal society. Nowhere else are so many women heads of districts or in such important political positions. Women own cattle, have wives and may aspire to headship of large villages; and in the social system the main forces are oriented from the pivotal position of the cattle-linked sister. A wife or mother is queen of her establishment, as its old Khilovedu name, *mulago*, indicates: *hu laga* means to control like a leader, while *le lago* describes the excessive control of some overwatchful kraal heads.

Agriculture is not important as a field of achievement, for stores 556
cannot be accumulated; immoderate success is suspect and a man cannot 555
establish or alter his status by economic means. 'Yours is what you eat; what you set aside is another's', means both that expending energy upon accumulating goods is lack of balance and that the 'haves' cannot be ungenerous to the 'have-nots'. Nor is the royal complex of institutions, except in so far as it interpenetrates the social system, a field of achievement for ordinary men. It is the social system which, besides being one of the great pillars of security, provides the scheme in which man seeks self-expression and recognition. There are wide avenues of achievement for men, especially in the *khɔrɔ*, and women may aspire to influence within the *munywalo* complex and its 'houses'. There are other fields of achievement: men may find satisfaction in the circle of the huts of their wives, women in spirit possession, and both men and women may become doctors, district heads, craftsmen, or story-tellers, while the adventurous may seek expression in the fantasy of manipulating the forces of witchcraft.

But all these avenues are available only within the arrangements of the 181
social structure, which on the whole are designed to eliminate competition 692
and to reward co-operation. The activities of the *khɔrɔ*, in which men seek and display their highest self-expression, throw into bold relief the qualities and traits that are most esteemed in the society: mature wisdom, appeasement, reliance, not on force, but on agreement, and confidence in the effective operation of the long-run reciprocities of the social system. The task of the *khɔrɔ*, the most honourable and most arduous of all tasks, is successfully achieved only if the disputants can be guided towards reconciliation and acceptable compromises. Certainty—the idol of security set up by our aggressive society, the fetish worshipped by legalistic practitioners and the obsession impelling our courts to adjudicate upon conflicting rights according to strict law—is not a feature of the *khɔrɔ*. The *khɔrɔ* is oblivious of the fear that hard cases will make bad law, for it need not, as we do, steel itself against tenderness for the hardship of the unwitting offender, lest exceptions upset the certainty of the law and that elegant symmetry which, as we conceive, guarantees security. In

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *hu fisa*, the care of cattle by others.

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness.

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass.

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tonga introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant; the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders

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creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and realignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

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643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men,
and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
588 or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to
644 be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the
[565] village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's
[171] mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage.

642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
559 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[834] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1943 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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857 of *lejaje* (*Mariscus sp.*) or *lejchajcha* (*Cyperus immensus*), rush-grasses which the ants seize with their antennae. The girls who have been stamping now set out with some friends from a neighbouring village, all armed
● [561] with axes, to collect firewood. The girls of this company are age-mates; they share their labours, confide their love affairs, bathe together, and, in
[832] the late afternoon, when they go to the bush, they sit together elongating their *labia minora* (*hu kwova*). Meanwhile the village lies basking and dreaming in the afternoon sun; except for the pecking fowls there is hardly a stir. '*Ŭu gae*' ('Where is it—beer'), says Raselaka to his son Sekware, as he returns with some poles on his shoulder for repairing his
574 wife's granary. 'There is beer of *lejema* [work-party] over at Mudziri's,'
273 is the reply; and the men, accompanied by the visitors, set out for the beer drink, knowing they will be allowed to partake even though they have done no work.

The hum of voices as you near a certain kraal leaves you in no doubt that this must be Mudziri's village. A fair crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the woman who is holding the *lejema* and a typical beer-drinking scene meets the eye. The centre of the picture is a large pot of beer placed in a rounded depression made for it in the courtyard. Beside it stands a flat winnowing basket containing long-handled calabash cups from which the beer is drunk. Beside the pot sits a man who serves the beer, using a beer-cup as ladle; he gives each cup to a young man of about twenty, who hands it round. The guests have ranged themselves on either side of the beer pot, women on one side, men on the other. As each calabash is emptied, it is brought back by the young man who is doing the waiting, to be filled. There is no hurry. Each one drinks at his leisure and conversation flows freely. Every one knows he will be given in his turn and, if one man is handed a second cup, he will pass it on to any one who has not yet been served, till all have had four or five. It is a pleasant social gathering and all the latest gossip is discussed. Small children toddle about in between the drinkers and may even be given a
651 little of the beer. Ominously Pheduli remarks, 'Madume has seen police
625 near Medingen. There appear to be four of them. What can they be wanting?' 'Oh,' replies Dwagu, 'they are no doubt raiding for tax defaulters!' There is general uneasiness, for about a fifth of the gathering are in arrears. Muhale is six years in arrears and, as he never goes to town to work, he has not once been caught. 'They won't catch me napping in my home to-night,' volunteers Mathukha. 'I shall go into the bush again. Are they Shangana-Tonga or Sotho, those police Madume saw?' a very relevant question, because the Shangana-Tonga, more likely than not recruited from outside the reserve, will not know these hiding places in the forests and caves. Here Pikula describes how his friend Setimela, who had himself always been in default and knew all the best hiding places, had joined the police the previous year. Consequently, at the very next raid the police made a most successful scoop, catching ninety-six defaulters, whom they marched to Duivelskloof.

574 The beer-pot is almost empty and people are merely sitting talking
273 when the host calls Raselaka and his European guest aside into his reception hut, together with a few other intimates. A woman brings in a small

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571 619 565 The first thing that strikes us is the large number of constituent groups in the tribe. Some of these groups are totemic, others are not, they come from all points of the compass. They are not clans in the accepted sense of the word and have no functions as such. They are so interwoven with the nuclear group, the Lovedu, and with one another, that it is not easy to disentangle them; they are usually interspersed with the general population, but, for one reason here and another there, they may be more or less concentrated in some part of the country. It is chiefly through the district organization that they become linked, upon the pattern of kinship, of marriage and bride-price, with the nuclear group. These groups are not arranged in any definite hierarchy of rank, though rank is of very great importance in the society. Yet there are distinctions between them: some are as honoured as the Lovedu themselves; some are regarded as rather of lower status, though intermarriage with them is not disapproved; others, mostly of non-Sotho origin, are despised and intermarriage with them is frowned upon.

[565] 621 571 613 This does not mean that there are institutionalized classes; there are no rigid lines cutting across the society, just as there are no definite functions that may be said to hold together these constituent groups. Functions of a political nature are bound up with the districts, not with the constituent groups as such; some religious and ritual functions are also bound up with the districts, but most of them (except those of national importance) are connected with kin groups, and this never means the whole constituent group and, indeed, usually not the lineage, but people from both sides of the family. Yet the lineage as a descent group has at least legal significance and to it are attached certain rights. On the whole, however, the lineages pale into significance beside the marriage or the bilateral kin groups. There is structural tension between the group which gives the brides and the group which gives the cattle; but one notices in ordinary life not so much the tension as the elaborate measures for maintaining good relations. Not only do the relations between these two groups obtrude themselves more prominently than those within the patrilineal lineages, but it is the main concern of judicial proceedings in the *khoro*, the most impressive feature of public life, to preserve harmony between them. There is ample reason for this emphasis because the whole social structure and, through it, the whole tribal system and the strongest bonds with the queen, depend upon the proper functioning of these groups. And these are again a part of, and supported by, the bilateral kin, who, with the cattle, the one relying on the other, constitute the ultimate basis of the social structure.

[561] 571 There are also age-groupings in the society. They have some wide integrating functions, but on the whole the organization into regiments is unimpressive and for national purposes of little value. The hierarchy of age plays a part of importance, however, as a regulative device; but it is not coincident with the hierarchy of rank and thus often occasions serious tensions in the social structure. Finally, we should remind the reader, though we cannot deal with them here, of groupings brought about by modern conditions. There is the more or less compact Christian group, with its divergent interests and loyalties, and the very scattered

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kinship terminology and behaviour patterns, because they effectively 571
operate only within narrow limits and are unsupported by tangible 602
reciprocities beyond these limits—though distant relationship is spoken of as a 'flavour that is familiar' (*ledugela*, literally, a salty taste)—cannot hold together widely spread groups without assistance from other social arrangements. And this is precisely where the complex of kin segregated out by the cattle plays its decisive part. In generation after generation the links are renewed as grandfathers, fathers, sons, and grandsons all take their chief wives from and send their cattle to the same group. The bridegrooms not only give the cattle, they are perpetually giving all their lives, assisting the group of the brides in paying their debts and helping its male members with *munyualo* and in a hundred other ways; on the other hand, the brides or parents-in-law must always honour the bridegrooms and must maintain relationship with them by periodically bringing beer. These reciprocal obligations are at the very basis of the social system, of the interrelations between villages, of the bonds between the districts, and, finally, of the vast and intricate system that binds the nuclear group to the other groups and to the districts. If the lineages are the bricks out of which the society is constructed, the *mulogo* and particularly the cattle-relatives (*mulogo na dikhomu*) constitute the straw and the mortar, even the steel framework. It is also within the grouping brought about by these cattle that the fiercest conflicts occur. The price that is paid for a system, without which the fundamental structure and interrelations of the society might crumble to the ground, is certainly great; but in view of the functions of this system, it is perhaps not too great.

The *munyualo* system is also closely associated with the hierarchy of 571
rank within the household. For the chief house of a polygynist is the 595
house established by the cattle he received from the marriage of his sister; and at the same time the mistress of this house is his cattle-linked cross-cousin. The rewards of rank thus support the *munyualo* system. But rank reckoned in this way is not completely co-ordinated with seniority and other arrangements in the society. Some of the conflicts that arise are mentioned elsewhere. Here we shall refer briefly to social 561
groupings based upon age. Firstly, there are age-mates (*thaga*). Girls, on the one hand, and boys, on the other, from an early age club together in their games and their activities. The group is a very loose one, wholly unorganized from without; it is not unlike our play gangs. Techniques of co-operation and group cohesion are well developed, especially among herdboys. They have their games, their heroes, and their bullies; their loyalties are, in a sense, in conflict with adults, but they are not anti-social. They may not tell tales out of school; if they do, adults will dismiss the matter as nonsense. Girls bathe together, get firewood together, play and stamp mealies together. They know one another's love affairs, they share one another's troubles. This group of age-mates is purely localised; it does not extend beyond the district and is often confined to a few neighbouring villages. In later life these age-mates continue to be on friendly, even intimate and joking terms—that is, as far as such is possible when they are also relatives. Among girls especially,

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561 a whole group of age-mates may be punished for the delinquency of one of the group, but it is not strictly the same group as played together; it might be young mothers only, because one of them had insulted an old woman.

[281] Besides the *thaga* there is the *murɔle*, the age-set brought into existence by the great national initiations, the *vudiga* for boys and the *vyali* for girls. (The word *murɔle* is also applied to cattle born in the same year.) But these age-sets have much less significance than in other tribes. Their chief function is to grade men and women into groups to which a distinctive name is given and by which they can readily reckon their relative ages. In the very old days the age-sets had some military function, but the queens relied less and less upon their fighting unit and to-day nothing is left of the old basis, if it was such, of the age-set. There is hardly a bond of mutual help and fellowship within the group. It does not constitute the unit that is usually called to perform communal duties for chief or tribe. This work is done by districts rather than by regiments, though it is said that in the old days there was some sort of division of labour as between the different sets, and to-day occasionally in the district of the capital the youngest age-set is called upon to weed the field of the queen. Certainly there is still the conception that each regiment is entitled to some particular portion of a beast that is slaughtered, but in practice there is no evidence of the observance of this rule. It is as if, with the breakdown of their military functions, their other specific functions also fell into disuse. What remains are the privileges attached to seniority and to age. The enclosure of the queen's *khɔrɔ* is built by men of all ages, called up by districts; this applies equally to labour on the roads, brick-making, and building. If young men are sometimes given a specific piece of work, it is primarily because they are young men or the young men of such and such a district, and never in our experience as the whole age-set in the tribe.

But the function of marking relative ages, seniority in respect of important activities in the tribe, is of very great importance. A young man who has gone through one initiation may have advanced one important stage towards adulthood, but he is still very far from being a complete man or from being initiated into the inner secrets of the 'school'. In the second initiation he becomes a shepherd (*mudabi*), in the third he may be one stage higher up (one of the *madidi*), and, if he is lucky, he may reach the fourth stage, that of the old men or of one of the officials of the initiation. Girls have to go through even more stages before full initiation in the puberty ceremonial. And in the *vyali*, as we saw in 1939, only men who were initiated as far back as 1894 were allowed in the enclosure for men. The beer and the food and delicacies which were brought by the girl initiates were for these old men, though occasionally they relented and passed on a pot of beer to their juniors watching the proceedings from outside the enclosure. And there is a similar hierarchy in the *gomana* cult. Only gradually are men introduced to the innermost secrets; only the old men play the part of the weird whistling spirits (*zwiglojane*), until they become too old to play the part and are replaced by younger men.

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remoulding of culture elements provides important clues to understanding the Lovedu. The *vudiga*, despite its admirable integration into Lovedu culture, still overstresses national regimentation and military virtues; it makes too much of the repudiation of association with women (a tendency rectified in the *vyali*); and the conception in it of an ordeal or revenge inflicted by adults, who have suffered circumcision, upon novices whose turn to suffer has come is too pronounced for a culture that abhors vengeance. It is curious, also, that in a society in which mates are born for one another the problem of harmonizing romantic love with the limited range of socially approved choices is not dealt with in the *khɔba* or the *vudiga*. Pre-marital sexual experiment is excluded at least as a means of avoiding individual incompatibilities; but such incompatibilities are not phrased as a difficulty in marriage, the sexual aspect of which is one of the least important in Lovedu society, and the institution of *vuḑavu* (of having lovers), with whom married much more than unmarried men or women form liaisons, gives an outlet to romanticism and supports the long suckling period. The chastity that is stressed in the *khɔba* is the pre-marital chastity that leads to no complications in the social structure, such as would be caused by the birth of a child to an unmarried girl; it does not preclude those satisfactions the desire for which is inevitably aroused by the great value that is placed upon fertility.

The rites of the *vudiga* and *khɔba* do not, as we have seen, change boys and girls from youth to full-fledged manhood. The transition is a gradual one. The *khɔba* becomes a bride; the bride after the birth of her first child is a *mudwana*; and she in turn, when her children marry, is a venerable old woman (*mukhegulu*). The bride is of small consequence even in her own home; for long she serves an apprenticeship under the control of her mother-in-law, who also takes her child out of her hands, baths it and feeds it. Only as an old woman does she reach the peak of her life. With a man the position is no different. After the *vudiga* he has a kind of legal status. After marriage he advances a further stage, but in his marital relations and as a father he is a child dependent upon advice from his elders. In public activities, such as in the courts, he still sits and listens, but the old men may entrust a case to him and his age-mates to teach them a sense of responsibility. His helplessness is strikingly in evidence when a child is born to him: he does not see it at first, knows little of its progress, is ordered by the old women to seek this or that root, for what purpose he cannot tell, and, when the child is taken out of the hut, he is merely called, given medicine and told what to do with it. Finally, he must seek the advice of the old women as to when he may resume sexual intercourse with his wife. In other spheres of life also, the education of the man on the woman gradually advances. Craftsmanship, for instance, is the province of the old. Young men and women may learn from their fathers or mothers, but more usually the leisure and inclination come in their old age. A bride, fully occupied with housework and cultivation under the eye of her mother-in-law, has no time for pottery and mat-making; a young man's life is too unsettled to allow him quietly to sit down to make a basket or a stamping-block. The Lovedu

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561 are not at all anxious that their children should be taught craftsmanship in the mission schools.

887 In contrast to our customs, education never ends. As the physiological capacities vary, so new activities are undertaken. The culture always provides a place for the aptitudes of every stage of life, and neither men nor women become redundant in their old age, unless, indeed, they are utterly decrepit. With their physical decline, the culture provides new avenues and interests, to which they are continuously adjusting themselves. They suffer no sense of frustration, because their adjustments are dynamic. With us old age may be tragic: among women, the menopause may precipitate a crisis; among men, retiring from work often causes loss of interest in life and mental decay. But old Lovedu men and women always have something more to learn and to do. Women are not perturbed about external signs of age and complacently accept the end of their childbearing years, for these years bring increased influence, a fuller life, and greater rewards. If physical disability excludes old men from active political life, they receive ample compensation in reduced responsibilities and added prestige. There is no sense of impotence that upsets their balance. Instead, the changing sphere of their roles and their interests both keeps them stable and makes them precious to the society. The distress of old age among us is seldom seen, for rewards always stimulate the new adjustments that have to be made. Utter decrepitude is, however, a tragedy, fortunately ended by the neglect that we may regard as pitiless, but which realistically eliminates those who cannot attain even the mediocre level of achievement that the society calls for. He who cannot attain this level cannot make simple adjustments. But he who can still use his faculties in his old age may become a doctor of note, or a recognized authority on tribal legends or history. Finally, the psychological effect of beliefs attaching to the very old is to provide them with new incentives and renewed opportunities. The widespread suspicion that they have personal contacts with the world of darkness enhances their power, while their elevation, in anticipation, to godhead, for they are already so near death that they may be referred to as gods (*vadimo*), invests their dignity and their wishes with a supernatural halo.

871 Beside this all-pervasive system of tribal education, the modern school,
797 with its three R's, is as yet of small importance. It reaches, and only in
177 an attenuated form, no more than 3 to 5 per cent. of the children. Its methods are foreign, divorced from life; its teachers are immature, handicapped by inadequate equipment and by being uprooted from the soil of tribal culture. Yet the modern school is the force of the future. Education is passionately desired by the young, and the old would welcome it if they did not feel that it was subversive. There is no compulsion upon a scholar to become a Christian; but the belief persists that education and Christianity are inseparable. It is a belief that raises an awkward dilemma: must the school, which at the same time is the gateway to Christianity, give up its task of breaking down, or can it compromise with superstition? Can it work from within, integrated into the culture, without defeating its purpose? The answer cannot be given here. The task of the school and the Church is no less prodigious and delicate than

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695 The procedure to-day involved in witchcraft cases can be set into motion and these cases may be settled by district heads. In short, set rules as to competence do not exist and district heads are left to cope with as much as they can manage.

576 627 561 A brief discussion of some quasi-judicial processes will enable us to appreciate better, as it will introduce us to the procedure and spirit of the *khoro*. Firstly, there is the method by which especially old women deal with disrespectful or insulting behaviour of younger women. Should one or more young women play a practical joke upon or be disrespectful to an old woman, or playfully 'dance' an infant child, even their own, or prematurely try to make it sit up or walk or scold or beat it, in the presence of the grandmother or of an old woman, their behaviour is regarded as insulting. The conception is that old women in their role as midwives, rather than young mothers, have brought children into the world and the old, not the young, are the guardians of the babes. If one young woman arrogates to herself rights and privileges which belong to the old women, the latter are entitled to take suitable action. The insulted old woman reports to a few of her age-mates and in consultation they decide to punish the age-mates of the young woman resident in the same territorial unit—for example, a district. There is neither 'trial' nor tribunal. The punishment consists of three elements: the age-mates of the young women (say all those who have one baby) must brew beer with which to effect a reconciliation with the older women; in a rite accompanying the beer drink and resembling that used at initiations, the oldest woman canes her immediate junior, who in turn canes the next, and so on, including the culprits; and, finally, the culprits are read a lesson as to the iniquity of being disrespectful to their elders.

One day three young married women, in circumstances that implied disrespect, sent three old women a tiny quantity of snuff. The older women immediately fined the younger and vicariously all their age-mates living in the Christian settlement, for they were all residents there. They were told to grind snuff and restitute their wrong with beer. Five days later the twelve young married women of the settlement came to the house of the oldest woman, bringing large quantities of nuts, light beer, pumpkins, and other food; their husbands, in addition, sent a large tin of snuff and these 'gifts' were divided among the old women. Then followed the rite and the warning. On another occasion all the young mothers of a district were fined because one of them had 'danced' its baby in the presence of its grandmother. Likewise, it is said, though we have not seen a case, that the old women may fine a young father and his age-mates, if he forgets their privileges in regard to babies. But we cannot speak of regimental courts, the age-grades are not determined by the 'schools', the responsibility is territorial, and the punishment is 'beer of reconciliation' (largely replaced by food among Christians).

627 691 The second procedure, that called *hu khumelwa* (to beg pardon, to reconcile), has an enormous province and a profound significance, not only for legal arrangements, but in the whole culture. The procedure uses a *mukhumedi*, the emissary who intervenes on behalf of one of the parties to beg the pardon of the other. Its essence is not humiliation of

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and at Khimarela one may hear, 'You are drunk, you of Maleakhotho, you who are habitual smokers of hemp.' Not only have sub-groups and even lineages distinctive variations upon perhaps a common praise of the group, but there are different praises appropriate to different occasions. 634 571 554

Owing to patrilocal marriage, the patrilineal kin tend to form the core of a district. These cores were perhaps more distinct in the distant past, for it is quite clear that, for instance, the districts of the Mudiga lay towards the east, while those of the Mahasha clustered together in the north-west. But members of the Mudiga and Mahasha were always scattered throughout the tribe and never co-operated as groups in any political situation. We must not think of co-operating patrilineal groups, for 'A man has influence and fortune where he has relatives-in-law'. The core of the district may be the brothers, father's brothers, and their sons in the district, but generally the mother is a link with one outside district and sisters and daughters marry into others. There is seldom a numerical preponderance of the lineage of the district head in the territorial unit, their number and solidarity depending upon a large number of factors: length of residence or of headship, the homogeneity of diversity, size, dispersion or concentration of the group that immigrated and was given a district, agreement within the group, and so on. 634 571

We may take Matsui as an example. The head, a Crocodile, and his male forebears have ruled the area for over a century. Matsui is at one point immediately adjacent to the capital, but it is also near a whole chain of old Crocodile settlements, which 150 years ago extended from Mamaila in the north to Vudupi in the south. The district is largely a valley area and thus avoided by the Lovedu royal group, but extensively occupied by the Shangana-Ṭonga since about 1840. The population is 22 per cent. Crocodile and 14 per cent. Lovedu; 47 per cent. of the people belong to foreign groups or sub-groups, with whom intermarriage is not wholly disapproved, and 17 per cent. Shangana-Ṭonga. The Crocodiles are patrilineal kin and the Lovedu are relatives-in-law of the head, but the links with the Shangana-Ṭonga are those of neighbourliness, some friendship, and some economic interdependence. Of the intermarriageable foreigners, 20 per cent. are related in some way to the head, being mostly relatives of the line of 'messengers' (*diduna*) of the district head. It is generally felt that the messengers should not be patrilineally related to the head because of possible conflicts, but their alliance with the head is usually a close and long-established one. In the case of Matsui, the links are not only through the capital where the group of the 'messenger' used to be officials, but also through the district head's brother, who is the *muḓuhulu* (cattle-linked sister's son) of the 'messenger'. In other districts, of course, the dispositions are different: on the hills, for instance, there are no Shangana-Ṭonga and few of the more or less outcast *vaɔka*. The diversity of the groups is very great, as we have indicated elsewhere, but the manner in which they have been interwoven into the royal group, chiefly through the districts, is even more impressive.

The patrilineal core of the district is no more important than the link through the bilateral kin, especially through mothers and sisters and daughters and the cattle-chains forged by them with other areas and with 634 562

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634 562 the capital. These links emphasize the part played by women in the political system. The intermediaries or registrars at the capital, through whom political and legal matters are taken from the district to the queen, are called, not fathers or councillors, as is very usual in other tribes, but 'mothers' of the district heads (*mma vɔna*), a very appropriate name in the light of the fact that one usually approaches the paternal authority through one's mother. 'Mothers' of districts may be women as well as men, and quite often a male 'mother' is succeeded by his widow. The position opens large avenues of political opportunity for women. Again, at present 14 per cent. of the acting district heads are women, some holding in their own right, some on behalf of a male heir, who perhaps, as in the case of Mukupi, will never have much influence during the lifetime of the deputy. If we reckon cases in which a son is ruling in consultation with his mother, the percentage is much higher.

Let us take a few examples. Mukoko, the jester (*khidada*) at the capital, is nominally head at Ravothata; but until her death it was his mother, daughter of the brother of Mujaji II and a wife of the queen, who was in charge, and it is now his wife, also an ex-wife of the queen, who has remained behind and rules, though Mukoko has appointed a deputy. At Madumani, the heir has quarrelled with and was expelled by the sister of his deceased father; she installed another son, Khobi, as nominal head; and when Khobi died, his sister took over control, feathering the nest of her son, against whom the chances of the rightful heir seem at present to be small. At Muthomeni the mother's influential relatives secured the succession of Mudzwalo against that of his younger brother, the legal heir. Matsere's sister's daughter is head at Khiobeni and her husband does the court work. Khimarela, an old Mudiga district, was consistently given to wives of the queen; and in its recent history, Matnagu, a wife of the queen who married a Mudiga, was head until her son, Thagu, took over. The mother of a district head at Khithunja rules because the son has paralysis. At Lerejini, Bogi, who is now head, entrusted the district to his elder sister, who, in order to rule, as she did until her death, left her husband, who lived in another area. Rapada at Mashakha had only one daughter in the great house and she was a wife of the queen when he died; his wife is now head and, if the ideal pattern is followed, she will be succeeded by the heir of the daughter-in-law, supposititious wife of her son, who comes to cook for her; but this daughter-in-law, as experience shows, is likely to overshadow her son, the true heir. Magovo, sister of Mugɔdɔ, the chief, was the first ruler at Mudzinoni; as she had no issue, her sister succeeded her, the next head was daughter of the sister (because the son expelled the true heir and then died prematurely), and this daughter was followed by her own choice, the son of her brother.

Cases of this nature, where a woman plays the decisive role, may be multiplied. They may give the impression that there are no strongly institutionalized rules of succession; yet these rules exist. They are patrilineally patterned, but they recognize the claims of the sister's son (*muduhulu*). The weight of the social structure, in all complicated cases, balances unevenly between the cattle-descent and the cattle-linked

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houses—that is, between the heir raised in the chief house of the head 634
and the head's cattle-linked sister. The daughter of the cattle-linked 562
brother comes as daughter-in-law to the mistress of the chief house, her cattle-linked aunt, to bear the heir, whether that house has a son or not; and legal precedences support this arrangement and succession. This emphasizes the power of the mother and her lineage. But the position of the cattle-linked sister is also strong, as we have indicated elsewhere, and in cases of succession to the headship of a district is further strengthened if she has been a wife of the queen. Conflicts do often arise and it is not strange that the queen usually leaves them to settle themselves. It is seldom that she interferes or interposes her authority, though she does so when the balance of convenience or interest strongly inclines one way. Tenure of headship is tolerably secure. The queen would only exceptionally and for very good reasons favour the displacement of a district head of one of the old groups; and in that case the district itself must strongly desire it while, not a stranger, but the nearest acceptable relative of the lineage will be substituted. If, however, the links with the royal family are not close, tenure by the lineage is less secure and it occasions no surprise that a man, coming to the queen with a few pounds, may be given a district where there has been trouble. We have seen a few such cases and it seemed incomprehensible to those with whom we discussed them that we suspected bribery and corruption.

The district is singularly autonomous in its political arrangements. 634
Land is allotted by the district head not, as in many neighbouring tribes, 425
by the chief. The district head, if he wishes, gives land to people living 609
in other districts; at Mawa, for instance, non-residents hold over 300 423
fields. The district head reports the settlement of a stranger from another tribe by taking £1 to the queen, but it is to him as district owner that landholders annually bring beer. A non-resident also nowadays cultivates the district head with beer, clothes, and even money before asking for land. The land given to a non-resident is not very securely held; the tenure is so imperfectly institutionalized that practice varies from one district to another and definite rights and obligations cannot easily be deduced; on the whole, it is not unlike lending, though the culture does not recognize lending of land for a consideration. A non-resident holding land in a district, unlike a resident, cannot, generally speaking, interchange it with or lend it to others without the consent of the head; but at the capital he can, even without reporting to the queen; and there also a resident may break new land without any one's permission.

Land tenure is too complicated for treatment here, but we may note 634
that where a district head takes back the land of a resident, the queen's 425
court may, but does not usually, interfere in the interests not so much of 423
security of land tenure as of peace. If a resident quarrels with the district head, he cannot beg pardon with beer, highly though that method of reconciliation is appraised, because he would be 'humbling himself with the mealies of the land' or, as it is sometimes phrased, 'paying a fine with the calf of the cattle of the district head'. A resident migrating from the district should bid its head farewell with 'the beer of greeting'; application

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fine or making the restitution. The great feature of the *khɔrɔ* is its publicity. It constitutes a large part of the public life of the men and, while it lives as an institution, it will powerfully counteract the sense of frustration resulting from the intervention of the white man. 692

The *khɔrɔ* is the final safeguard of the *munywalo* system[1] and, through that system, of the intricate social structure. It also deals with witchcraft, theft, assault, adultery, and other disputes; but its province in witchcraft and sorcery is limited and has only recently developed, theft and adultery do not lend themselves to its genius, and other cases are primarily to be settled by *hu khumɛlwa*. Of all disputes coming before the *khɔrɔ*, 76 per cent. are *munywalo* cases, but if we consider only the disputes that are really submitted to trial and not merely for confirmation or registration of a decision otherwise reached, the percentage rises to 88. Yet the chief subject of litigation is *munywalo* only if we ignore completely the conflicts that are settled by *hu khumɛlwa* or in the family. In our opinion, though by the nature of the case the evidence can never be complete, these latter cases outnumber *khɔrɔ* cases to the same extent as *munywalo* cases outnumber all other cases of the *khɔrɔ*. 692 691

Of the many implications of these facts, we shall refer merely to two First of all, contrary to what is often stated concerning the Bantu, it is not that most conflicts in the society arise from *munywalo*, but that, of the disputes having, as we phrase it, legal consequences, none are more in evidence than *munywalo* tangles. But as the *khɔrɔ* is really a *munywalo* court, we cannot argue from the litigation we find in it to the general nature of the conflicts in the society. The error is somewhat like concluding from cases coming before special divorce courts among us, that marital disputes are the main causes of dissension in our society. *Khɔrɔ* proceedings are essentially *munywalo* proceedings because the complex *munywalo* system, and the safeguarding of its intricate reciprocities, can adequately be entrusted, not to private arrangements, but to an imposing public organization. The stresses and strains in the system are not only of a personal but of an institutional nature, involving the integration of diverse elements in the social structure. Compromises affect individuals as well as larger groups and their interrelations, and, for the solutions required, the society needs the wide perspective and wisdom of a trained body of men. They have to adjust personal difficulties, but in the context of an intricate system that is easily thrown out of gear. Herein also lies the special genius of the *khɔrɔ*.

Secondly, legal arrangements appear to be made and controlled by men, but that is because we identify law with the *khɔrɔ*, the place of the men. In *hu khumɛlwa* women are at least as important as men, and in family disputes no one occupies so pivotal a position as the cattle-linked sister, the legal 'builder' of most houses in the country, she who 'cuts' cases arising within the house and regulates the inheritance of goods and of widows. These 'judicial'-like activities cover vast provinces of the total culture, and they are fully recognized in *khɔrɔ* proceedings in which neither in arriving at a decision nor in safeguarding its execution can the men ignore the wishes, authority, or influence of the sister. In complicated cases, they often postpone their decision again and again until she 692 562

[1] [See cat. 582+583.--Analyst]

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692 appears, and they rely upon her to suggest a solution and to guarantee its
562 being put into effect. Old women, sitting on the fringes of the court, are sometimes heard to mumble, as if impersonally, about the tortuous ways of the men when such-and-such is the simple solution; a man within earshot overhears the remark and applies it to the case; and more often than not, as you see the men 'jump upon' the happy phrase or formula suggested, you realize that men do not have the monopoly of wisdom. Women are the strongest pillars of the social structure and without their support there can be no guarantee that the adjustments in the superstructure will be lasting or effective; and, in a society that relies on compromise and not on coercion, this role becomes even more important. Women appear as plaintiffs or defendants as frequently as men; we have never heard either the *khɔrɔ* or a party object that an opponent was a woman unassisted by her guardian; but we have heard an old woman, the defendant, refuse to proceed in a case where the plaintiff was a young man of twenty-five years. It was a divorce case, in which the young man presumptuously had handed *munyɩoalo* cattle, not to the mother of the bride, but to the bride's former husband. The mother took back her daughter and the young man sued for the return of his goods. The mother said in the *khɔrɔ*, 'I scorn to discuss the matter with you, a mere child. You know nothing about cases. Bring your father. I do not understand your complaint.' The *khɔrɔ* agreed. Of course, the *khɔrɔ* is the province of the men, and their place and function in it have been institutionalized; by contrast, only a few women have an institutional hold upon the *khɔrɔ*, but they are firmly entrenched in the social structure, which is the *raison d'être* of the *khɔrɔ*.

694 We cannot do more than give a general picture of a few aspects of the practice and procedure of the *khɔrɔ*. There are the usual preliminary processes. A creditor, going alone directly to the debtor, complains (*hu vela*) once, twice, perhaps many times; the complaint is not made through the village head. The debtor may ask his district head or another to intercede as his *mukhumedi*. But if nothing happens, the creditor warns the debtor that he will proceed to *hu ḑalia*, the formal complaint to the district head, not the village head, which begins the case. The dispute may still be settled privately with the district head appearing in the role of an intercessor rather than a judge, probably at the defendant's village. If this fails, the assistance of the 'mother' of the district may be called in, as already described, or there may be a full-dress *khɔrɔ* trial, with its 'opening' fees and 'fees of the feet'. Should the district head be 'overcome', the case may go to the capital. The parties are summoned to appear on a certain Sunday and there are present some fifty men, all of them potential arbitrators. It is difficult to distinguish judges, litigants, and visitors, and, though there is some one presiding, now one, now another of the men, even though they have been found guilty in a previous case the same day, may take the lead and decide the case.

695 The *khɔrɔ* is not unlike a family council: there are no set forms or formulas or procedures, no precise order in which cases are called or matters are discussed. While the parties to one case, unable to reach agreement, retire to the 'dung of the dogs' along the fence of the court-

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strengthens the tendency towards cunning and duplicity (which safe- 157
guard the secrecy of the rain charms) and has given rise to the impression among Europeans that the Lovedu are cowardly and deceitful, lacking the manly qualities of their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga. Foolish valour is discredited, for 'It is at the home of the coward that the porridge bowl is not thrown away': he lives to eat another day. The prestige of a 562
queen as ruler also maintains the high status of women in a patrilineal society. Nowhere else are so many women heads of districts or in such important political positions. Women own cattle, have wives and may aspire to headship of large villages; and in the social system the main forces are oriented from the pivotal position of the cattle-linked sister. A wife or mother is queen of her establishment, as its old Khilovedu name, *mulago*, indicates: *hu laga* means to control like a leader, while *le lago* describes the excessive control of some overwatchful kraal heads.

Agriculture is not important as a field of achievement, for stores 556
cannot be accumulated; immoderate success is suspect and a man cannot 555
establish or alter his status by economic means. 'Yours is what you eat; what you set aside is another's', means both that expending energy upon accumulating goods is lack of balance and that the 'haves' cannot be ungenerous to the 'have-nots'. Nor is the royal complex of institutions, except in so far as it interpenetrates the social system, a field of achievement for ordinary men. It is the social system which, besides being one of the great pillars of security, provides the scheme in which man seeks self-expression and recognition. There are wide avenues of achievement for men, especially in the *khɔrɔ*, and women may aspire to influence within the *munywalo* complex and its 'houses'. There are other fields of achievement: men may find satisfaction in the circle of the huts of their wives, women in spirit possession, and both men and women may become doctors, district heads, craftsmen, or story-tellers, while the adventurous may seek expression in the fantasy of manipulating the forces of witchcraft.

But all these avenues are available only within the arrangements of the 181
social structure, which on the whole are designed to eliminate competition 692
and to reward co-operation. The activities of the *khɔrɔ*, in which men seek and display their highest self-expression, throw into bold relief the qualities and traits that are most esteemed in the society: mature wisdom, appeasement, reliance, not on force, but on agreement, and confidence in the effective operation of the long-run reciprocities of the social system. The task of the *khɔrɔ*, the most honourable and most arduous of all tasks, is successfully achieved only if the disputants can be guided towards reconciliation and acceptable compromises. Certainty—the idol of security set up by our aggressive society, the fetish worshipped by legalistic practitioners and the obsession impelling our courts to adjudicate upon conflicting rights according to strict law—is not a feature of the *khɔrɔ*. The *khɔrɔ* is oblivious of the fear that hard cases will make bad law, for it need not, as we do, steel itself against tenderness for the hardship of the unwitting offender, lest exceptions upset the certainty of the law and that elegant symmetry which, as we conceive, guarantees security. In

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

634 characteristic of Lowveld political organization. Districts are still of
624 great importance, and the district head is a busy and important man, both socially and politically. Contact with the European has resulted in two diverse tendencies observable in our area: among small tribes,
634 such as Phalaborwa and Sekhopo's Lobedu, there has been increased
624 centralization, the chief taking over functions, such as allocation of
178 land, which used to be the province of headmen; elsewhere, especially in the large kingdom of Modjadji, district headmen are in many respects becoming more independent, exacting from underlings labour to which they are not entitled and even controlling other districts to which they have no right.

624 Women may here, as among Venda, be heads of districts,[1] and, though the proportion of women to men is never high, they are often
● 562 the most important district heads in the tribe. Women become headmen in a variety of ways: among Lobedu a woman of the royal family may be appointed head of an area (generally, nowadays, over newly-bought tribal land) and though in practice her husband may do most of the work, she it is who is recognized and approached in the last resort. A daughter of the chief house succeeds her father even if there are sons of other houses; a woman may succeed her husband when the children are too young, and though, strictly speaking, she is only a regent in this case, she often continues to rule until her death and long after her son has attained his majority. Or a *rakhadi* may be asked to act as regent for her nephew, in which case she very often secures the succession for her own son, ousting the rightful heir.

695 LAW AND JUSTICE. The Lowveld was the land of the ordeal, the only method by which witchcraft could be discovered or difficult cases of theft and adultery, where evidence was inconclusive, be decided. Boiling medicated water which scalded only the hands of the guilty might be used or a concoction be drunk which intoxicated the culprit, leaving the innocent unaffected. Except for occasional use among the Phalaborwa, however, the ordeal has been completely ousted by the Shangana–Tonga smeller-out and a modern method of dealing with witchcraft has developed over the whole of the Lowveld, which has spread not only into Vendaland but also into portions of the

[1] Except among Phalaborwa, Tsubye, and the people of Tswale and Sekhopo.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion.

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vamalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vamukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsɛni*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaḓuhulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin.

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
557 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[834] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1945 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term mojoko or
613 *lelako* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[789] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhobo* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours
[476] and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

● [562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[582] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhobo*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

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I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *neji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*masha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

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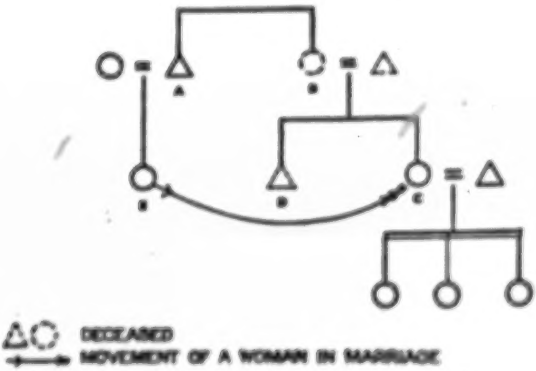

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepize's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepize (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepize's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepize and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepize (*o ne bekile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepize (E) not '*wagi*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mahadile*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

[601]

562 (*mesna ma ka*) by their '*wives*' *batsumi* when they marry on
588 behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children
601 of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

582 Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter
583 appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maseriba's
583 bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years
588 later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batamedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[607] he also is a *mudukulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

748 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[608] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[593] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

748 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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one goat was

428 given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted
[587] him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *leshupe*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.
[587] The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The
[746] division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the
428 relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for
429 the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's
[587] brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

429 When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation
634 with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a
429 district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a
562 widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died,
[587] the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a
[674] widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting

the court cases.

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home- 634
stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, 562
a married woman who does not live in the area was made 429
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from 604
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting 592
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable 604
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's 634
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to 643
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The 634
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some- 602
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thoge moye bo dula mudukulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging 592
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance 592
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portion- 591
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become 591
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels 571
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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one hand a means of binding the women of the lineage, even after their marriage, by strong links to their father's family and on the other of maintaining from generation to generation the bonds with the maternal kin created by the marriage of the parents.

A woman has a dual role in the social structure. On the one hand by establishing a 'house' in her husband's lineage, she is the means whereby his lineage is perpetuated and its numbers increased; for even after the death of her husband his brothers will raise seed to his name and in the absence of sons she can herself ensure the continuation of her husband's lineage by marrying a woman on behalf of a fictitious son. On the other hand a woman remains important to her own lineage: if she is the eldest child of her 'house' she will officiate at all important religious offerings (if her brother is older he may officiate but she will always be called to collaborate with him); when she dies her name and those of her sisters will be included among the names of ancestors called upon in prayer; she divides out the inheritance on the death of her uterine brother; she guards the interests of the children of her cattle-linked brother's 'house' whence she will obtain a daughter-in-law; upon her falls the responsibility in the absence of her parents of providing an heir in her mother's 'house' (of her father's lineage) should there be no son; and she may even act in the place of her deceased father as ruler over a district until the heir is of age or until one can be raised.

The maintenance of links with married sisters and its complement marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter, by means of which one's links with one's wife's (or mother's) family are perpetuated, are supreme values in Lobedu society. That is why a wife who has no son has little difficulty in persuading her husband to hand over her daughter's bride-price to her brother rather than create links with a strange family. It is possible thereby to 'build a house' (or 'make a gate') at her brother's home from which her daughter's son will obtain a wife. This may at first sight appear to be very like the transfer of rights from mother to daughter but this is not the case. It is made possible by the transfer of cattle belonging to the daughter's husband and is bound up with the great desire to maintain links between the descendants of brother and sister. The right

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161 density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-
estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the
450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.
133 The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The
132 rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is
very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather un-
certain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main
rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat
202 fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*)
501 used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one
is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate
824 knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their
dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes,
and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The
134 soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game;
136 but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of
the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the
132 summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by
bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps sum-
mer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agri-
244 culturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more
231 numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots
of social relationship.

● 563 The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Roka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhopo, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigoa, the Dgona and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calcu'ation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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entering from the first quarter of the eighteenth century until to-day, and are all segments of other tribes, themselves composed of very diverse elements. To-day the task of unravelling the confusion and complexity is beyond the wit of man. It is a complexity which everywhere antedates the nineteenth-century disturbances, probably even the movements and unrest recorded by the Portuguese for the sixteenth century. Not all the groups are equally closely linked with the royal nucleus. The most alien are the Shangana-Tonga. This is because intermarriage with them is frowned upon and because, in the incorporation of a foreign group into the tribe, the most effective instrument is the alignments effected by the bride-price of the marriage system. The process of incorporation is dealt with elsewhere. It depends upon the obligation of the immigrant group to send one of its daughters as a wife to the queen. These are handed out to nobles of the nuclear group and thereby the whole complicated machinery of intermarrying lineages is set into motion. Thus, through the links created by giving brides and in return receiving cattle, loyalties are built up in the foreign groups and they become closely knit into the texture of the tribe and of its social structure, the centre of which from this point of view is the nuclear ruling group.

We have to remember, in considering the pageants of the past, that each of the constituent groups also has a background of history. There are scores of subsidiary pageants, some almost as impressive as the royal pageant. Neither the historical background nor all that it implies as to the meaning of the present culture can be properly interpreted without taking into account the subsidiary pageants. Some of them are almost self-contained side-shows, some have become submerged in the main pageant; but all have contributed something to the total culture of the Lovedu. It is always instructive to observe what the contribution has been and how it has been reshaped to harmonize with the predominant conceptions in the society. The selection of traits that are congenial, the rejection of elements that do not fit, the manner in which the assimilation has altered the details as well as the meaning of borrowed institutions, all throw light upon the values and working of the society. But in this book we are concerned only with the final result; and for that reason also we have omitted the histories and pageants of the constituent groups.

So far we have referred to the background of the royal group and to the great diversity of peoples that make up the Lovedu. It is time that, instead of viewing the tribe in broad perspective, we should turn to the ordinary mundane activities of the people. They do not live by the spirit of the past alone, and we cannot remain on the hilltops looking at them from afar. We must descend into their villages, attend their beer drinks, take a hand in the stamping and cooking, listen to the scandal at beer drinks and join them in their recreation. The contrast between the rarefied atmosphere of their philosophical contemplation, as it emerges in the pageants, and their everyday avocations, as we shall see them when we move in their midst, is very great. But so is the contrast between our philosophy and our everyday life.

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from 252
two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in those earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner. While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves roast mealies or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen enters with a large gourd of water on her 576
head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Mukhadi wee*,' calls out her mother. '*Mulenya*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase 563
by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Mukhadi goes into the huts and collects 415
five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used [273]
for making light beer (*mabudu*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the [264]
sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two- 853
months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by washing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth, she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and gurglings are of no avail till Granny has decided it has had enough. This novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held 854
over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap, special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that at any moment the child may slip out of the woman's hands; but she is skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward occurs. After being air-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline, an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys 000
arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neighbours could be seen; their own were nowhere to be found. Your hostess is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with legs tied together.

The woman of the *musha* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning 264
to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of slovenliness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food; porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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ease of presentation. Mavetha, district head of Mareroni, some thirty-eight years ago gave his daughter, Muthatso, to the queen. Muthatso after a time was allotted to Khidima, the queen's maternal uncle. Later Khidima sent a daughter to be one of the wives of the queen and this girl in turn was given by the queen to Nagambi, district head of Maulwi. Meanwhile Mavetha's son, Muhale, succeeded at Mareroni and sent the only issue of his wife, the daughter Makwajo, to the queen (1936). The next ruler at Mareroni will be either Makwajo or an heir raised by the wife acquired with the cattle given by the queen as *munywalo* for Mukwajo. Already these arrangements link the district heads of Marenoni and of Maulwi with the queen and one of her nobles, and also with one another. The network is indefinitely continued in all directions, and though its ends appear to diverge, they centre in the queen and become interlinked at many points. For instance, to Rasodi, a younger brother of Nagambi, the queen gave Makwada, her wife, who came from Malematsha, an important district head, and as a result Rasodi's son must marry at Malematsha's. Once these interrelations are established, they set into motion the whole social system and the reciprocities which double the links and perpetuate the interrelations. In the district of the capital the ramifications of exchanges and re-exchanges are so complex as to defy analysis.

Broadly speaking, districts may be divided into those given to one of the old *kwevo* or royal groups (of Muhale, of Mudiga and of Mahasha), those originating from *vaṭanoni*, and those held by heads of foreign groups. The so-called *vaṭanoni* districts constitute a composite group, because women do not normally succeed to one another. We have already mentioned elsewhere how the district Matsui was given by Mujaji I to her wife, who, marrying a Crocodile, was succeeded by her son Matsui and his line of Crocodiles. In 34 per cent. of the 100 districts we know well enough to trace their origin, the position has not been very different. To-day sixty of these 100 districts are held by the royal groups and forty by foreign groups, and of those held by foreigners sixteen were acquired, as Matsui was, through *vaṭanoni*. Thus 40 per cent. of the foreign and 30 per cent. of the *kwevo* districts, as far as we know, were originally handed to wives of the chiefs. Districts may originate in many other ways. It was customary for the kings to place their districts under sisters and brothers and temporarily also under their wives. Their wives could not as easily as among the queens consolidate their position, as they were unable to send their daughters as wives to the king, whereas now they can and do send such wives to the queens. Districts were also given to the great messengers (*diduna*) of the chiefs; to foreigners, who, though they came with no large following, were renowned doctors of the national 'schools', some of which they introduced; to men who gave the queen cattle and a wife, and occasionally to those who had rendered services of value.

It does not much matter how a district originates from the point of view of the links that are gradually established with the queen and with one another. If foreigners come with a large, compact body of followers, they are often given an area and in return send their daughters as wives

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634 to the queen. A Ţalɛrwa group came from the west in Khiali's reign
●563 (*c.* 1740), had a *muţanoni* at the capital and were given a large district.
571 Malematsha, a son of the *muţanoni*, having married a daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the next chief, was given half the district, the other half being ruled by the Ţalɛrwa head. By these arrangements the Ţalɛrwa line became *vamakhulu* of Malematsha, whose son succeeded to the whole area in 1895, when the Ţalɛrwa ruling family left as the result of famine. The Malematsha are *vaḋuhulu* of the royal Lovedu. At Bagoni, which was originally given by Mujaji I to her younger brother, Murwatsɛţa, there now rules Mukupi, daughter of Murwatsɛţa's son. Mukupi had been the wife of Mujaji II, but, as there was no living male heir, she was released by the queen so as to enable her to rule the area. The true heir, son of the girl whom Mukupi's brother, had he lived, would have married (for the girl was the brother's cattle-linked cross-cousin), is now about forty-five years of age. It is doubtful whether he will ever succeed, for Mukupi is an ambitious and important woman, a district head who, like the queen, has no legal husband, but several wives; she is related to the queen and her councillors in a dozen ways, the most important being that she is *mukhadi* of the queen and was wife of Mujaji II. Relɛla has a long history, but we need go no further back than the time when it was entrusted by Mujaji I to Mathogani, daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the chief, and *muţanoni* of Mujaji I. Mathogani married first Rampi and, after his death, Muhotɛla, Rampi's brother. Kwathi, son of the latter, who was given a *muţanoni* by Mujaji II, for reasons we need not here consider, usurped the headship. Segɛte is a district given by Mujaji II to her wife Makhivasɛ, who was daughter of a Venda chief, and, as Makhivasɛ had no issue, she was succeeded by her sister's son, the sister having married a direct male descendant of the elder brother of Mujaji I. This elder brother, Malegudu, had a daughter, Magɔvo, who became *muţanoni* of Mujaji II. Mujaji III made Magɔvo head of Maulwi, and Magɔvo's son, Mugɔdɔ, was the man who was chosen to raise the next heir to the throne. A son of Mugɔdɔ by his chief wife (not the queen) is now district head at Maulwi. These are but some of the cases, much simplified, that give us an idea of the manner in which districts originate and become linked up with the queen and the royal group.

634 The district is a political and a territorial unit, often very small in size,
571 and usually having a distinctive praise. The size varies from half a square
554 mile to nine square miles, the average in the congested reserve being under one square mile. Originally the districts were larger, but, as European occupation advanced, the old districts were divided and subdivided to make room for the heads that were ousted. The praises, already mentioned elsewhere, are generally praises of the group or subgroup of the head. At Maunadala, though he migrated from Naji, near Tzaneen in the south, to the tribal farm Khinobɛlwa to the north of Ŭulovedu, they still sing, 'Crocodile of Mugazi, outcast (*murɔka*) of the rain water,' because his people had no rain-making magic; when Mahubusana brings beer, the praise runs, 'At the kitchen-hut of Magwala of Khodini, where potatoes are eaten,' though Mahubusana now rules near the capital, having long ago left Khodini, to the south of Ŭulovedu;

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THE LOVEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. KRIGE

The World View of the Lovedu

101 THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

144 Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to
177 have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga
● 563 immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this
642 group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

231 Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the
241 South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pur-
231 suits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

[p. 55]

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1] The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
559 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[634] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1945 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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571 619 565 The first thing that strikes us is the large number of constituent groups in the tribe. Some of these groups are totemic, others are not, they come from all points of the compass. They are not clans in the accepted sense of the word and have no functions as such. They are so interwoven with the nuclear group, the Lovedu, and with one another, that it is not easy to disentangle them; they are usually interspersed with the general population, but, for one reason here and another there, they may be more or less concentrated in some part of the country. It is chiefly through the district organization that they become linked, upon the pattern of kinship, of marriage and bride-price, with the nuclear group. These groups are not arranged in any definite hierarchy of rank, though rank is of very great importance in the society. Yet there are distinctions between them: some are as honoured as the Lovedu themselves; some are regarded as rather of lower status, though intermarriage with them is not disapproved; others, mostly of non-Sotho origin, are despised and intermarriage with them is frowned upon.

[565] 621 571 613 This does not mean that there are institutionalized classes; there are no rigid lines cutting across the society, just as there are no definite functions that may be said to hold together these constituent groups. Functions of a political nature are bound up with the districts, not with the constituent groups as such; some religious and ritual functions are also bound up with the districts, but most of them (except those of national importance) are connected with kin groups, and this never means the whole constituent group and, indeed, usually not the lineage, but people from both sides of the family. Yet the lineage as a descent group has at least legal significance and to it are attached certain rights. On the whole, however, the lineages pale into significance beside the marriage or the bilateral kin groups. There is structural tension between the group which gives the brides and the group which gives the cattle; but one notices in ordinary life not so much the tension as the elaborate measures for maintaining good relations. Not only do the relations between these two groups obtrude themselves more prominently than those within the patrilineal lineages, but it is the main concern of judicial proceedings in the *khoro*, the most impressive feature of public life, to preserve harmony between them. There is ample reason for this emphasis because the whole social structure and, through it, the whole tribal system and the strongest bonds with the queen, depend upon the proper functioning of these groups. And these are again a part of, and supported by, the bilateral kin, who, with the cattle, the one relying on the other, constitute the ultimate basis of the social structure.

[561] 571 There are also age-groupings in the society. They have some wide integrating functions, but on the whole the organization into regiments is unimpressive and for national purposes of little value. The hierarchy of age plays a part of importance, however, as a regulative device; but it is not coincident with the hierarchy of rank and thus often occasions serious tensions in the social structure. Finally, we should remind the reader, though we cannot deal with them here, of groupings brought about by modern conditions. There is the more or less compact Christian group, with its divergent interests and loyalties, and the very scattered

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571 a person who, not merely when he has no legal father, takes the totem or
619 secondary name of another group. We can, therefore, make no off-hand deductions from the names. Identity or similarity of name may or may not imply similar ancestry. A positive assertion of similarity or identity based upon the similarity or identity of the descriptive name is not conclusive; it may merely reflect a present sense of being related, important in itself, but with no basis in history or fact. It is by no means easy to deal with a situation of such infinite complexity; and from our present point of view there is no need to do so. Except where the name is significant for some other purpose, not that of reckoning relationship as such, and except within the functioning unit, little attention is given to these names. For the purposes of rank within the tribe, against other tribal units, it is important to designate oneself, not Elephant or Lion, but Lovedu. But when we have said this as regards the general position, we have also, as in everything else, to begin pointing out exceptions.

571 An Elephant of Ravothaṭa has as such nothing in common with an
●565 Elephant, say, of Selowa. Their backgrounds, their origins, even their
619 customs, are conceived to be different. The Elephant of Ravothaṭa have come in recent years to tolerate the Elephant of Selowa; intermarriage is beginning to establish bonds, and common allegiance to the queen is breaking down the old barriers; yet on the whole an Elephant of Selowa is a *murska*, a person of the low country, not fit to aspire to such high positions in the tribe as the Elephants of Ravothaṭa. The *murska* is, however, much closer to the Ravothaṭa than the Shangana-Ṭonga Elephants; the latter are not unlike the lower classes, the dwellers in the slums, as compared with the aristocracy, among us. Through sagacity and some forms of achievement, they can rise in the scale, but as yet intermarriage is frowned upon and there are some strong barriers between them. What we wish to point out is that the Elephants of Ravothaṭa are far more closely associated with their immediate blood relatives and their relatives-in-law, whether they be Elephants or Lions or Pigs or what not, than with Elephants of Selowa or other Elephants, including far-off *varavothata*; and by far off we mean not merely any one of the sub-group within which kinship terms and behaviour obtain, but also any one of this lineage who lives far away or with whom there is no agreement. And yet there is something more to the matter. The history of the Ravothaṭa, their very early association with the royal group as messengers on the way from Rhodesia, the fact that since the earliest times their heads held an extensive district and still do, their prestige as makers of the skin of the sacred drums, all this and more places them in a special position. These things distinguish the Ravothaṭa as a group; they are like the crest of a noble family or like its traditions. They are scattered all over the tribe, it is true, and any ordinary member of the group would not presume to give himself airs because of the achievements of the past. They never act together, except within the limits of the interested family or lineage, just as happens anywhere else; yet there is some consciousness of belonging together, as indeed there is among families among us.

The same may be said of any other groups in Vulovedu. There are, for instance, the *vamavulana*, so closely linked to the royal group to-day

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that they are called the *kwɛvo* of Tshazi. Their history also dates back 571
to the earliest times, when they were Tshazi quite unrelated to the 565
kwɛvo. They are now and have been since the time of Khiali (*c.* 1740) 619
the great maternal uncles of the royal group. They have their distinctive
praise-titles and also a distinctive laudatory response. If one of the Mavulana 571
is called by his superior he answers by prefixing his words with the 565
praise *moni*. These laudatory responses (for which there is no generic 554
name) are found only among a few groups. The Ravothaṭa say *zemula*,
the Crocodiles of Vudupi *myagani*, the *kwɛvo mulemyazi*, the Dipanyika 619
nɛpya, some Venda (those from Twsale) *sigo*, the Khaḍa *khɛnɛlo*, and the
Lions of Magwale *maan*. This laudatory response honours both the
speaker and the person addressed; and it occurs sometimes in the great
praises of the group—for instance, 'Mavulana of Vutshazi! At Makhifaja,
the place of pasturing, we pasture our cattle in autumn; at Ḍaja it is that
the cattle graze in spring. We are *moni*.' A specific response does not,
however, belong to the whole group. You may hear a *kwɛvo* say *mule-
myazi*, but, after all, the Tswale also call themselves *kwɛvo*, and they say
sigo, while the Mahasha, who are *kwɛvo rathɔle*, may answer *mulovedu
rathɔle*, and a Crocodile of Vudupi, *vudupi vya mamyaka*.

The cluster, such as all the Pigs or all the Elephants, never has one common praise-title. One does not even find a common praise for many groups or sub-groups, such as the Crocodiles, say, of Vudupi; and the same is true of most of the groups. The members of some of the groups and sub-groups use common praise-titles, but the really live praises, those that stir people and stand as a symbol of their unity, are the district praises. They are taught in the *vyali* initiation and are sung when beer is brought by the district to the queen. The district praise may or may not coincide with the praise of the sub-group or lineage of the head of the district. The Mudiga of Madumani, for instance, one of the sub-groups of the Mudiga, identify themselves closely with the royal group, but their distinctive praise-title refers to the mountain of their district, just as the distinctive praise of the Mudiga of Mareroni, another district, refers to the place name as well as to a forebear to whom the district was originally given. In addition, both Madumani and Mareroni have the old Mudiga praise, 'You are hemmed in [by lions]' (*le a digwa*). The local district praise is far more alive than the group or sub-group praise, if it exists at all, in the case of people living in the district who are not Mudiga, but Crocodiles or Elephants or Lions and so on. It is thus far more usually a locality than a group praise, though, with regard to the people of the lineage of the head, it often is both. The exquisite poetry of these praise-names cannot easily be rendered in English, '*Vuuga vya uuga bula ea na*', the praise of Levibi, we may translate as 'When it thunders at Vuuga, the rain rains', but we cannot recapture the rumbling of the *u*'s nor the pattering of the *a*'s.

Let us look more closely at the Crocodiles. They are by no means 571
a real group at all. At Matsui, where one of them is a district head, they 619
are very closely linked to the royal nucleus; the mother of Matsui was a relative of Mamujaji the mother of the first Mujaji, and it is at Matsui that the cow Mamujaji, belonging to the head of the district, is dedicated

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643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men, and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
588 or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to
644 be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the
• [565] village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the
[184] throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's
[771] mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage,

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Monealo a o fede*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tsetse* (or *mudubulu*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*mudubulu*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

.2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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231 young goat, 'the payment of the herding', to-day, even if the goats have
465 not prospered, because herdboys are no longer willing to work for nothing. Moreover, the *mufimu* of cattle is nowadays asked to help the owner with his ploughing and he often (illegally, by traditional standards) charges herding and grazing fees. This charge is levied on the model of European farmers and is exacted even in areas within the reserve, where grazing fees are unknown. *Hu fise* differs from *hu disija* (to cause to graze), an arrangement whereby one man allows another's cattle to run with his own, usually because he has no herdboy; for this no consideration passes.

461 Service, just like the various forms of co-operation, thus hardly ever implies subservience. Where it does, as in the old *hu fuja* or in the various modern forms of service, its incidents are regarded as derogatory, because they are incongruent with the emphasis on reciprocity. Even
● 567 *vuthobya* (slavery), which arises from captivity and was practically unknown, implies no real bondage. There is to-day still one 'slave', an old Shangana-Tonga woman captured, not by the Lovedu, but by the Shangana-Tonga, who sent her as tribute for rain to Mujaji. The institution of slavery is unknown among the Lovedu; so she, just like other wives of the queen, was handed over to one of the nobles, who accepted her as a daughter. As we have mentioned, there is a tendency to adopt European patterns of labour, both in the more or less solitary and in the co-operative activities.

166 The most important change is the migration to towns and farms in
464 search of cash wages. The cash amount that enters the tribe, as compared with the total income of an average family, is small, not more than 7 per cent. The effects of the migration itself are proportionately small. It is not so much the absence in town of the men nor even the ideas that they bring back with them that are of the first importance. More men, not less, are idle to-day, and more crops, not less, are reaped than in the old days. Moreover, what the men have learnt in the towns is on the whole so different from the practice at home that it has to be laid aside. The greatest changes are not the direct introductions by these men, but the indirect reactions to the rule and the economy of the white man. Many of these reactions are unintelligible in relation to local conditions; they have spread from the highveld. We are concerned at present only with changes in the outlook towards economic arrangements. At first sight they appear to be very great, but the longer one looks the more superficial they appear and the firmer the old foundations stand out. The Christians
[184] are a notable exception, not because they migrate more to the towns (on the whole the difference is negligible), but because, orientating themselves from an anti-tribal angle, they have eagerly accepted whatever differentiates them from their heathen brothers. They are competitive and money-conscious; they exploit their brothers.

For purposes of comparison, we may briefly consider two areas: A, with a population of 822, and B, with a population of 610. The census in A was taken in April, 1936, of B in April, 1937, the seasons 1936 and 1937 not being significantly different. A is 40 per cent. Christian and on the whole Christian standards of living prevail; B is 16 per cent. Christian

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482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping
[262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-
576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are
[263] cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson; their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside
431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks
603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done
551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' (*'U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinowyana a jia dithɔhɔ a fa vanimana'*). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lemei la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled *njugo* beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khɔvɔ*, the three men of the village are sitting by their
521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khɔvɔ*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies
to roast

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to roast. 'Let's ask riddles,' intervenes Khiebe. 'Here's one: Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree (*thaiii*), the witches are dancing on the thorns.' 'Stupid,' scornfully rejoins Mudumi. 'We all know that one. Hailstones, of course, for they bounce as they fall on the grass.' After pondering a moment he challenges: '*Thaiii*, the ox of my father has entered the pool, I remain holding its tail.' Roars of derision issue from the rest, 'A porridge-twirler,' they answer almost all together. The spiked head of a twirler is like the horns of an ox; it is thrust into the pot of water, while one holds it by its handle. 'Here's something you don't know,' comes from Mudumpani. '*Thaiii*, the nest of the water bird hangs down over the pool.' The company is silent, then there are some guesses, but it is beyond them, and they give it up. 'The eyelashes, of course,' says Mudumpani, 'because they hang over one's eyes.' Once the ball starts rolling, riddles follow one another in rapid succession. 'The babbling of a brook' turns out to be a calabash cup, for down its long handle beer gurgles as you drink; 'They always stand looking at each other' are the doorposts of a hut; and 'The chief entering the crimson (muddy) pool' is sunset. It is impossible to capture the poetry of these riddles; you cannot render their alliteration or play upon words in English. But it is clear that these youngsters are well versed in them. The time when riddles are most popular is, however, when a wedding party is present and the young people have to entertain them in their hut. On such an occasion riddles provide a mild form of competition between the two parties, that of the bride and that of the groom.

The men have retired to their huts, whence they will not reappear. The women have eaten the evening meal informally round the fires and are just chatting. In a hut three girls are sitting by candlelight, one of them, who has been to school, writing a love-letter for her friend to her lover in town. 'Why are you throwing me over?' she asks. 'Why don't you write? Please send me a nice cloth and a blanket, but not one like that which you gave your wife!' In another hut some children have persuaded Mamujaji, an elderly woman, to tell them tales. She begins, '*Dgano-Dgano* (a story, a story).' They reply, '*Dgano*.' 'Once upon a time,' she continues, but before she gets further they again interject, '*Dgano*.' Then she goes on, 'There lived a boy who had sores all over his body.' '*Dgano*,' they repeat whenever the speaker hesitates or takes breath. 'One day when the girls went to fetch grass. . . .' This is the beginning of a story about a bird who gives away the girls who kill the boy. A marked characteristic is the frequent occurrence of a song and refrain, during the telling of the tale, in this case, '*Phogu, Phogu ya Dzowa*, &c. ('Bird, bird of the south'), so that what with the interjections and singing of the chorus of the refrain, the listeners appear to take as active a part in the story as the narrator herself. At the end of each tale there is a long-drawn-out '*Dgaaaaa*' and all spit into the fire. In the small villages of to-day story-telling has almost completely died out. Where there are only one or two present a story loses most of its charm, and there are many young men and women who know practically no stories, more particularly among Christians, whose parents prefer them to learn their lessons rather than tell them stories.

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CHAPTER IV

CO-OPERATION AND EXCHANGE

Arrangements of and changes in the work-party, partnerships, and solitary occupations—relative roles of economic and goodwill exchanges—beer, dances and bride-price as vehicles of reciprocal exchanges—aversion from business.

181 To convert to his use the material resources upon which man relies for subsistence, some organization of labour is necessary; man must co-ordinate his energies with those of his fellow man. He must co-operate with some and he may consider himself as a competitor of others. The Lovedu is an individualist, but life is hardly regarded as a competitive struggle, even in respect of the things that are limited in supply. Men aim, not so much at achievement and riches, as at maturity and self-sufficiency. There is no single scale of attainments by which men measure themselves against one another. Moderate success is credited to industry, but immoderate success may be suspect; he who reaps much more than his neighbours is in danger of being looked upon as an enemy in league with anti-social forces. The Lovedu do not display either their emotions or their possessions; ostentation is appropriate only to states of exhilaration. Self-expression finds its legitimate scope, not in worsting a rival, but in a gradually expanding responsibility and prestige. The society has a hierarchical framework so constructed that rank and age interpose themselves between possible competitors This does not mean that there is no competition, but the great emphasis is upon co-operation.

476 The two methods by which men pool their resources in order to provide for their primary needs are working together in mutual helpfulness and exchanging the products of their labour. Co-operative working together arises chiefly in agricultural and building activities, where its main purpose is easily intelligible; exchanges are not felt to bear such a direct relation to the differentiated needs and activities of men. Yet fundamentally co-operation and exchange are part of the same system of values. Mutual helpfulness is highly esteemed and aggressive exploitation deeply despised. In the co-operative situation these values are intrinsically present; but the exchange situation must be reconstituted to bring it into harmony with them. The problem in co-operative situations is to harmonize with them the individualism of the peasant; the problem of exchange situations is to eliminate the idea of a commercial transaction; and in both types of situations this is done by the stress upon reciprocity. The purely economic aspect tends to become wholly obscured, except in modern forms of co-operation and exchange. In them the helper becomes a servant and exchanges become 'bizniss' (business). Service and 'bizniss' are tolerated only so far as they conform to the old pattern and values.

176 The *lejoma*, which is the most distinctive form of co-operative work,
571 consists of a more or less casual group of workers. Neighbours, relatives,

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and friends—indeed anyone—may join the group and help in the task, usually agricultural, which is being performed. But the group that collects for the occasion is not wholly fortuitous; relatives and neighbours always predominate. There is no elaborate pre-arrangement. The *lejema*-giver usually announces his *lejema* beforehand and invites some people to come. Women, who brew the beer, usually organize more than men, some of whom rely on those they can collect on their way down to the field that is to be hoed or weeded or reaped. People who are invited are not bound to give an excuse for not coming; it is far more usual to promise to come and not to come than to give an excuse which, whatever it is, can hardly be valid in a society where people are not considered to be bound by time or by their previous engagements. Moreover, the beer for the *lejema* may not yet have matured on the day fixed by the *lejema*-giver. People may have come from long distances, but they will not be annoyed; there is sure to be a beer party in progress quite near. On the other hand, the *lejema*-giver will not complain if those who promised to come do not put in an appearance, for he knows that since 'the far-off well causes thirst', it is better to drink by the way.

Often, though the beer may be ready, no work is possible on the day. The weather may be unpropitious, some important event may require rearrangement of the activities of the day, or sometimes work may be taboo because of a death or hail or the first rain after a period of drought. In these circumstances, the beer must nevertheless be consumed; it is not something that can await the convenience of man. And to those who partake, it is announced that the *lejema* has been converted into a *phodwa*—that is to say, the drinkers are not mere drinkers, but a potential labour force that may be expected to do a day's work at some future date. The arrangement is so vague that we cannot fit it into any of our conceptions, such as a promise to perform or a right to demand the labour. The *lejema*-giver may, if he has a good supply of corn, give beer again when he calls those who previously drank of the *phodwa*. A *phodwa* is essentially a pre-arranged *lejema* which has miscarried; but it may be fortuitous—for instance, when one has to kill a pig against which neighbours have complained. A social occasion at which one gives beer cannot be converted into a *phodwa*. Sometimes, when supplies are low or for other reasons no beer can be provided, a man invites a group of people to work for him in anticipation of a beer party, also called a *phodwa*, at a future date. But only very special circumstances justify these departures from the *lejema*.

According to our standards, activities at a *lejema* appear to be very haphazard and unorganized. Each member of the group contributes to one end, the execution of the task which is to benefit the *lejema*-giver; but the effort of each worker is not individually assessed; some may turn up when the work begins, others join in much later, even perhaps just before the workers prepare to go home. The work proceeds in a leisurely manner, without undue exertion; no special achievement is expected from any one and the organization is such that the most inexperienced and dilatory can keep pace with the most efficient. Efficiency is as little a matter for comment as inefficiency. There is no rivalry, no spirit of

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476 calculation, no supervision. The adjustments in the situation rely upon
571 no pre-organization; there is practically no leadership or direction; and
461 yet an effective interaction is attained. The total pattern is a part of the social system; it is not as if two or more people have casually encountered one another and have by trial and error to discover how to co-operate
[184] effectively in performing the task. Christians, whose standards of organization, performance, and efficiency are derived from those of the white man, attempt to submit the workers to discipline. They sometimes constitute themselves as foremen, they attempt to apply the available energy systematically, they have a system of rewards and penalties. The result is, not co-operation, but service; there are few, if any, songs and the occasion is no longer a gala social event.

The workers at a *lejema* usually adjourn after one and a half or two hours to refresh themselves at about 11 a.m., when a pot of beer, euphemistically called 'the knife-sharpener', is brought to the field. The interval is of indefinite duration and is so much out of harmony with modern ideas, that 'the knife-sharpener' is often regarded with disfavour; instead of sharpening, it blunts the edge of activity in the modern situation, in which the *lejema*-giver thinks of himself as an employer and the workers are concerned to avoid being exploited. Neither employer nor employee is equipped by his background of culture and training to achieve success in these new roles; and the result is that tensions arise. Fortunately, however, the *lejema* is still overwhelmingly a collective social event. There is as yet no need to buoy up labour with dignity and moral worth; it is sufficient to submerge it in the sociability of beer. For the real nature of the *lejema* appears when the workers go to the home of the *lejema*-giver. The situation there instantly dispels any preconception
[574] we may have of special rewards for the workers. There are visitors, dubbed *vahobedi* (solicitants) and as such are distinguished from the *vashumi* (workers). In our society they would be called 'gate-crashers' or 'beggars', but they are not in needy circumstances and do not ask for favours; they are entitled to join in. Individually they not only imbibe calabash for calabash with the workers, but far outnumber them, not unusually by as much as four or five to one.

[735] To judge the situation correctly, we must remember that begging, one of the traits of the Lovedu we might regard as most irritating, is not socially disapproved. He who has and does not give is the offender, not he who asks for what he needs. The case is different, however, when the beggar is a loafer and sponger, roaming about in search of beer without doing any work; and if, as is not unlikely, he is disliked, his presence during the exhilaration caused by the beer is liable to cause a breach of the peace and he might be turned away. Generally speaking, *vashumi* are not given special beer; the beer is not a reward for their services, but a feast transforming work into recreation and reflecting the emphasis upon liberality. To-day the *vahobedi* are sometimes looked upon as parasitic beggars, and measures are taken to reconstitute the *lejema* so as to make it a more economical method of co-operation. Fundamentally, all the arduous work is still done by *lejema*, though every one knows that, for, say, 4*s*. worth of salt, more workers could be obtained and better

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work accomplished than if one had beer made at the cost of 10s. worth of corn, not to mention the time, labour, and firewood that is consumed in preparing the beer. The motive is, however, not economic but social. *Majema* are used, not for long and difficult tasks only, but also for light work, which a man can easily do himself without help. The aim in these cases is not so much to complete the work quickly—time is rarely a matter of importance—as to be credited with generous impulses and to have a pleasant social event. Christians, with their more Europeanized outlook, averse from the waste entailed, and fearing excommunication by the Church, which prohibits beer, nevertheless find it hard not to conform to this custom.

Another form of co-operation is the *khilcbc* (*jcbc*, a hoe). Uncommon to-day in its original form, it has its essentials preserved in ploughing partnerships, the so-called 'stock fair' in towns and particularly in the collective agricultural work of young girls. The co-operating group, defined by convenience and proximity of domicile, is largely a local one and consists mainly of close relatives, both on the mother's and on the father's side. The group is still comparatively stable, as it was in the old days, when it had its basis in common interests and common needs. Its members collectively reaped or weeded or hoed one another's fields, completing one field and then going to the next, and each arranged about his own food. Kin or neighbours had their lands closer together and less split up than to-day; they started their various tasks at much the same time; there was safety in concentration, and economy in co-operation. The great distinction between *khilcbc* and *lejema* was and still is that no beer is provided; but, as in the *lejema*, the *khilcbc* partnership lessened the monotony of arduous work and mobilized energies and incentives. As the group was smaller and more closely khit, relied more tangibly upon reciprocity and had more elements of continuity, the stimulus of beer was not necessary to hold it together. Each partner remained an individualist, for the crops were not shared; but each realized the value of mutual helpfulness and the necessity of minimizing the self in relation to the ends of others.

To-day the conditions of the operation of the *khilcbc* no longer exist in their old form. Fields have become split up; the old dangers are no more; the plough has vastly decreased man's dependence upon the help of his kin or his neighbour. Though it was perhaps the most potent agent of destruction of the old *khilcbc*, the plough has become the centre of the new. The household, which is the economic unit, hardly ever has ploughs, animals, and workers all available at the same time; only 30 per cent. of such units possess ploughs and only 15 per cent. have cattle or donkeys. Thus cultivation calls for some form of co-operation, and the form which was familiar was the *khilcbc*. There are new elements in the situation, but their co-ordination was effected by drawing upon pre-existing patterns of co-operation. Typically the *khilcbc* in ploughing consists of four partners, representing four economic units: one supplies the animals, a second the plough, the third some of the workers, and the fourth the herdboy, who looks after the cattle during the year and might wield the whip or plant behind the plough. The emphasis

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476 is upon the sharing of tools rather than upon that sharing of services
571 which characterized the old *khilcbc*. But in the old institution hoes were
241 borrowed from one another and the differentiation of to-day was not unknown, though it took a different form. The organization implies a person-to-person adjustment rather than institutionalized leadership, except that he who provides the animals sometimes tends to dictate whose lands have first to be ploughed. No payment passes, however unequal the contributions or needs of the partners, and sometimes an old widow is a partner who can contribute nothing at all. The essence of the whole institution is a complete disregard of the exact equivalences of the contributions or of the services.

476 This form of co-operation, in which mutual helpfulness and reciprocity
571 and not economic advantage are stressed, finds expression in many activities. Among Christians there are potters who club together; usually they are kin who live in the same settlement. The only work they share is the excavation of the clay; each works quite independently of the other, though advice is exchanged. Men often build *ga khilcbc* instead of *ga lejema*, but in this case the association is a very loose one, consisting merely of the available friends or relatives in or near the village; and though some small gift is given by the owner of the hut built, the main feature of the co-operation is a sense of mutuality and reciprocity. The conception of mutual helpfulness recedes before that of profit when, as is becoming more common, the person for whom the work is done pays a reward in money. Curious anomalies occur, because sometimes less, sometimes more, consideration is given to the exact money equivalence of the services rendered. Where a man considers that he is paying wages for services, he usually models his behaviour upon his conception of the European employer and the whole pattern of reciprocity falls to the ground. But this model is very unpopular, though for the employer it has distinct advantages; as he contracts for the labour, he can requisition it when he wants it and can control its execution. He is no longer an equal partner, but a foreman.

One development of the *khilcbc* which is seen in townships is the 'stock fair'. It is practicable only where each of the partners periodically receives cash wages. Every month one of the partners, taken in rotation, is entitled to a fixed amount from each of the others, the purpose being to make available to every one in turn a fairly large sum of money. Though the partners wear some distinctive dress, the association is very unstable and many as a result suffer loss. The 'stock fair', far though it be removed from the *khilcbc*, is thus based on a generalization from past experience in which social ends are attained by the application of rule-of-thumb principles, with little resort to trial and error and little dependence on organizing ability or on individual leadership.

357 With the various forms of co-operation, we may briefly contrast solitary occupations and services. It is somewhat unusual for any one alone to undertake a large task, and among heathens it is rarer still for an
357 individual to hire out his services. There is no real domestic service;
736 even in the royal household, *vulada* is very different from service in our sense of the term. The *mulada*, usually an orphan, is the ward of his

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CHAPTER VI

SOME SOCIAL GROUPINGS

Groups in the tribe—analysis of the groups of a district—character, divisions, and subdivisions of groups—the patrilineal lineage as the core of co-residence—marriage groups, age sets, and regimentation.

THE Lovedu tribe is not, in the main, a body of kinsmen tracing descent from a single far-off ancestor. The nuclear or royal group are the Lovedu proper. They are, strictly speaking, *kwevo*, though you will very rarely hear this word, because it and its praise-title are associated with *hu kwevva*, to elongate the *labia minora*. Ignoring popular usage and Lovedu sensitiveness, we may still call them *kwevo*, leaving to posterity to decide whether the name will survive or be lost in oblivion. This nuclear group, the *kwevo*, constitutes no more than 10 per cent. of the tribe; or, in other words, only one person in every ten bears the nuclear group name, *kwevo*, which we must think of as a patrilineal descent name, not unlike such oft-recurring surnames as Jones or Smith among us. There are numerous other group names and people bearing different names of this kind may be regarded as having originally been unrelated. They constitute over 90 per cent. of the tribe.

It is obvious that in these circumstances very strong bonds must exist to maintain the allegiance of the non-related groups, just as, among us, a vast network of institutions, of interlinked organizational systems, ramifying throughout the society, exists side by side with common sentiments of loyalty and of solidarity. But the interlinking machinery is very different from ours, and neither nationalism nor ideology is important as unifying sentiments or principles. There are important structural links which, on the one hand, form part of the social system and on the other are intimately bound up with the political system; and in this way both kinship and *munywalo*, or bride-price, are used to strengthen the solidarity of the tribe as a unit. These links are discussed elsewhere. They make good the absence of the bonds between the nuclear ruling group and the other groups. There are, for instance, the fundamental reliance upon the rain-making powers of the queen, the periodical tribute to the queen by the districts, and the national organization of some of the 'schools'. In this chapter we are concerned to point out some of the social groupings in relation to one another and to the solidarity of the tribe. The great work they have to do in the society will be realized when we remember how complicated and all-pervasive in our society are the links which unite us to one another and to the state. The work is all the greater in a society in which the language is the language of a group larger than the tribe, the historical background and traditions are not uniform, but diverse, governmental machinery is incipient and hardly impinges upon the subject, and there cannot be said to be much organization of common interests and ideals.

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571 619 565 The first thing that strikes us is the large number of constituent groups in the tribe. Some of these groups are totemic, others are not, they come from all points of the compass. They are not clans in the accepted sense of the word and have no functions as such. They are so interwoven with the nuclear group, the Lovedu, and with one another, that it is not easy to disentangle them; they are usually interspersed with the general population, but, for one reason here and another there, they may be more or less concentrated in some part of the country. It is chiefly through the district organization that they become linked, upon the pattern of kinship, of marriage and bride-price, with the nuclear group. These groups are not arranged in any definite hierarchy of rank, though rank is of very great importance in the society. Yet there are distinctions between them: some are as honoured as the Lovedu themselves; some are regarded as rather of lower status, though intermarriage with them is not disapproved; others, mostly of non-Sotho origin, are despised and intermarriage with them is frowned upon.

[565] 621 571 613 This does not mean that there are institutionalized classes; there are no rigid lines cutting across the society, just as there are no definite functions that may be said to hold together these constituent groups. Functions of a political nature are bound up with the districts, not with the constituent groups as such; some religious and ritual functions are also bound up with the districts, but most of them (except those of national importance) are connected with kin groups, and this never means the whole constituent group and, indeed, usually not the lineage, but people from both sides of the family. Yet the lineage as a descent group has at least legal significance and to it are attached certain rights. On the whole, however, the lineages pale into significance beside the marriage or the bilateral kin groups. There is structural tension between the group which gives the brides and the group which gives the cattle; but one notices in ordinary life not so much the tension as the elaborate measures for maintaining good relations. Not only do the relations between these two groups obtrude themselves more prominently than those within the patrilineal lineages, but it is the main concern of judicial proceedings in the *khoro*, the most impressive feature of public life, to preserve harmony between them. There is ample reason for this emphasis because the whole social structure and, through it, the whole tribal system and the strongest bonds with the queen, depend upon the proper functioning of these groups. And these are again a part of, and supported by, the bilateral kin, who, with the cattle, the one relying on the other, constitute the ultimate basis of the social structure.

[561] 571 There are also age-groupings in the society. They have some wide integrating functions, but on the whole the organization into regiments is unimpressive and for national purposes of little value. The hierarchy of age plays a part of importance, however, as a regulative device; but it is not coincident with the hierarchy of rank and thus often occasions serious tensions in the social structure. Finally, we should remind the reader, though we cannot deal with them here, of groupings brought about by modern conditions. There is the more or less compact Christian group, with its divergent interests and loyalties, and the very scattered

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group of sophisticated men who, influenced by their experiences of European town life, have acquired values and needs disruptive of the old alinements. They have already come to our notice. But if we deal with them, we must also discuss the disturbances in the old settled spheres of men as distinguished from women. For this and for any elaboration of the manifold aspects of the various social groupings touched upon in this chapter we have no room. It will be sufficient to draw attention to a few points only.

Let us look briefly at the tribe as a whole. We shall obtain some impression of its constituent elements by merely listing the group names of the various district heads. For the moment it is sufficient to accept this name as a kind of distinctive designation; it may be the name of a totem or a place, of a dynasty or a tribe. Within the effective jurisdiction of the queen, which extends considerably beyond the reserve and the tribal farms, the following group names of district heads are found: thirty-four district heads bearing the name *kwɛvo Muhale*, or the name of the royal group; sixteen Elephants, mostly of very different ancestries and very divergent places of origin; nine *kwɛvo raudigwa* or *vamudiga*; fifteen *kwɛvo rathɔle* or *vamahasha*, both spoken of as 'brothers' of the royal group, and also four *kwɛvo mutshazi* or *vamavulana* not originally related but now the great maternal uncles of the queen's group; eleven Crocodiles, mostly from the west, but some with secondary designations indicating probable diverse ancestries; thirteen Venda, some with, some without totems, some from as near as Tswale, others from as far as Mpefu; five Lions whose interrelations, if they exist at all (coming as they do from such different directions and at such different times), are wholly obscure and lost in oblivion; and besides these, smaller numbers of Leba, those curious kosher-killing, exclusive wanderers with their moon ritual from the north, of Wild Dogs from the highveld, Khalaga and Dibanyika from Rhodesia, of Shangana-Tonga of various branches of that great group of peoples whose tenure of headship is only half recognized, of Koni who, in proportion to their numbers, hold very few districts, not to mention Ramafalo, who is a Pig of Luɔdɛ, one *kwɛvo madavele*, a few Sia of Levia, and several sub-heads under the *vamamadeba* who are descended from Mugɔdɔ, the last of the Lovedu kings.

It is not to be thought that the relative number of heads of this or that constituent group in any way reflects the number of people of that group in the tribe. There is, for instance, a considerable population of Porcupines, of Impalas, of Mbɛzi, of Goats, but there are no district heads of these groups or clusters. Nor must we conceive of these groups as entities having something more in common than their name and, where it has not been lost in oblivion, a background of history and tradition. There is no solidarity between their members. Where some of them live together in a district, it is their relationship to the head or the emphasis upon the common life of the territorial unit that holds them together rather than any conception of a link with a far-off ancestor or of a mystical bond with their totem. They are said to swear (*ku ana*) by their totem, which is sometimes called *mayano* (what is sworn by), sometimes *mutupo* (what is grouped together)—these two words are occasionally sharply

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571 622 619 distinguished, but more often, especially among the common people, they are identified or hopelessly confused. But if to swear by one's totem means something in some cases and among some groups, it usually signifies as little as when we swear by Jupiter.

571 49 Before embarking upon a further elucidation of these names, let us look more closely at an area in Ɓulovedu so as to obtain a better idea of the distribution and nature of these constituent groups. We select an area towards the south-west, of about four square miles, because if we go to the centre we shall obtain an exaggerated impression of the proportion of *kwevo*, the royal group, whereas in the extreme north we may well think that we are in a tribe of Shangana-Ʈonga.

[161] In this area, which has a population of about 830 people, there are, counting the group names of both men and women, Elephants, Cattle, Crocodiles, Leopards, Porcupines, Goats, Lions, Pigs, Duikers, Impala, Wild Dogs, Khalaga and Sia without totem, besides a fair sprinkling of Shangana-Ʈonga and even people using the name Zimbabwe. There are two individuals calling themselves Oorlams, one Bush and one Kapa (Cape coloured), which is most unusual and does not reflect the position in the tribe as a whole. There are, finally, some whom we must merely designate Venda because, as they say, they swear by no animal or object and they do not know to what Venda group they belong. That is not the end of the matter, for in the Elephants (*ɖou*) cluster there are fifteen different groups. Some of them may be remotely related, but they distinguish themselves by different secondary names and know of no common ancestry or of any links in the past; indeed, as they come from very different parts, they positively deny a common origin. For instance, there are *ɖou* of Khalaga, recent-comers from Rhodesia, *ɖou* of Tsubye, far away to the south-east near Phalaborwa, *ɖou* of Thovolo in the Game Reserve to the north-east, *ɖou* of Ravothata, the messengers, it is said, of the royal group when they migrated from Rhodesia, *ɖou* of Sefareni, whose nearest relatives are in Nareni (Mahlo) country. Similarly, there are ten different groups of Lions: some, like the Khioga, were the aboriginal inhabitants, who are said to have known no fire and no political organization, and were ousted by the Lovedu; others, like those of Selowa, come from the far east with the cult of the possessed, which they might have adopted from the Ndau in Portuguese Moçambique, and still others hail from Vendaland and Ɓuɖokwa. There are likewise clusters of Crocodiles with four, of Duikers with four, of Pigs, Khalaga, Sia, Impala and Wild Dogs, each with two different secondary designations (division or group names). Among the Shangana-Ʈonga, though they are comparatively few in number, there are no less than four different totems and nine different other names (*shibongo*), such as Loyi, Khosa, Mavunda, Mathie and Ngoveni. Reckoning all the differently named groups as distinct, we have over sixty such groups in this area alone.

The following table gives a rough representation of the position in the area in question:

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PEOPLE IN AN AREA OF FOUR SQUARE MILES, WITH A POPULATION OF *c.* 830

Cluster	Percent. of Population	No of Groups	Remarks
1. Elephant	14	15	Groups very divergent as to tribe (including Sotho, Venda, Khalaga, Leba—Shangana-Ʈonga. Elephants are enumerated under 7, below), place of origin and time of immigration. Majority of groups reducible probably to common, very far back, but now forgotten ancestor. A fortuitous cluster.
2. Khalaga	14	2	No animal or object of reverence. Mostly recent-comers and directly from the north. Interrelations obscure, but some appear to be Sothoized Shangana-Ʈonga or Nyai.
3. Pig	11·8	2	One of the groups, the *kwɛvo*, is of the royal nucleus and has further subdivisions; the other is from Mamavolo, a tribe which split from the Lovedu about 250 years ago. The two groups no longer acknowledge relationship. A genetic cluster.
4. Lion	11·8	10	Groups very divergent as to tribe (Sotho, Venda, Khɔga) and time of immigration. Some are aboriginal and were thinly scattered over a wide area, and their common ancestor, if any, has been forgotten; these aborigines cannot even remotely be linked with recent-comers from the north (Ʊirwa), from the east (Thɔvolɔ) and from the south (Pedi). A fortuitous cluster.
5. Porcupine	11·2	2	Said to be distinct from one another, coming at very different times from Phalavorwa and from Thavina; the connexion between them, if any, is obscure and is denied.
6. Duiker	8	4	These are all Koni and the secondary designation refers to four tribes (Khaha of Maupa, Maake, and Mamija, all of whom are Koni, and the Letswalo). A genetic cluster.
7. Shangana-Ʈonga	8·3	13	Four are totemic, totems being borrowed from the Sotho; the rest have retained their *shibɔngɔ*. Some came before the great migration, 1840–94; others as part of it. Still call themselves Ʈonga, but come from very different parts of Ʈongaland.

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Cluster	Per cent. of Population	No. of Groups	Remarks
8. Crocodile	6·9	4	Groups are reducible probably to two genetic clusters, the Kwena of Dudupi, who are Ngwato from Bechuanaland, and the Kwena from Khimosa in the east near the Game Reserve.
9. Mbezi	3·5	1	People from East Vendaland, who are probably Nyai. All river animals are taboo to them.
10. Cattle	3·2	1	All from Nareni originally and largely as a result of the transportation of the Letswalo in 1894. But some came later.
11. Goat	3·0	1	All Venda, i.e. of the Kwinde group. Have lost the Venda observance of peeling the skin off the goat's tail before killing, which is still practised by the Tswale tribe near by.
12. Impala	2·4	2	Some of them are from the north, some from the east. The Lovedu are sometimes also called *phala*, but the true significance of that is obscure. *Phala* in the east (Phalaborwa) are regarded as having had no fire, and were ousted by fire.
13. Sia	1·3	2	Appear to have been neighbours of the Lovedu since very early times, living to the north of them. Some come from the Mashau (Venda); others from Molepo. Affinities obscure.
14. Venda	0·4	1	Venda who cannot trace their origin or ancestry to any definite group; not all related.
15. Zimbabwe	0·3	1	People from the north; they also call themselves Khalaga. Do not know the Zimbabwe ruins.
16. Wild Dog	0·2	2	Probably these two groups are related, but the relationship is not recognized; all we can say is that they are Sotho.
17. Leopard	0·2	1	Recent-comers from the highveld (Dokwa).

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Cluster	Per cent. of Population	No. of Groups	Remarks
18. Bush	0·2	1	Said to be Vaalpens; a mixture of Bush and Bantu. From the towns.
19. Kapa and Oorlam	0·2	1	Cape coloured. The word 'Oorlam' has a special connotation, implying sophistication. From town.
20. Springbok	0·1	1	Origin obscure; come from Phalaborwa.
Total	100·0	67	

This is the position in a single area. It is somewhat more complicated in the tribe as a whole; we certainly would not like to say how many clusters, groups, and sub-groups are to be found; and as for disentangling their origins and histories, and linking them up with common ancestors, that is a task which, if it can be successfully undertaken at all, will require infinite labour and extensive research. For our present purpose, it will be sufficient to indicate the nature of these groups. And let us first consider the nuclear group.

If you ask a Lovedu what his *mutupo* (group name) is, he might say *kwɛvo*; some, however, will say Wild Pig (*golovɛ*). But upon closer examination it will be found that *golovɛ* is really the *muyano*, though this is not a word that many of the other groups use. Certainly the name *golovɛ* includes, not only the royal group, but also groups in several other tribes: Mamaila, Sekhɔpɔ, and Rakwadu are also Pigs of Muhale. The Pigs of Luɔde, the Ramafalo, are associated with the Venda, though there are many in Ʊulovedu and since long ago some of the important national doctors assisting with the initiation 'schools' have come from this group. The Ramafalo are not regarded as being of the same group as the royal group, but they are nearer to it than the Mamavolo, Pigs of Maḍaji, who live on the highveld and with whom all, except the very oldest men and women, strenuously deny any relationship whatever. There is certainly nothing in common between the Pigs of Muhale and the Pigs of Maḍaji; even their customs and institutions differ more widely than those of the Lovedu do from such unrelated neighbours as the Khaha or the Nareni. There are quite a number of Pigs of Maḍaji, especially in the south-western districts of Ʊulovedu, and they are, of course, also scattered among many other tribes.

There are no all-pervasive bonds between these scattered *golovɛ* people; there are merely bonds within the families and lineages of which they are made up. With their relatives in Ʊulovedu, who are not Pigs at all, their bonds are much closer than with people of the group name who fall outside the kin. If, again, we consider the Pigs of Muhale, we shall find that the relationship between their branches Mamaila, Rakwadu, and Sekhɔpɔ, on the one hand, and the royal group in Ʊulovedu, on the

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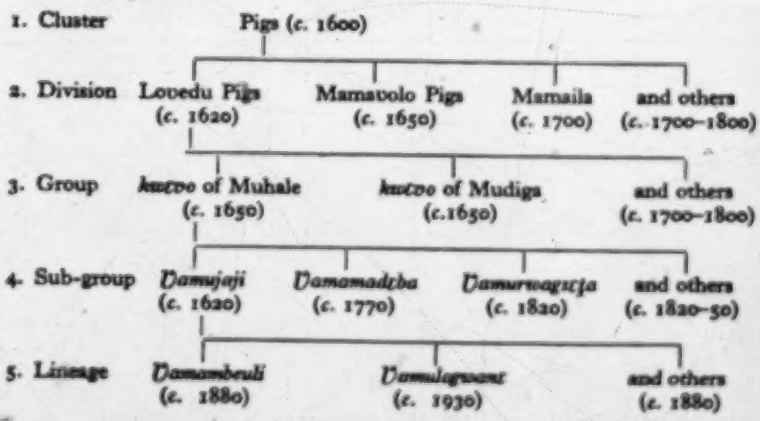
other, is hardly a close one; it is certainly not as close as that between the groups, the Mudiga, the Mahasha, and the royal family, which came into existence long before the Rakwadu and Sekhopo broke away. The Mudiga and the Mahasha are not clans; they have the same *mutupo* and *muyano* as the royal group, but each has his own distinctive praise (*khirtdo*), though there are also distinctive praises of still further subdivisions, the sub-groups, especially when a member of such sub-group is a district head.

The process of division and subdivision can be traced back to the very earliest times; but there are specific periods when the tendency towards division was specially marked, often coinciding with national crises, the parcelling out of new districts to relatives of the royal group, or the emergence of outstanding personalities. To-day in the royal family it is curious to observe how some of the sons of the queen's deceased brother say they are Mulogwane, others that they are Mujaji. They have strenuous arguments about the matter, as they are not quite sure whether the new designation is in imitation of surnames among Christians or in accordance with precedents of the past.

To sum up the position and to clarify the confusion somewhat we may state the position as follows:



There is, first, the all-inclusive group which we may call the *cluster* (1) of the Pigs. This is a genetic cluster because, although it is not generally recognized that all the Pigs are related or descendants of a single ancestor, their group histories are interconnected. Clusters are not all genetic; nor are they all totemic. In a fortuitous cluster, such as that of the Elephants or Lions, the histories cannot be linked up and no genetic relationships can be established or are recognized in any sense at all. Within the fortuitous cluster there may be smaller genetic clusters—for instance, some Lions or Elephants who have a common ancestor. The genetic cluster has large *divisions* (2), sections that broke away completely very long ago—for instance, the Lovedu Pigs or *kutvo* and the Mamavolo Pigs, with whom relationship is only very faintly recognized as a matter of

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history and by a few of the oldest men, and also more recent segments, such as the Mamaila Pigs and the Pigs of Sekhopo, with whom relationship is recognized fairly generally, but as a matter of form. Two individuals of such divisions cannot, however, concretely trace relationship. Within the divisions there are *groups* (3), such as the *kuevo* of Muhale, of Mudigs and so on, some very old, some of more recent date. These are real groups, however, in which some bonds exist, such as a common praise, and a few specially placed individuals can trace relationship to one another. These groups, again, are divided into *sub-groups* (4) of various orders and arising at various times, such as the *vamujaji*, who came into existence 100 years ago. According as we go further and further back, less and less people can trace relationship, and the sub-group imperceptibly merges into the group. On the whole, however, in spite of infinite variations, distant lineal relationship is generally recognized, but it is not given concrete expression in kinship terminology or in behaviour patterns. Finally, we have a further sub-division, which we call the *lineage* (5), between the members of which kinship terms and behaviour patterns come into play, to a greater or lesser extent according to the operation of a large number of circumstances, such as family pride, contiguous residence, agreement among one another, and so on. There are lineages in the process of being formed to-day, such as the *vamulogwane*, the children of Mulogwane, who died in 1934; but at present they are still members of a family, acting in concert in domestic situations, with which the lineage is usually not concerned at all.

Each of these, from the cluster to the lineage, as we have defined them, is functionally distinct in some ways; but they do not have distinctive generic names. We must not make the mistake of thinking that they are sharply demarcated from one another. The patrilineal alinement is secondary; it is overshadowed by the territorial alinement, which may cut across and break up the solidarity of the comparatively small and closely linked lineage. The largest group or cluster, such as the *goloec*, has no cohesion whatsoever. This is evident among the *goloec*; but it is much clearer among such clusters as the Elephants and the Lions, in which the groups bearing the names Elephant or Lion with a secondary designation may not be segments of a single original group at all. It is quite evident that a Shangana-Tongs Elephant cannot have any common ancestor with a Sotho Elephant; it is equally clear that there can hardly be any relationship between Elephants of Selowa, of Sia, and of Sefareni, for the Selowa people are from the north-east and the Sia and Sefareni, though local, have entirely different histories and ultimate origins.

The names by which people designate themselves cannot be relied upon to establish relationship. A man may designate his group or ancestry or tribe by a totem or chief or dynasty or place or other name or a combination of these. Tradition records several unaccountable or arbitrary changes in these designating names, even in totems; often a non-totemic group adopts a totem of another group or a totemic group adds to its existing totems with subsequent loss of some. And this process occurs, not only in respect of totems or primary names, but also in respect of secondary names. There is a word (*phodwadzo* or *khapa-matapo*) for

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571 619 a person who, not merely when he has no legal father, takes the totem or secondary name of another group. We can, therefore, make no off-hand deductions from the names. Identity or similarity of name may or may not imply similar ancestry. A positive assertion of similarity or identity based upon the similarity or identity of the descriptive name is not conclusive; it may merely reflect a present sense of being related, important in itself, but with no basis in history or fact. It is by no means easy to deal with a situation of such infinite complexity; and from our present point of view there is no need to do so. Except where the name is significant for some other purpose, not that of reckoning relationship as such, and except within the functioning unit, little attention is given to these names. For the purposes of rank within the tribe, against other tribal units, it is important to designate oneself, not Elephant or Lion, but Lovedu. But when we have said this as regards the general position, we have also, as in everything else, to begin pointing out exceptions.

571 565 619 An Elephant of Ravothaṭa has as such nothing in common with an Elephant, say, of Selowa. Their backgrounds, their origins, even their customs, are conceived to be different. The Elephant of Ravothaṭa have come in recent years to tolerate the Elephant of Selowa; intermarriage is beginning to establish bonds, and common allegiance to the queen is breaking down the old barriers; yet on the whole an Elephant of Selowa is a *mursha*, a person of the low country, not fit to aspire to such high positions in the tribe as the Elephants of Ravothaṭa. The *mursha* is, however, much closer to the Ravothaṭa than the Shangana-Ṭonga Elephants; the latter are not unlike the lower classes, the dwellers in the slums, as compared with the aristocracy, among us. Through sagacity and some forms of achievement, they can rise in the scale, but as yet intermarriage is frowned upon and there are some strong barriers between them. What we wish to point out is that the Elephants of Ravothaṭa are far more closely associated with their immediate blood relatives and their relatives-in-law, whether they be Elephants or Lions or Pigs or what not, than with Elephants of Selowa or other Elephants, including far-off *nanwethata*; and by far off we mean not merely any one of the sub-group within which kinship terms and behaviour obtain, but also any one of this lineage who lives far away or with whom there is no agreement. And yet there is something more to the matter. The history of the Ravothaṭa, their very early association with the royal group as messengers on the way from Rhodesia, the fact that since the earliest times their heads held an extensive district and still do, their prestige as makers of the skin of the sacred drums, all this and more places them in a special position. These things distinguish the Ravothaṭa as a group; they are like the crest of a noble family or like its traditions. They are scattered all over the tribe, it is true, and any ordinary member of the group would not presume to give himself airs because of the achievements of the past. They never act together, except within the limits of the interested family or lineage, just as happens anywhere else; yet there is some consciousness of belonging together, as indeed there is among families among us.

The same may be said of any other groups in Vulovedu. There are, for instance, the *nanwalena*, so closely linked to the royal group to-day

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that they are called the *kwevo* of Tshazi. Their history also dates back to the earliest times, when they were Tshazi quite unrelated to the *kwevo*. They are now and have been since the time of Khiali (*c.* 1740) the great maternal uncles of the royal group. They have their distinctive praise-titles and also a distinctive laudatory response. If one of the Maoulana is called by his superior he answers by prefixing his words with the praise *moni*. These laudatory responses (for which there is no generic name) are found only among a few groups. The Ravothaṭa say *nemula*, the Crocodiles of Uudupi *myagani*, the *kwevo mulemyazi*, the Dipanyika *ngpya*, some Venda (those from Twsale) *ngo*, the Khaḍa *khentlo*, and the Lions of Magwale *maan*. This laudatory response honours both the speaker and the person addressed; and it occurs sometimes in the great praises of the group—for instance, 'Maoulana of Uutshazi! At Makhifaja, the place of pasturing, we pasture our cattle in autumn; at Ḍaja it is that the cattle graze in spring. We are *moni*.' A specific response does not, however, belong to the whole group. You may hear a *kwevo* say *mulemyazi*, but, after all, the Tswale also call themselves *kwevo*, and they say *ngo*, while the Mahasha, who are *kwevo rathole*, may answer *muloovedu rathole*, and a Crocodile of Uudupi, *vudupi vya mamyaka*.

The cluster, such as all the Pigs or all the Elephants, never has one common praise-title. One does not even find a common praise for many groups or sub-groups, such as the Crocodiles, say, of Uudupi; and the same is true of most of the groups. The members of some of the groups and sub-groups use common praise-titles, but the really live praises, those that stir people and stand as a symbol of their unity, are the district praises. They are taught in the *vyali* initiation and are sung when beer is brought by the district to the queen. The district praise may or may not coincide with the praise of the sub-group or lineage of the head of the district. The Mudiga of Madumani, for instance, one of the sub-groups of the Mudiga, identify themselves closely with the royal group, but their distinctive praise-title refers to the mountain of their district, just as the distinctive praise of the Mudiga of Mareroni, another district, refers to the place name as well as to a forebear to whom the district was originally given. In addition, both Madumani and Mareroni have the old Mudiga praise, 'You are hemmed in [by lions]' (*le a digwa*). The local district praise is far more alive than the group or sub-group praise, if it exists at all, in the case of people living in the district who are not Mudiga, but Crocodiles or Elephants or Lions and so on. It is thus far more usually a locality than a group praise, though, with regard to the people of the lineage of the head, it often is both. The exquisite poetry of these praise-names cannot easily be rendered in English, '*Uuuga vya uuga bula ea na*', the praise of Levibi, we may translate as 'When it thunders at Uuuga, the rain rains', but we cannot recapture the rumbling of the *u*'s nor the pattering of the *a*'s.

Let us look more closely at the Crocodiles. They are by no means a real group at all. At Matsui, where one of them is a district head, they are very closely linked to the royal nucleus; the mother of Matsui was a relative of Mamujaji the mother of the first Mujaji, and it is at Matsui that the cow Mamujaji, belonging to the head of the district, is dedicated

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*571 619 to the spirit of Mamujaji. These Matsui Crocodiles, though they can trace their ancestry to the Ngwato of Bechuanaland, are, firstly, a closely linked lineage in their district and, secondly, they are relatives-in-law of the royal group as well as of several other groups, including Maoulana; but the other Crocodile groups never so much as obtrude themselves in their interests or consideration. There are the Crocodiles of Maunadala, who also answer *nyiguni*; yet they have a distinctive praise in which they refer to themselves as the 'outcasts of the rain' (*marsha na metsi a bula*), because they are unable to make rain. They also are Crocodiles of Uudupi, but they are quite distinctive. They have a long history; they lived on the furthermost southern boundaries of Uulovedu relatively independent even for these parts; they held their national 'schools', as they still do to-day, with scant deference to the precedence that should be accorded to the queen; and among them are celebrated doctors of the *nahwera*, *nyali*, and *gomana* complex of institutions. They owe their solidarity not so much to their common ancestry as to their concentration in a district in which they have been able to rule themselves and to build up their own traditions; but it is the solidarity of the people of Maunadala, whatever their totem or ancestry, not that of the Crocodiles. And much the same applies to Khaja, the Elephants of Sefavni, also called *ga Khaja*. Their genetic relationship with the Leba, though, by way of derogation, affirmed by their neighbours, cannot be credited; there is no association, no intermarriage, no acknowledged relationship with the Leba. Their immediate alliance is to Khaja and the district; their ultimate alliance is with the royal nuclear group; with other Elephants they have nothing in common. And so we may go through all the constituent groups.

We have paid enough to dispel the idea that the tie of real or supposed common ancestry in itself is of importance. In the larger groups the union that exists is due to other factors. The bonds within them do not even necessarily imply an informal feeling of preferential comradeship. The groups and sub-groups are not as such charged with specific functions, though, as we have seen, individuals in them may have special functions. For some time now one of the families of the Mudiga has been responsible for distributing the rain medicine (*mufuge*), but it would be a conception foreign to the Lovedu that the Mudiga only could be entrusted with this work. Not only Ramafalo, a Pig of Luzdi, but many others of different groups are doctors of rain; and the same applies to other special positions.

571 794 619 It is not difficult to see how these things work. One may still observe the process of the introduction of a new cult in neighbouring tribes. Rasekwalo, a Crocodile, recently brought the *gomana* to the Tswale tribe, just as another Crocodile brought it to the Ubwa of Makhatho. By running the 'school', these foreigners pocket some of the fees and naturally try to safeguard their rights. Their children follow them and the special function or privilege appears to be attached to the group of Crocodiles. But in time the drums of the cult become the drums, not of the Rasekwalo, but of the chief; his descendants may still take a prominent part, not because they are Crocodiles, but because some of the secrets

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and medicines are in their hands, or rather in the hands, not of the group, but of the specific family. That family may be honoured by being given a district to rule, and, as marriage is patrilocal, the area gradually may contain a fair percentage of the lineage of Crocodiles of Rasekwalo. They may be lucky and retain the privilege, but there need be no necessary continued association between the *rarasekwalo* and the *gomma*. All depends on the circumstances.

No one thinks of a certain group as having certain functions, from which other groups are excluded. Yet only some district heads may, for instance, hold the great national 'schools'; it is rather the privilege of those heads whose people have traditionally held them. But this is not considered to be a privilege of the groups; it is the privilege of a lineage if that lineage happens also to be in charge of a district, for the organization is territorial. The Lovedu, indeed, use the word *khovo*, but, as applied to groups of people, it does not mean a segment of any kin group. One speaks of the *khovo* of Mavulana, for instance; but the term refers to the people that live in the district of Mavulana, not the *vamavulana* who are scattered over many districts. One may even speak of the *khovo* of Mulogwane, meaning a section of the capital which was in charge of Mulogwane. Equally, one hears of the groups, the Mudigs, the Mabasha, the Crocodiles of Udupi and so on spoken of as the *dikhovo* of the tribe. The connotation of the term is quite indefinite; it is as likely to refer to a group or sub-group of people as to a district; the word is not commonly used and is considered to be foreign.

The patrilineal groups or sub-groups have as such no functions. They do not regulate marriage, nor do they imply co-operation and mutual helpfulness. They are not at the basis of solidarity in legal and political situations. It is not unilateral grouping which unites people in their common interests or common activities, except when we come to the smaller sub-divisions, in which close relationship is acknowledged. If there was any real cohesion within them, the groups or sub-groups would cut across both tribes and districts; they would constitute a challenge to the principle of local contiguity, and the culture would be as diverse as the groups are numerous. Lack of group cohesion helps the diffusion of the fundamental values and institutions. There is great diversity in details, but the broad pattern of the culture stands out boldly. Unilateral grouping of a smaller kind, such as the core of a lineage, is not disruptive, for, on the one hand, the lineages which give tone to the remarkably autonomous districts are intimately linked with the queen and the tribal structure and, on the other hand, they harmonize admirably with that local unit which is a great political unit. Co-residence tends to be limited to the immediately effective lineage, the regulative principle being patrilocal marriage. The sentiments developing about co-residence are strengthened by inheritance and succession in the male line; the core of the lineage has common property and other interests. The segregation of this core is promoted by the tendency to take a name which, according to the circumstances, is the name of a grandfather or a father. It is the lineage, or, rather, the operative segment of a lineage, that may be regarded as an important institution in the society.

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571 613 The patrilineal lineage, however, is a formal rather than a friendly group, at least when one goes beyond the brothers' sons of one father who, as the phrase goes, 'share even the head of a locust'. There is nothing, however, apart from the name of its members which divides it from sub-groups or groups. It has no generic name and no observances such as special milk or other taboos; but marriage within the patrilineal lineage is incest, at least outside the royal family. It is the group which exercises certain kinds of control; though it must be remembered that the head of a lineage is head only of his, not of his brother's or even his son's village. Within the lineage there is more often than not considerable friction. The conflict is a conflict about legal precedences, for if seniority is emphasized in the society, if the influence and status of a man or a woman depends largely upon his or her age or seniority in a certain position, it is the chief son or daughter, the issue of a man's mother's brother's daughter, however young he may be, who steps into the shoes of his father. A younger brother, whatever his legal status by this reckoning, calls his elder brothers 'great one' (*mukulu*) and later in life, when the chief brother becomes district head or councillor, there is at least the 'war of the eyes' between them. You will see struggles for influence and position everywhere within the lineage for this reason. The enormous weight of the social structure is massed behind the chief son; but seniority is given precedence in the 'schools' and in the kinship terminology.

571 602 It is not our intention to give more than a glimpse of the patrilineal lineage. But it is necessary to insist, on the one hand, that it is the *malugu* relatives, both on the father's and on the mother's side, that the Lovedu have constantly in mind, and, on the other hand, that the groups with the most impressive reciprocal rights and obligations are the *vaghalulu* and the *vamakhulu*. In the most general sense and whenever these groupings are spoken of as linked groups of people, the *vaghalulu* are the people where one gets bridegrooms—that is, it gives *mayunalo* cattle and receives brides. The *vamakhulu* in this context are the people who supply the brides and in return receive cattle. These two terms, in other contexts, have other connotations; for instance, the *vaghalulu* include all one's grandchildren, own and classificatory, but the term also refers to children of one's sister (man speaking). The pivot of the alinement of the two groupings is the cattle-linking of brother and sister and its co-ordination with cross-cousin marriage. The primary linking of brother and sister, described elsewhere, is immensely strong; and this strength is transmitted to the further linking of the two groups. The *vaghalulu* and the *vamakhulu* are not so much separate groups as interlinked people, and the bonds between them are partly kinship bonds, for they both are part of the *malugu*; but the specially emphasized link is the link forged by the cattle. The linkage must, in its widest application, be regarded as binding together people who do not live together.

The patrilineal lineage is the core of co-residence units, such as the village and the districts. But the strongest links between these units are the links binding together the *vaghalulu* and the *vamakhulu*; they are the cattle links. The cattle forge links within the *malugu*, a much wider group, ramifying both through males and females throughout the society. But

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kinship terminology and behaviour patterns, because they effectively 571 operate only within narrow limits and are unsupported by tangible 602 reciprocities beyond these limits—though distant relationship is spoken of as a 'flavour that is familiar' (*ledugela*, literally, a salty taste)—cannot hold together widely spread groups without assistance from other social arrangements. And this is precisely where the complex of kin segregated out by the cattle plays its decisive part. In generation after generation the links are renewed as grandfathers, fathers, sons, and grandsons all take their chief wives from and send their cattle to the same group. The bridegrooms not only give the cattle, they are perpetually giving all their lives, assisting the group of the brides in paying their debts and helping its male members with *manyualo* and in a hundred other ways; on the other hand, the brides or parents-in-law must always honour the bridegrooms and must maintain relationship with them by periodically bringing beer. These reciprocal obligations are at the very basis of the social system, of the interrelations between villages, of the bonds between the districts, and, finally, of the vast and intricate system that binds the nuclear group to the other groups and to the districts. If the lineages are the bricks out of which the society is constructed, the *mulɔgɔ* and particularly the cattle-relatives (*mulɔgɔ na dikhomu*) constitute the straw and the mortar, even the steel framework. It is also within the grouping brought about by these cattle that the fiercest conflicts occur. The price that is paid for a system, without which the fundamental structure and interrelations of the society might crumble to the ground, is certainly great; but in view of the functions of this system, it is perhaps not too great.

The *manyualo* system is also closely associated with the hierarchy of 571 rank within the household. For the chief house of a polygynist is the 595 house established by the cattle he received from the marriage of his sister; and at the same time the mistress of this house is his cattle-linked cross-cousin. The rewards of rank thus support the *manyualo* system. But rank reckoned in this way is not completely co-ordinated with seniority and other arrangements in the society. Some of the conflicts that arise are mentioned elsewhere. Here we shall refer briefly to social 561 groupings based upon age. Firstly, there are age-mates (*thaga*). Girls, on the one hand, and boys, on the other, from an early age club together in their games and their activities. The group is a very loose one, wholly unorganized from without; it is not unlike our play gangs. Techniques of co-operation and group cohesion are well developed, especially among herdboys. They have their games, their heroes, and their bullies; their loyalties are, in a sense, in conflict with adults, but they are not anti-social. They may not tell tales out of school; if they do, adults will dismiss the matter as nonsense. Girls bathe together, get firewood together, play and stamp mealies together. They know one another's love affairs, they share one another's troubles. This group of age-mates is purely localised; it does not extend beyond the district and is often confined to a few neighbouring villages. In later life these age-mates continue to be on friendly, even intimate and joking terms—that is, as far as such is possible when they are also relatives. Among girls especially,

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535 male advances can be prevented from becoming dangerous. These are *digwa*, secret things or mummeries.

The last night of the ceremony is devoted to dancing and the showing of many *digwa*. It is *khilalowemi*, the night when one sleeps standing—that is, does not sleep at all, though, since people just take a nap any time they feel tired, the name is somewhat exaggerated. All the women of the area who wish to attend gather either in the village, from which men will be debarred, or at a secluded spot somewhere near, bringing with them mealies and nuts to roast and eat while there. There is a great deal of dancing and singing. The greatest *digwa* are shown at about 3 a.m., after a period of comparative quiet that sets in towards midnight, when most of the people begin to doze around the fires, and these continue until dawn, when disguised figures come dancing in. Each mummery has its own meaning, but this is not clear to the initiate, who does not even see many of them. In the morning, while the girls are at the [302] river, the hut of seclusion is swept and freshly smeared. On her return, after having her head shaved along the sides and back, leaving a circular top, which is a form of hairdress much liked by girls and associated with ritual occasions, the girl is anointed with fat and, except when she is of the royal family, also with ochre. She is given three skins to wear, a [292] frontal covering, a rear covering, and a skin to wear over the shoulders like a cloak. Round her neck is a thick collarette of beads. When dressed, the girl has respectfully to salute the assembled company of women in the courtyard by lying down on one side, palms held together. Now follows a few days during which the novice speaks to no one and walks with bent head, fists clenched and held to the breast. She is taken by the [431] elder girls to greet various relations, who must *nose* her by means of a small gift before she can rise. A month or more after the ceremony a grand beer-party is given by the girl's parents for the women of the area, [571] who, at a spot near which men are not allowed, have a dance of *digwa*, specially disguised figures. When the novice has been through the requisite number of ceremonies, she is taken to the queen or the wife of the district head to be beaten with a stick as a sign of her graduation.

881 Boys' initiation (*vudigo*) is much more spectacular than the *khoba*. Typically it is held by the whole tribe every twelve to fifteen years, but some district heads occasionally do not wait for the authority of the queen. The last *vudigo* upon a national scale was in 1919, but since then there have been local lodges, such as the one held by the district head Maunadala in 1937. The interval of more than twenty years is not considered extraordinary. Sometimes in the past there were delays, especially in the latter half of the reigns of queens, because, so it is said, they wished to postpone their ritual end, which coincided with the fourth initiation after their accession. In 1938–9 the *nyali*, or girls' initiation, was revived after thirty-five years, partly as a preliminary to the next boys' initiation; and if within a year or so there is a *vudigo*, it will be the third of a reign that has already lasted forty-three years. There are other reasons for the present delay. The *vudigo* involves an immense organization, brings all public activities, such as the courts, to a standstill, upsets the economic routine, and concentrates energies upon one supreme

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one of presentation. Maoetha, district head of Mareroni, some thirty-eight years ago gave his daughter, Muthatso, to the queen. Muthatso after a time was allotted to Khidima, the queen's maternal uncle. Later Khidima sent a daughter to be one of the wives of the queen and this girl in turn was given by the queen to Nagambi, district head of Maulwi. Meanwhile Maoetha's son, Muhale, succeeded at Mareroni and sent the only issue of his wife, the daughter Makwajo, to the queen (1936). The next ruler at Mareroni will be either Makwajo or an heir raised by the wife acquired with the cattle given by the queen as *manyanalo* for Makwajo. Already these arrangements link the district heads of Mareroni and of Maulwi with the queen and one of her nobles, and also with one another. The network is indefinitely continued in all directions, and though its ends appear to diverge, they centre in the queen and become interlinked at many points. For instance, to Rasodi, a younger brother of Nagambi, the queen gave Makwada, her wife, who came from Malematsha, an important district head, and as a result Rasodi's son must marry at Malematsha's. Once these interrelations are established, they set into motion the whole social system and the reciprocities which double the links and perpetuate the interrelations. In the district of the capital the ramifications of exchanges and re-exchanges are so complex as to defy analysis.

Broadly speaking, districts may be divided into those given to one of the old *kwena* or royal groups (of Muhale, of Mudigs and of Mahasha), those originating from *nafanowi*, and those held by heads of foreign groups. The so-called *nafanowi* districts constitute a composite group, because women do not normally succeed to one another. We have already mentioned elsewhere how the district Matsui was given by Mujaji I to her wife, who, marrying a Crocodile, was succeeded by her son Matsui and his line of Crocodiles. In 34 per cent. of the 100 districts we know well enough to trace their origin, the position has not been very different. Today sixty of these 100 districts are held by the royal groups and forty by foreign groups, and of those held by foreigners sixteen were acquired, as Matsui was, through *nafanowi*. Thus 40 per cent. of the foreign and 30 per cent. of the *kwena* districts, as far as we know, were originally handed to wives of the chiefs. Districts may originate in many other ways. It was customary for the kings to place their districts under sisters and brothers and temporarily also under their wives. Their wives could not as easily as among the queens consolidate their position, as they were unable to send their daughters as wives to the king, whereas now they can and do send such wives to the queens. Districts were also given to the great messengers (*dikwena*) of the chiefs; to foreigners, who, though they came with no large following, were renowned doctors of the national 'schools', some of which they introduced; to men who gave the queen cattle and a wife, and occasionally to those who had rendered services of value.

It does not much matter how a district originates from the point of view of the links that are gradually established with the queen and with one another. If foreigners come with a large, compact body of followers, they are often given an area and in return send their daughters as wives

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634 to the queen. A Ṭalerwa group came from the west in Khiali's reign
563 (*c.* 1740), had a *mujanoni* at the capital and were given a large district.
571 Malematsha, a son of the *mujanoni*, having married a daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the next chief, was given half the district, the other half being ruled by the Ṭalerwa head. By these arrangements the Ṭalerwa line became *nanukhulu* of Malematsha, whose son succeeded to the whole area in 1895, when the Ṭalerwa ruling family left as the result of famine. The Malematsha are *nafuhulu* of the royal Lovedu. At Bagoni, which was originally given by Mujaji I to her younger brother, Murwatsɛṭa, there now rules Mukupi, daughter of Murwatsɛṭa's son. Mukupi had been the wife of Mujaji II, but, as there was no living male heir, she was released by the queen so as to enable her to rule the area. The true heir, son of the girl whom Mukupi's brother, had he lived, would have married (for the girl was the brother's cattle-linked cross-cousin), is now about forty-five years of age. It is doubtful whether he will ever succeed, for Mukupi is an ambitious and important woman, a district head who, like the queen, has no legal husband, but several wives; she is related to the queen and her councillors in a dozen ways, the most important being that she is *mukhadi* of the queen and was wife of Mujaji II. Relela has a long history, but we need go no further back than the time when it was entrusted by Mujaji I to Mathogani, daughter of Mugɔdɔ, the chief, and *mujanoni* of Mujaji I. Mathogani married first Rampi and, after his death, Mthotela, Rampi's brother. Kwathi, son of the latter, who was given a *mujanoni* by Mujaji II, for reasons we need not here consider, usurped the headship. Segɛte is a district given by Mujaji II to her wife Makhiwane, who was daughter of a Venda chief, and, as Makhiwane had no issue, she was succeeded by her sister's son, the sister having married a direct male descendant of the elder brother of Mujaji I. This elder brother, Malegudu, had a daughter, Magɔɔo, who became *mujanoni* of Mujaji II. Mujaji III made Magɔɔo head of Maulwi, and Magɔɔo's son, Mugɔdɔ, was the man who was chosen to raise the next heir to the throne. A son of Mugɔdɔ by his chief wife (not the queen) is now district head at Maulwi. These are but some of the cases, much simplified, that give us an idea of the manner in which districts originate and become linked up with the queen and the royal group.

634 The district is a political and a territorial unit, often very small in size,
571 and usually having a distinctive praise. The size varies from half a square
554 mile to nine square miles, the average in the congested reserve being under one square mile. Originally the districts were larger, but, as European occupation advanced, the old districts were divided and subdivided to make room for the heads that were ousted. The praises, already mentioned elsewhere, are generally praises of the group or subgroup of the head. At Maumadala, though he migrated from Naji, near Tzaneen in the south, to the tribal farm Khimobelwa to the north of Ulovedu, they still sing, 'Crocodile of Mugani, outcast (*mwɛka*) of the rain water,' because his people had no rain-making magic; when Mabubusana brings beer, the praise runs, 'At the kitchen-hut of Magwala of Khodini, where potatoes are eaten,' though Mabubusana now rules near the capital, having long ago left Khodini, to the south of Ulovedu;

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and at Khimaris one may hear, 'You are drunk, you of Maleakhotho, you who are habitual smokers of hemp.' Not only have sub-groups and even lineages distinctive variations upon perhaps a common praise of the group, but there are different praises appropriate to different occasions. 634 571 554

Owing to patrilocal marriage, the patrilineal kin tend to form the core of a district. These cores were perhaps more distinct in the distant past, for it is quite clear that, for instance, the districts of the Mudiga lay towards the east, while those of the Mahasha clustered together in the north-west. But members of the Mudiga and Mahasha were always scattered throughout the tribe and never co-operated as groups in any political situation. We must not think of co-operating patrilineal groups, for 'A man has influence and fortune where he has relatives-in-law'. The core of the district may be the brothers, father's brothers, and their sons in the district, but generally the mother is a link with one outside district and sisters and daughters marry into others. There is seldom a numerical preponderance of the lineage of the district head in the territorial unit, their number and solidarity depending upon a large number of factors: length of residence or of headship, the homogeneity of diversity, size, dispersion or concentration of the group that immigrated and was given a district, agreement within the group, and so on. 634 571

We may take Matsui as an example. The head, a Crocodile, and his male forebears have ruled the area for over a century. Matsui is at one point immediately adjacent to the capital, but it is also near a whole chain of old Crocodile settlements, which 150 years ago extended from Mamaila in the north to Uudupi in the south. The district is largely a valley area and thus avoided by the Lovedu royal group, but extensively occupied by the Shangana-Tongs since about 1840. The population is 22 per cent. Crocodile and 14 per cent. Lovedu; 47 per cent. of the people belong to foreign groups or sub-groups, with whom intermarriage is not wholly disapproved, and 17 per cent. Shangana-Tongs. The Crocodiles are patrilineal kin and the Lovedu are relatives-in-law of the head, but the links with the Shangana-Tongs are those of neighbourliness, some friendship, and some economic interdependence. Of the intermarriageable foreigners, 20 per cent. are related in some way to the head, being mostly relatives of the line of 'messengers' (*dikoma*) of the district head. It is generally felt that the messengers should not be patrilineally related to the head because of possible conflicts, but their alliance with the head is usually a close and long-established one. In the case of Matsui, the links are not only through the capital where the group of the 'messenger' used to be officials, but also through the district head's brother, who is the *maghalala* (cattle-linked sister's son) of the 'messenger'. In other districts, of course, the dispositions are different: on the hills, for instance, there are no Shangana-Tongs and few of the more or less outcast *ngoka*. The diversity of the groups is very great, as we have indicated elsewhere, but the manner in which they have been interwoven into the royal group, chiefly through the districts, is even more impressive.

The patrilineal core of the district is no more important than the link through the bilateral kin, especially through mothers and sisters and daughters and the cattle-chains forged by them with other areas and with 634 562

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181 is complete without beer. During some seasons of the year, people are
273 in a perpetual state of exhilaration: some are singing or gossiping near the beer pots; some are expectantly watching their concoctions mature; and the rest are recovering from the last beer drink. Drunkenness is deprecated, but drink induces a state in which behaviour otherwise frowned upon is tolerantly regarded. Beer parties should be orderly, for they are occasions when some of the restraints of life may be relaxed and when jealousies and dissensions, normally under control, may rise to the surface. Though ostentation, even self-praise, is allowed in states of exhilaration, beer must be drunk with decorum; it should be lingered over, not bolted in haste.

181 A multitude of values centre round beer. It is a nourishing food, taking
273 the place of meat feasts elsewhere; it is also the food of the gods. Beer is so
574 great an attraction that it would be sheer lack of balance to keep one's appointments, to attend to other business, or to be worried by the passage of time if a beer party is imminent or in progress. A man's reputation for generosity depends upon his giving a beer party occasionally, although the entertainment is invariably in connexion with some definite purpose, economic, ritual, or religious. Beer is the medium of goodwill exchanges between relatives-in-law and between neighbours; and, as belonging to this context, the tributary beer from the districts to the queen is transformed from a burden to a pleasure. Beer is at the basis of the group of
[571] *eulejane* (literally, those who eat together), composed largely of kin and neighbours who often co-operate in economic activities; this group cuts across the lines of the district and includes even such alien elements as Shangana-Tonga; and the main obligation of its members is to call fellow members to any beer that is available. Reconciliations are effected by beer, which also 'opens the way for the mother-in-law'. All the essential reciprocities are maintained by beer: a man returns a borrowed article with beer; a family doctor, instead of being paid for his services, expects to be called to the family beer; and in the work party beer removes labour from the category of subservience to that of mutuality. With beer one thanks, but with money one pays.

181 None of the interests that we have considered are intensive, and none of the striving, whether for security, achievement, or recreation, is concentrated. The diverse ideals and achievements that are permitted in social arrangements enrich personality and encourage the qualities of balance and wisdom; and the insistence upon a reciprocity which is not motivated by distrust, conditions mutual helpfulness and suppresses aggressiveness and display. An important clue to Lovedu *Weltanschauung* is their attitude to what may be considered to be ultimate power, the power through which the final goals of life and security can be attained. Such power is sought, not in privations, tortures, visions, and self-oblivion, but in normality, equanimity and maturity; it is derived, not from breaking the ordinary bounds of experience to escape to another world and from transcending the limits of the senses, but from manipulating mundane forces and from identification with nature. The Lovedu do not compel cosmic laws by the power of ecstatic states or trances; they bend these laws to their purposes by supplicating the queen and

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phase* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*metapo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ena*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *metapo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *melolo* or

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *makhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

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421 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship
591 and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable
[476] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily
[273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintain-
[179] ing social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes
911 the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new
431 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small
571 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the
602 same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even
421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and
671 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples.
431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went
931 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour
643 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies.
571 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a *shari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl,
[588] Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge inda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga masadi a de a sikhidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

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'I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*metsaesi*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *lodole*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khwa*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief counsellor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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often, if at all, only after the death of both the father and his heir, the eldest brother who succeeded him as head of the homestead. Full independence is not an ideal that is striven for.

In its early stages the new unit or incipient 'house' is still dependent on the bridegroom's natal house (house of orientation). The new bride works for her mother-in-law. She has no fields of her own to begin with, no utensils, nor a hearth and very often not even a sleeping hut of her own, the young couple using the mother-in-law's sleeping hut while she sleeps in her kitchen hut. The bride cooks on her husband's mother's hearth, works with her husband in a field allocated to them and helps her mother-in-law in hers. The husband will, if he has not done so before bringing his bride home, build her a new hut after the marriage at any time convenient to him. Simeon made sun-dried bricks himself, paid one pound to have the walls built, had a work-party for the framework of the roof and did the thatching himself. A man's father may help him but usually a young man uses his own money earned by previous migrant labour.

A woman cooks for her mother-in-law until a new bride, either of her husband's brother or of her husband arrives when she may be given her own pots. When Simeon's second wife arrived both wives cooked together for the mother-in-law for a while. Then when they began to disagree one (the younger one in this case because she was unrelated) was given her own pots to cook separately. Being given her own hearth is an important thing in a woman's married life marked by a little ceremony and a visit home to announce her new status. Even when she has her own hearth, however, she must continue to provide food for her parents-in-law. Children are thus an insurance against old age and it is the duty and responsibility of a son, more particularly the youngest son, to care for his mother in her old age. The father may have young wives to care for him when his elder sons are married.

Even after his marriage a man remains under the jural control of, and subordinate to, his father. Only after his father's death is he free to choose whether to remain in the village under the heir or to hive off. Sometimes, though rarely, a married son does, however, quarrel with his father and move away. Mostly

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him.

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking.

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *masha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*mudukula*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people.

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact

that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirele* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirele* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for he also is a *mudukulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu, identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family. If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home- 634
stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter 562
a married woman who does not live in the area was made 729
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from 604
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting 692
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable 604
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's 634
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to 693
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's
child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The 634
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some- 602
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thaga*
maye ba dala mudzhala—where a master is lacking there sits the
nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often
ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant
cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long
reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being
ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the
rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed
dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging 592
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers.
Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains
the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance 592
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portions 79
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become 791
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknow-
ledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near
by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels 792
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a
homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a
married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more
likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area
with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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572 571 572 [144] [145] woman, K, has, during her husband's prolonged absence in a labour centre, moved away from her fellow wives into another district in order to be near her married daughter. She lives in a small homestead with her married son, who is absent doing migrant labour, and her other children. In contrast to this is the homestead of a neighbour of hers who has five wives and

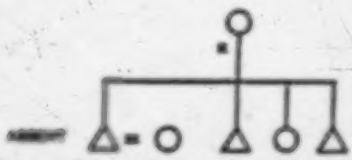

FIG. 5. Composition of a very small homestead.

whose ten brothers together with their wives and children still live with him in the homestead—a total of sixty-eight inmates (twenty-nine adults, thirty-nine children). Of these three married and two unmarried men are away doing migrant labour.

The domestic group indicated in Figure 6 originally lived in one homestead.

On A's death his chief son, B, inherited his youngest wife (No. 3) who as yet had no children. They all moved out of the old homestead, the sons (B and D) of A's two elder wives

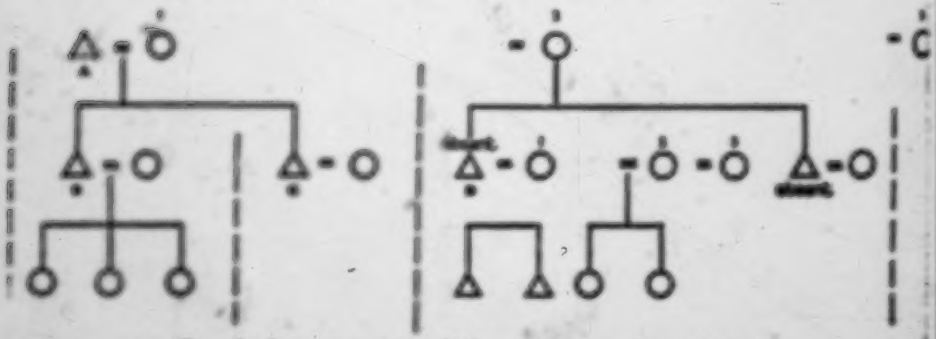

FIG. 6. Segmentation of a homestead on 'house' lines.

building separate homesteads next to one another, where I found them in 1938. The women in the homestead of D considered themselves part of the homestead of A and in the

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

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is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbourhood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,

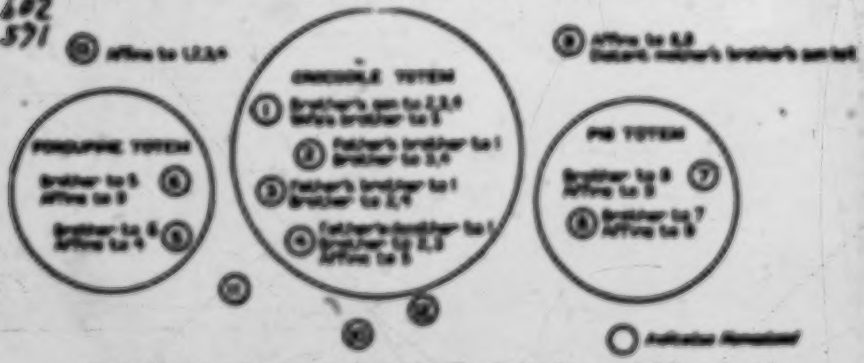

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 18: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*ruba*) all their relatives (*malala*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*bakhale*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

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Conclusion

Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djealane ka ba khwane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

An important principle in the social structure is preferential marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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of a woman to 'someone to stamp for her' from the 'house' created by her bride-price also enables the father of a woman who has no uterine brother to control to some extent, by the placement of his daughter's cattle, the marriage of her sons. Her husband 'follows the tracks of his cattle' to find a wife for his son but it is her father who determines where these 'tracks' will lead to.

There are thus to be found in Lobedu social structure a neat balance between the various kinds of kin; a combination of patrilineal principles with strong matrilineal bonds; a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family; and an equality in the importance of paternal and maternal kin which is seen on all social and ritual occasions and is reflected also in the composition of local groups.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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857 of *lepaje* (*Mariscus sp.*) or *lejekejeke* (*Cyperus immensus*), rush-grasses which the ants seize with their antennae. The girls who have been stamping now set out with some friends from a neighbouring village, all armed
[561] with axes, to collect firewood. The girls of this company are age-mates;
[532] they share their labours, confide their love affairs, bathe together, and, in the late afternoon, when they go to the bush, they sit together elongating their *labia minora* (*ku kuvna*). Meanwhile the village lies basking and dreaming in the afternoon sun; except for the pecking fowls there is hardly a stir. '*Uu gae*' ('Where is it—beer'), says Raselaka to his son Sekwane, he returns with some poles on his shoulder for repairing his
574 wife's granary. 'There is beer of *lejema* [work-party] over at Mudziri's,'
273 is the reply; and the men, accompanied by the visitors, set out for the beer drink, knowing they will be allowed to partake even though they have done no work.

The hum of voices as you near a certain kraal leaves you in no doubt that this must be Mudziri's village. A fair crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the woman who is holding the *lejema* and a typical beer-drinking scene meets the eye. The centre of the picture is a large pot of beer placed in a rounded depression made for it in the courtyard. Beside it stands a flat winnowing basket containing long-handled calabash cups from which the beer is drunk. Beside the pot sits a man who serves the beer, using a beer-cup as ladle; he gives each cup to a young man of about twenty, who hands it round. The guests have ranged themselves on either side of the beer pot, women on one side, men on the other. As each calabash is emptied, it is brought back by the young man who is doing the waiting, to be filled. There is no hurry. Each one drinks at his leisure and conversation flows freely. Every one knows he will be given in his turn and, if one man is handed a second cup, he will pass it on to any one who has not yet been served, till all have had four or five. It is a pleasant social gathering and all the latest gossip is discussed. Small children toddle about in between the drinkers and may even be given a
651 little of the beer. Ominously Pheduli remarks, 'Madume has seen police
625 near Medingen. There appear to be four of them. What can they be wanting?' 'Oh,' replies Dwagu, 'they are no doubt raiding for tax defaulters!' There is general uneasiness, for about a fifth of the gathering are in arrears. Muhale is six years in arrears and, as he never goes to town to work, he has not once been caught. 'They won't catch me napping in my home to-night,' volunteers Mathakha. 'I shall go into the bush again. Are they Shangana-Tongs or Sotho, those police Madume saw?' a very relevant question, because the Shangana-Tongs, more likely than not recruited from outside the reserve, will not know these hiding places in the forests and caves. Here Pekela describes how his friend Setimela, who had himself always been in default and knew all the best hiding places, had joined the police the previous year. Consequently, at the very next raid the police made a most successful scoop, catching ninety-six defaulters, whom they marched to Duivelskloof.

574 The beer-pot is almost empty and people are merely sitting talking
273 when the host calls Raselaka and his European guest aside into his reception hut, together with a few other intimates. A woman brings in a small

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Rasetaka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Rasetaka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*ku nwa*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Rasetaka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the last dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lohe* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaaaw*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khoro* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Pekela, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khirula* beer to their *tsani* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*ku pekela*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mushiji khi le; gi y'a sheva ga nama*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10s. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsani*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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476 calculation, no supervision. The adjustments in the situation rely upon
571 no pre-organization; there is practically no leadership or direction; and
461 yet an effective interaction is attained. The total pattern is a part of the social system; it is not as if two or more people have casually encountered one another and have by trial and error to discover how to co-operate [594] effectively in performing the task. Christians, whose standards of organization, performance, and efficiency are derived from those of the white man, attempt to submit the workers to discipline. They sometimes constitute themselves as foremen, they attempt to apply the available energy systematically, they have a system of rewards and penalties. The result is, not co-operation, but service; there are few, if any, songs and the occasion is no longer a gala social event.

The workers at a *lejoma* usually adjourn after one and a half or two hours to refresh themselves at about 11 a.m., when a pot of beer, euphemistically called 'the knife-sharpener', is brought to the field. The interval is of indefinite duration and is so much out of harmony with modern ideas, that 'the knife-sharpener' is often regarded with disfavour; instead of sharpening, it blunts the edge of activity in the modern situation, in which the *lejoma*-giver thinks of himself as an employer and the workers are concerned to avoid being exploited. Neither employer nor employee is equipped by his background of culture and training to achieve success in these new roles; and the result is that tensions arise. Fortunately, however, the *lejoma* is still overwhelmingly a collective social event. There is as yet no need to bury up labour with dignity and moral worth; it is sufficient to submerge it in the sociability of beer. For the real nature of the *lejoma* appears when the workers go to the home of the *lejoma*-giver. The situation there instantly dispels any preconception [574] we may have of special rewards for the workers. There are visitors, dubbed *nakobedi* (solicitants) and as such are distinguished from the *nashwai* (workers). In our society they would be called 'gate-crashers' or 'beggars', but they are not in needy circumstances and do not ask for favours; they are entitled to join in. Individually they not only imbibe calabash for calabash with the workers, but far outnumber them, not unusually by as much as four or five to one.

[735] To judge the situation correctly, we must remember that begging, one of the traits of the Lovedu we might regard as most irritating, is not socially disapproved. He who has and does not give is the offender, not he who asks for what he needs. The case is different, however, when the begger is a loafer and sponger, roaming about in search of beer without doing any work; and if, as is not unlikely, he is disliked, his presence during the exhilaration caused by the beer is liable to cause a breach of the peace and he might be turned away. Generally speaking, *nashwai* are not given special beer; the beer is not a reward for their services, but a feast transforming work into recreation and reflecting the emphasis upon liberality. To-day the *nakobedi* are sometimes looked upon as parasitic beggars, and measures are taken to reconstitute the *lejoma* so as to make it a more economical method of co-operation. Fundamentally, all the arduous work is still done by *lejoma*, though every one knows that, for, say, 4*s.* worth of salt, more workers could be obtained and better

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§31 some day reciprocate and the old man again 'thanks' him with beer given in his honour. And this is an essential aspect of these gift exchanges. The most striking illustration is in respect of *mayondo* (bride-price). The *tsini*, it is said, never completes *mayondo* payments (*mayondo a a fele*); even in his old age he must still respond to the call for assistance from his relatives-in-law; and they in turn never cease bringing him beer. But whatever he gives falls into the *mayondo* and must be returned should the marriage be dissolved; the chain linking the parties into relations of reciprocity has snapped.

574 The *guba*, essentially a dance performed by the young men of one or
535 more areas, provides the setting of an interesting interchange of goodwill
471 and of commodities. The main object is undoubtedly recreational, and the main participators are not kin, but members of a territorial unit. The district head is not necessarily involved, except as far as he must know what goes on in his district. The old Lovedu word *lacho*, a musical
[59] entertainment, emphasizes its salient features: youths, blowing on reed flutes, dance round in a circle to the accompaniment of four drums beaten by girls. There is much preliminary practising under the leadership of the dance-master (*malogwane*), but in the actual performances leadership is not marked and changes continually as one performer after the other takes his stand in the centre of the ring of dancers. The artistic aspect, the making of the sets of reeds, their tone compass, the rhythmic contrapuntos and the various melodic and harmonic sequences of sound may be dismissed in a sentence: close by, one is reminded of the peeling of bells thrown into ever new combinations by complex steps and movements; at a distance one listens as if to an *ensemble* of brass instruments strongly supported by drums. We are concerned with the socio-economic aspects only.

171 A slight comparison with the Venda *matangwa*, a word also used by the Lovedu (*matagwa*), is instructive. A Venda creditor wishing to collect a debt calls the dancers, gives them some work (such as the building of a hut or the repairing of a fence), and sends them to the recalcitrant debtor. There they stay feeding at the expense of the debtor and of his neighbours until the debtor pays. But the beast that the debtor pays is slaughtered and consumed by the performers, the creditor receiving only a small part. Apart from using the *matangwa* to enforce payment by debtors, the Venda also send such dancers to express sympathy when there has been a death and in that case there is a return visit to get back the beast slaughtered. It has also other uses not relevant to our present purpose.

574 Among the Lovedu the *guba* is somewhat different. Private individuals
535 send it to friends or relatives to express sympathy or to notify a death as
471 well as to celebrate the occasion of the latter's marriage or setting up a new home; and there are special rules for each kind of *guba*. The *guba* of condolence, for instance, lasts one day, drums are not allowed if the deceased is of a foreign tribe, and refusal of the entertainment is impossible. Generally speaking, a *guba* entails special food and lodging arrangements, food for the visitors being collected from households in the district which also provides sleeping quarters. The old rules designed

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to prevent promiscuity among young boys and girls are no longer in evidence, and complications are liable to arise where there is a *gosha*. The economic aspect of the *gosha*, except where it originates in a visit of condolence or is sent to supplicate for rain, is that the host, whether he himself originally invited the dancers or not, may send back a 'revenge' *gosha* to get back the beast he killed for the performers. He gets back very little, only the *musuwo*, perhaps a leg of the beast, and the performers do not work for him to compensate him for what they have eaten. The *gosha* is not conceived of as a debt-collecting institution, it never originates in a debt, and once it is set into motion, its real function is to maintain reciprocal relations. A man may start the chain of reciprocity by inviting a *gosha* from elsewhere; on the other hand, a party of dancers out for merriment sometimes descend upon any one they like, but he may refuse the entertainment as too costly or for other reasons. To notify the host that a *gosha* is coming is usual; but a man whose *gosha* has been accepted by another may stop (*ku thiwa*) the latter from returning the compliment (and getting back his beast) by sending *khirula* beer; he will do so, for instance, when he has no beast to kill or is reluctant to part with one.

The *gosha* may be a cumbrous instrument to effect exchanges of commodities, but it throws the social concomitants of these exchanges boldly into relief, magnifying them to such an extent that the gift exchange is completely obscured. This is in accordance with Lovedu conceptions, for they have a great dislike of anything that is clearly and primarily a commercial transaction. The *gosha* stresses the interchange of goodwill; the guests, drawn perhaps from three or four areas, come to display their skill for the delectation of their hosts; and the later, hurriedly collecting their dancers, come forth with their drummers and *ensemble* of flute-players to challenge their guests. First the one party, then the next give their performances; it is a social gala occasion and the competition is carried on in the friendliest spirit. The spectators are the judges: an old man passing gives his verdict, perhaps after having heard only one set of performers; an old woman, after a dance of ecstasy (*ku pekela*), sets the crown, be it merely a leg-ring or necklace, upon the head of her favourite performer; and when the next party dances, the verdicts are reversed and the honours paid anew. In the end neither party is victor or vanquished. The object has been self-expression, without stress upon individual performance, and entertainment in which the competitive element is present merely to heighten the enjoyment. The boys and girls of the competing areas intermingle and there are many lovers' intrigues; the girls give their favourites cloths to wear as if they were knights; it is truly an occasion for the renewal of the ties of friendship, ties between relatives and ties between districts. The reciprocity is generally at long range, for distant districts are brought into relationship. Resting upon a relationship between two individuals, it draws into its sphere, through the dancing, food, and sleeping arrangements, whole territorial units.

The most impressive of all the gift exchanges, however, involves the two groups of people between whom, by reason of a marriage, brides are exchanged against cattle (*musuwalo*). This exchange is as far

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181 is complete without beer. During some seasons of the year, people are
273 in a perpetual state of exhilaration: some are singing or gossiping near the beer pots; some are expectantly watching their concoctions mature; and the rest are recovering from the last beer drink. Drunkenness is deprecated, but drink induces a state in which behaviour otherwise frowned upon is tolerantly regarded. Beer parties should be orderly, for they are occasions when some of the restraints of life may be relaxed and when jealousies and dissensions, normally under control, may rise to the surface. Though ostentation, even self-praise, is allowed in states of exhilaration, beer must be drunk with decorum; it should be lingered over, not bolted in haste.

181 A multitude of values centre round beer. It is a nourishing food, taking
273 the place of meat feasts elsewhere; it is also the food of the gods. Beer is so
574 great an attraction that it would be sheer lack of balance to keep one's appointments, to attend to other business, or to be worried by the passage of time if a beer party is imminent or in progress. A man's reputation for generosity depends upon his giving a beer party occasionally, although the entertainment is invariably in connexion with some definite purpose, economic, ritual, or religious. Beer is the medium of goodwill exchanges between relatives-in-law and between neighbours; and, as belonging to this context, the tributary beer from the districts to the queen is transformed from a burden to a pleasure. Beer is at the basis of the group of
[571] *malojana* (literally, those who eat together), composed largely of kin and neighbours who often co-operate in economic activities; this group cuts across the lines of the district and includes even such alien elements as Shangana-Tongs; and the main obligation of its members is to call fellow members to any beer that is available. Reconciliations are effected by beer, which also 'opens the way for the mother-in-law'. All the essential reciprocities are maintained by beer: a man returns a borrowed article with beer; a family doctor, instead of being paid for his services, expects to be called to the family beer; and in the work party beer removes labour from the category of subservience to that of mutuality. With beer one thanks, but with money one pays.

181 None of the interests that we have considered are intensive, and none of the striving, whether for security, achievement, or recreation, is concentrated. The diverse ideals and achievements that are permitted in social arrangements enrich personality and encourage the qualities of balance and wisdom; and the insistence upon a reciprocity which is not motivated by distrust, conditions mutual helpfulness and suppresses aggressiveness and display. An important clue to Lovedu *Weltanschauung* is their attitude to what may be considered to be ultimate power, the power through which the final goals of life and security can be attained. Such power is sought, not in privations, tortures, visions, and self-oblivion, but in normality, equanimity and maturity; it is derived, not from breaking the ordinary bounds of experience to escape to another world and from transcending the limits of the senses, but from manipulating mundane forces and from identification with nature. The Lovedu do not compel cosmic laws by the power of ecstatic states or trances; they bend these laws to their purposes by supplicating the queen and

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XV. BEER AS A SOCIAL STIMULANT

(a) BEER BEING CARRIED TO THE QUEEN

(b) A BEER PARTY

[facing p. 288]

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Fig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Fig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Fig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*malala*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*bakhala*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

THE LOVEDU

1. The Lovedu-tribe took its origin in Mashonaland. Therefore, when a Lovedu salutes, they say: "In truth, Lovedu, in truth Khalaga,[1] person of Ledaka,[2] person who comes from Mashonaland!" Furthermore they are "the Pigs of Mohale."[3]—They say there is the home of the Lovedu.[4] 173 576

2. They say the king there had two sons. Now one of them[5] was given the rain.[6] Afterwards the elder brother desired the thing of the younger one. He went to ask his younger brother for the rain. But the younger brother refused to give him the rain. The elder brother rose against him with spears.[7] The younger brother escaped southward,[8] he crossed the Limpopo-river of Mashonaland. On the way they separated into two groups. One tended towards the South and settled at Vyafadi[9] namely the Mamabolo-tribe. They are also "Pigs[10] of Mafaki."[11] 173

3. Now the Lovedu were looking for a nice country with fertile soil and with ant-hills.[12] They sent the young men in advance to look out for such a country. And indeed—when these passed Vendaland they found the right country having merula-trees and ant-hills in the east of the mountain where there is established "Medingen"[13] to-day—namely at Khumelo.[14] [197]

4. They found that there was living another tribe called that of Kheoga.[15] Those people did not know the fire. They ate all their food unboiled. They ate it just like the wild animals.

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[1] Name for the inhabitants of Mashonaland.

[2] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[3] Name of chief.

[4] I was given the following explanation of the word "Lovedu": *Valovedu khé khe khe fhadohwa ge khere: mo kho lovokho zwilé, e lékho vathu le kikhomo le ridgu.*—Lovedu means: there where things namely persons, cattle, goats and sheep are being brought as offerings. [101]

[5] The younger one.

[6] The instruments and formulae to prepare the rain-medicine.

[7] Chief weapon.

[8] Literally: upwards.

[9] Mountains near Haenertsburg.

[10] Lovedu and Mamabolo praise the same animal: the wild pig.

[11] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[12] Asm = a delicacy. [262]

[13] Mission Station.

[14] Name of mountain.

[15] Another Bantu-tribe.

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the royal kraal. The children of the chief's kraal are attending school at her command. 175 791

37. Chief Khesêthwane does not allow that a person enters her kraal with shoes on his feet. When somebody approaches the main entrance, he must take off the shoes and leave them outside the main-entrance that he may be allowed to enter the meeting-place. 643 576

The beginning of the government of female chiefs in Lovedulanl

1. The last male chief is Mogôdô. He had two sons: Malegudu and Khoêbe. These young men quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father when he was still alive. Now they had a sister who was called Mokaki. So the chieftainship was given her that she might be the ruler of the tribe. The brothers were driven away. 173 643

2. When a person is made chief in Loveduland, he must be given the fire-stick and the water-calabash. Now they gave the sister the fire-stick and the calabash that she might bring it to Malegudu, the elder brother. But it is said that they had been strengthened by magic charms which make a person mad who looks at them with his eyes. He will behave like a mad person, he will leave his home, go away and move to another country and dwell there. 643 789

3. They say when Malegudu had looked at the fire-stick and the calabash, he left the land of his father, went to Vendaland and died there. Khoêbe the younger son who had quarrelled with him about the chieftainship was treated in the same way as the elder one. He left the country went to Thôvôô[44] and died there. 173 643

4. So the chieftainship was given the daughter of Mogôdô namely Mokaki I. She had a daughter called Masala-Navô. She followed her mother in the chieftainship.

5. Masala-Navô had no child until her old age. But she had a younger sister. She had two children. The first child was a boy, the second one a girl. The girl-child called Khesêthwane was chosen to be chief. She is Mokaki who governs still to-day.

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[44] In Portuguese-East-Africa.

137 [272] marula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malomatsha wae, Malomatsha wae; badi ga dzwala ga* [103] *dzwala ga filajo, ga ewela waphabalowa*' (Malomatsha, Malomatsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a greeting I returned)—the praise 431 song of a district in Lubwedu. There at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malomatsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach [564] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiphalelowa*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiphalelowa sewa*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they pinching us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunya*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

621 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any 789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lowphua* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the [417] protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were [824] set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3-4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *pipposwi* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin 324
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which
is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses
caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the
village needs to be 'awakened' (*ba dzowa mutse*) by the renewal of these
protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of
night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of
which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the
village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who
thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may
have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never
absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khwv*, an open 346
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged
around it than Rasetaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes for-
ward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands,
saying, '*Ndaw dowa*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely
inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According
to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief
hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over
the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khwv*. A
woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, pass-
ing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women;
then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a
most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let
himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-
coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the
process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called
madwa and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, 261
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary
mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing
to exchange them. Dotted about the *khwv* are other pits which can be
located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone
sealed down with mud. The *khwv* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the play-
ground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by
shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play
in the *khwv*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no
khwv; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected
space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at
work in town.

To the left of the *khwv* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside
the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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cold in winter. The veranda of the sleeping hut is used for storage. Here are pots of all sizes, many with lids glued down with dung, calabashes, sacks of corn on stands, medicinal roots, perhaps an old plough, a small grain basket on an inverted tripod of sticks, and a bag of reed pipes for dancing.

The contrast between sleeping and cooking huts is marked: whereas the former is relatively empty, cool and clean, the kitchen hut is generally rather untidy and, when a fire is burning, full of smoke. This is the domain of the housewife. Here are her cooking utensils—pots, baskets, wooden dishes, dishes of white enamel. At first the smoke deters you from entering, but the woman and her children sitting there appear to be quite at ease, so you summon up courage and go in. You splutter at first and your eyes water, but soon you grow accustomed to the atmosphere. You glance up at the unplastered roof and find it black from the smoke of many years. It is the home of countless cockroaches. Stuck in it are ears of corn and mealie cobs kept for seed, and many other articles, such as a cupping horn, some medicinal roots, some old arrows, and axe and spear of Sotho-worked iron kept as religious objects. On a platform of wood, out of the reach of white termites, are several bags of nuts and mealies, while a handbroom of asparagus fern lying near the hearth in the centre comes in useful from time to time for sweeping all the dirt into the fireplace. In this hut women sit at night; grandmothers sleep here with the children; here children are born and here they are often fed; here people lie when ill and here too they die.

A chair, native-made but after the European fashion, with seat of strips of thong, has been placed for you in a shady spot in the chief wife's courtyard. To be perched so high above ground when every one else sits on the floor is distinctly uncomfortable and out of place, but, in deference to the hospitality of your host in according you the honour of a chair, you feel you must occupy it. Four or five small, pot-bellied urchins with dirty noses range themselves near you to watch more closely the features and clothes of the European. One softly points out your peculiar nose to a companion, another comments on your shoes; altogether they find you and your ways absorbing. One small child holds aloof, screaming with fear when the rest try to force him to come near. With her back to the sun, a woman kneels beside a large pot of boiling water, deftly twirling a wooden twirler between her palms. Every now and then she stops to add a little of the fine, white mealie meal beside her by means of a ladle of calabash, for this is the first stage in the making of *pawse*, cakes of thick meal, their staple food. The twirling prevents the formation of lumps. When the mixture becomes too thick for the twirler, a large, flat, wooden spoon is used with both hands. An aged and wrinkled old woman, mother-in-law of the one who is cooking, arrives from her garden with a basket on her head filled with the young leaves and male flowers of the pumpkin and three or four fresh cobs of mealies. The leaves and flowers are for relish for the meal; the cobs of maize she roasts in the fire for her grandchildren. She sits down, feet straight before her, and begins slowly to pull off the rough outer covering from the stalk of each leaf; it is then broken into two or three pieces and placed in a small, wide-mouthed pot.

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from 252
two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in these earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner. While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves roast mealies or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen enters with a large gourd of water on her 576
head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Mukhadi uwe*,' calls out her mother. '*Mulowyu*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase 563
by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Mukhadi goes into the huts and collects 715
five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used 273
for making light beer (*mahadu*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes 264
are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two- 853
months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by washing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth, she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and gurglings are of no avail till Granny has decided it has had enough. This novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held 854
over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap, special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that at any moment the child may slip out of the woman's hands; but she is skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward occurs. After being air-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline, an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys 508
arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neighbours could be seen; their own were nowhere to be found. Your hostess is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with legs tied together.

The woman of the *mushe* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning 264
to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of slovenliness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food; porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Raselaka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Raselaka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*ku nwa*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Raselaka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the last dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lobha* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaaa*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khwa* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Pekela, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khirula* beer to their *tsezi* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*ku pthela*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mushiji khi le; gi y'a sheva ga nama*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10s. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsezi*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

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482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263 this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' (*'U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinɔnyana a fia dithɔhɔ a fa vasimana'*). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lewai la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled *njugo* beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khɔrɔ*, the three men of the village are sitting by their 521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spiritedl account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khɔrɔ*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies
to roast

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in their lives and, where a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, 602
his relatives-in-law are his mother's people. The term *tsezi* (bridegroom) has in Lovedu society a very special connotation. The *tsezi* is greatly honoured by his wife's people. He is given the best of everything. When he visits, he is brought a rush mat to sit upon and beer in a special small calabash or pot as his own. Christians invite the 'bridegroom' or his people to all meat feasts connected with confirmation, baptism, and other ceremonies (heathens have practically no meat feasts), while a mother-in-law never visits at her son-in-law's place without bringing some gift. One day, when Mudiga's wife was on the point of leaving on a visit with beer she had specially brewed to take with her, a *tsezi* (her husband's sister's husband) unexpectedly turned up. So, much to her disgust, her visit had to be put off, 'for one cannot take beer from a *tsezi*'. The honour accorded a *tsezi* is given also to his brothers, own and classificatory, when they visit his relatives-in-law.

While a bridegroom is accorded great honour by his relatives-in-law, he has many obligations towards them. When they bring beer, he must slaughter a goat for them and wish them godspeed with another 10*s*. after the feast. If they ask him to help them plough or weed, he must do so. Batamedi, for instance, every year ploughs the field of his wife's grandmother—but they will always entertain him with beer for his trouble. If they have to pay a heavy fine, but have not the wherewithal, they will approach the 'bridegroom', and, if they need more cattle or goats for the marriage of their son, it is again to the daughter's husband that they look for help. A friend of ours, a Christian, is even paying for the schooling of his wife's brother. Hence it is that, in spite of the fact that bride-price is more or less fixed within certain limits, it is always [576] ● said 'bride-price never ends', for a bridegroom can never refuse to help his wife's relatives. He may not even suggest that they are demanding too much, for this would be a breach of good manners reparable only by the handing over of a pardon goat. His only policy is to remain respectful, promise to 'look for' what they require, then later to send a message that he has been unsuccessful, even if he has many goats and they know it.

The Lovedu do not have that strict system of lasting avoidances 602
between certain relatives-in-law that is to be found among Nguni, where 431
it involves the use of separate paths by the married women of the village and even proscribes the use of words with syllables contained in the names of the husband or his relatives. Avoidances associated with marriage are, among the Lovedu, found also on other occasions. When a girl comes from her puberty ceremony or a boy from circumcision, he will respectfully greet all his relatives and neither rise nor speak till they *nosa* him by giving him a small gift (6*d*. or soap or a leg or arm ring). Similarly, when a woman has a new baby, she will cover its face from inmates of the village till they *nosa* her to see it. Similar avoidances, ended by means of a gift, are associated with marriage.

As soon as a marriage has been agreed upon, prospective bride and 584
groom avoid each other. They may not be together nor speak to each 431
other and, if by chance they should meet, the bride will cover her face with one of the cloths she wears and turn half aside. Often several

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with the *vyali*, but beginning rather later when the grass is sufficiently long to be used for the elaborate costumes worn. As in the case of circumcision, the *vyali*, though of national importance, is held locally by various district heads. Only those heads whose ancestors traditionally have held the *vyali* are allowed to hold it, and control is exercised by the fact that permission (literally, *khiso kha mullo*, or firebrand) has to be obtained from the queen by all those wishing to hold a *vyali* by payment of £1. One finds considerable variation from one district to another. In some the *vyali* only is held, their boys having to go elsewhere for initiation into *vuhwera*; in others *vuhwera* is held simultaneously with the *vyali*, while everywhere there are variations in detail according to the doctor responsible for the initiation or the religious habits and desires of the headman holding the initiation. Hence it is that, while at the royal village men of the last regiment (*mangwe*—Leopards) were in 1939 considered too young to be allowed to enter the enclosure of the girls or the place where the old men sit with their wonderful Bird, in many of the districts they were not debarred at all. At the great opening ceremony, when the gods of whoever holds the school are approached for their blessings, those of the royal *vyali* were merely 'cooled' by the spurting of water and a prayer, whereas those of Relela were propitiated with beer brought to the family graves in the depths of the forest. And while at the royal village the initiates were smeared with the stomach contents of a head of cattle killed by being shot, for those of Relela the tail fat of a sheep ritually killed with a medicated knife was used, the stomach contents being mixed with medicine for strengthening the enclosure. The doctor at the royal ceremony carried all the meat of the slaughtered beasts away on donkeys for his own private use, but at Relela the assembled company, including men, ate the meat with medicine. The institution is sufficiently flexible to allow for changes in keeping with modern needs and modern ideas: six European nails were allowed in the construction of the hut of the Bird, a stipulation being made that they should not be visible, loin cloths of material took the place of hide in many areas and other, more far-reaching innovations differentiated the 1939 ceremony from those in olden days. All the 'schools' do not open simultaneously: months after the queen's *vyali* had begun in 1939, district heads were sending to ask permission to hold theirs, while even in the queen's own *vyali* new initiates were joining as much as five months after the opening. In a society where time is unimportant this is not unexpected.

It is not possible here to give a detailed account of *vyali* ceremonial. Only a few of its most important aspects and main functions will be touched upon. Considerable emphasis is laid in the *vyali* on age and rank. The initiates have to be very respectful towards old men and women, greeting them in a special manner (kneeling and clapping with hollowed hands) whenever they pass them. This general pattern is exactly the same as that found in the *vudiga*, the boys' circumcision. The last initiated regiment is to some extent in authority over the novices. Yet the initiates themselves vary in age from small girls of seven or eight to married women. Indeed, in the 1939 *vyali*, held after a lapse of thirty-five years, it was found necessary to divide the initiates into two distinct

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695 The procedure to-day involved in witchcraft cases can be set into motion and these cases may be settled by district heads. In short, set rules as to competence do not exist and district heads are left to cope with as much as they can manage.

576 627 561 A brief discussion of some quasi-judicial processes will enable us to appreciate better, as it will introduce us to the procedure and spirit of the *khoro*. Firstly, there is the method by which especially old women deal with disrespectful or insulting behaviour of younger women. Should one or more young women play a practical joke upon or be disrespectful to an old woman, or playfully 'dance' an infant child, even their own, or prematurely try to make it sit up or walk or scold or beat it, in the presence of the grandmother or of an old woman, their behaviour is regarded as insulting. The conception is that old women in their role as midwives, rather than young mothers, have brought children into the world and the old, not the young, are the guardians of the babes. If one young woman arrogates to herself rights and privileges which belong to the old women, the latter are entitled to take suitable action. The insulted old woman reports to a few of her age-mates and in consultation they decide to punish the age-mates of the young woman resident in the same territorial unit—for example, a district. There is neither 'trial' nor tribunal. The punishment consists of three elements: the age-mates of the young women (say all those who have one baby) must brew beer with which to effect a reconciliation with the older women; in a rite accompanying the beer drink and resembling that used at initiations, the oldest woman canes her immediate junior, who in turn canes the next, and so on, including the culprits; and, finally, the culprits are read a lesson as to the iniquity of being disrespectful to their elders.

One day three young married women, in circumstances that implied disrespect, sent three old women a tiny quantity of snuff. The older women immediately fined the younger and vicariously all their age-mates living in the Christian settlement, for they were all residents there. They were told to grind snuff and restitute their wrong with beer. Five days later the twelve young married women of the settlement came to the house of the oldest woman, bringing large quantities of nuts, light beer, pumpkins, and other food; their husbands, in addition, sent a large tin of snuff and these 'gifts' were divided among the old women. Then followed the rite and the warning. On another occasion all the young mothers of a district were fined because one of them had 'danced' its baby in the presence of its grandmother. Likewise, it is said, though we have not seen a case, that the old women may fine a young father and his age-mates, if he forgets their privileges in regard to babies. But we cannot speak of regimental courts, the age-grades are not determined by the 'schools', the responsibility is territorial, and the punishment is 'beer of reconciliation' (largely replaced by food among Christians).

627 691 The second procedure, that called *hu khumelwa* (to beg pardon, to reconcile), has an enormous province and a profound significance, not only for legal arrangements, but in the whole culture. The procedure uses a *mukhumedi*, the emissary who intervenes on behalf of one of the parties to beg the pardon of the other. Its essence is not humiliation of

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Highveld. When, after many private consultations with diviners, a man decides to make an accusation of witchcraft, he and the accused will *betcha* or lay a wager of money or cattle on the matter, after which, accompanied by a witness, the 'ears of the chief', supplied by the Head Kraal, they set out to consult a far-away smeller-out, nearly always a Shangana-Tonga who lives too far to know anything of the people concerned. Unless the smeller-out is able to give the totems of all members of the party and successfully find an object that has been hidden beforehand, they will pass on to another until some one suitable is found. The verdict of the smeller-out is taken to court where it is always accepted and the guilty party told to pay his wager, the modern counterpart of the death penalty of old. A distinction between murder and accidental homicide is everywhere found in the Lowveld, punishment for the latter being the handing over of a girl to the injured family. She never returns home, nor does any bride-price pass. 695 [682]

Bantu etiquette, which makes it impossible for a case to be reported to the chief except through a third party, generally among other Sotho tribes one or two specially appointed men, has in the Lowveld given rise to a rather more complicated system whereby each district has its 'mother' at the Head Kraal, through whom reports are made and actions brought. Where a person in one district has a case at the Head Kraal against some one in another district, the 'mother' of the complainant's district will approach the 'mother' of defendant's district to call his 'children' to the court, and various payments are connected with the system. Most of the important men living at or near the Head Kraal are such 'mothers', many having more than one district in their charge. 576 694

FAMILY AND CLAN. There is among Lowveld Sotho no term distinguishing the father's from the mother's side of the family, the word *moloko* being used to denote all relatives whether on the father's side or the mother's; and in practice, whether at weddings or at working parties, both sets of relatives play an equally important, if sometimes different, part. A man inherits his totem and family name from his father, but in his education and social life his mother's people have great influence. Most children spend some years of their life with the 601 611 855

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437 wealth; and the rewards of the society do not go to those who can manipulate the trading situation. Land cannot be traded, and cattle, the only other recognizable form of wealth, are completely absorbed in the *munywalo* exchanges. For the rest, the economic unit is as nearly as possible self-sufficient. There are occasional shortages, but usually they affect everybody more or less equally. The volume of internal trade, apart from gift exchange, was and still is insignificant. There are no markets, and skilled workers do not usually produce articles in anticipation of the needs of others. Hoes were, and pots still are, exchanged for agricultural products. The small interchange of agricultural products in normal times never unduly benefited one man at the expense of another. Animals constantly died, but only those people who had little consideration for their relatives—for elaborate rules exist as to the distribution of the various parts of an animal—thought of selling the meat. In abnormal times people sold and still sell cattle: the instinct of self-preservation overrides the sentiments against tampering with one of the main pillars of the social structure.

The Lovedu are in this respect wholly unlike their neighbours, the Shangana-Ṭonga, who undertook commercial journeys and had companies of carriers with elaborate organization and sharing of profits. The earliest Europeans constantly mention the begging propensities and topsy-turvy economic conceptions of the Lovedu. And even now it is useless to attempt to buy a valuable thing from them. You may succeed in getting it by begging or appealing to sentiment or showing how much you need it. With a Shangana-Ṭonga you may bargain; with a Lovedu bargaining arouses suspicion, the suspicion that you are making a profit out of his ignorance, and it is considered better to give than to sell. Begging is not [735] socially disapproved; it is contrasted, not with self-reliance, but with theft; and a man, it is said, should always ask for, not steal, the things of another. Begging is really the counterpart of mutual helpfulness, of the feeling of dependence on one another. Where such sentiments have a right of existence, even in royalty itself, the only consideration that evokes a sympathetic response in the trading situation is the need of the person who wishes to transact the exchange. A man does not sell for his personal gain and the price is not a matter of great moment; either goods have their fixed price or they have no price at all. The situation is always an embarrassing one. The Lovedu, in short, have no commercial instincts; they have been conditioned to mutual helpfulness and non-competitive trading.

437 They distinguish sharply between trade carried on in the traditional
●577 manner and what they call 'bizmis' (business), which generally involves
795 money transactions and is associated with subterfuge and personal gain. 'Bizmis' is beyond the pale of decency; it is specially debased in the hands of those upstarts who hold initiation schools for their own personal profit. The most depraved people are the few Christians, who, in league with Europeans or on their own account, constitute themselves as middlemen and exploit their fellow men. They are *dibava*, deceivers and breakers of promises, comparable only with prostitutes who 'are eaten on the road'. The Christian Church, with its fees and collections, falls,

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to the Lovedu manner of thinking, within the 'bizmis' scheme: one buys baptism and confirmation; at communion one pays for the flesh and blood of Christ. How different is the institution of *munywa*. No wonder the work of the Church is infinitely difficult.

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An omen or bane (*lesola*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesola*, and so can a *leshega*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *tola* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 787 825

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*vusola*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahava*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahava* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahava* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahava*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 777 602 [753] [769]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (*Vulɔi*)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *vulɔi* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Vulɔi* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Vulɔi* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *vulɔi* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *vulɔi* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*vulɔi vya vusiu*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*vulɔi vya matsiare*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 754 [577]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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in the use of motor traffic. Are not people more important than speed? The need for even a chief to respect the wishes of his subjects upon whom he depends for a following is summed up in the saying, *Vuhosi gi vatho*, 'chieftainship is people'.

The qualities or virtues that are stressed, then, in the moral code of the Lovedu are moderation and temperance, compromise and agreement, humility, respect for the personality and rights of others. Courage is not rated very high in this non-military society. Perseverance is often enjoined and is especially necessary in the monotonous tasks of hoeing, carrying heavy loads of wood, walking up steep mountain slopes; but it is never carried out with the single-mindedness that a European might expect. Theft is condemned and there are ritual sanctions against it. If the object stolen has been magically treated, for example, a painful sore will develop on the finger which defies treatment until guilt has been confessed and restitution agreed to. 'Don't steal, always beg (*hobela*) for what you want', children are exhorted. But theft is not a problem in this economically undifferentiated society, though nowadays cases of theft, even if extremely rarely, do come before the tribal courts. Drunkenness is bad only if it leads to neglect of duties or fights and quarrels. To be drunk is in itself no disgrace, it is merely pleasant and perhaps exhilarating, not a condition to be ashamed of. Indeed everyone looks forward to the *murula* season when all become slightly intoxicated from the cider made out of the fruits.

Right conduct is relative always to the human situation and morality is oriented not from any absolute standards of honesty or truth but from the social good in each situation. Conduct that promotes smooth relationships, that upholds the social structure, is good; conduct that runs counter to smooth social relationships is bad. Courtesy and the respect due to age or seniority are thus of greater importance than truth. A son-in-law who, tired of always being imposed upon by his wife's father, truthfully signified his unwillingness to help him by providing a goat would be guilty, in view of the special mutualities between families related by marriage, of unpardonable behaviour which might jeopardize his marriage. The correct procedure is to agree to help but to be always 'still looking for it' when approached for the goat. It took us a long time to discover that the right way to deal with incessant begging was not to refuse however politely, but to say 'I have none' or 'It is not mine to give'. The polite lie even if palpable is better calculated to maintain smooth relationships than strict adherence to truth. Truth is not good in itself nor is a lie always evil. Lies are objected to when they are socially inconvenient. Yet not only is it expected that a man will lie to get out of difficulties but there are cases in which lying is prescribed, as when children are told to lie to strangers if asked about village affairs. To keep tribal secrets and the secrets of initiation schools is of far greater importance than to tell the truth.

The social orientation of morality is clear in Lovedu sex morality. Sex is not regarded as a temptation to be resisted by painful efforts of will.

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There is nothing morally wrong in sex or the sex act; not only is sex play among small children connived at, but premarital sex relations are institutionalized. It is only having a child before marriage that is immoral. For adultery restitution must be made, yet a husband who is jealous and watches his wife too closely is despised, and most men and women have extra-marital lovers (*vatavo*). The Lovedu attitude is less strict than that of the Tsonga living among them, for Tsonga married women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, and the compensation and fine for adultery are far higher than among the Lovedu. The Lovedu attitude to sex is matter-of-fact, and obscenity in ritual does not have a prominent role. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of promiscuity; they learn from their proverb that 'a woman's pubes may break up a family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are undeveloped.

To anyone brought up in the West European culture, where every breach of the moral code is also a sin in the eyes of a God who may punish the wrongdoer either in this life or the hereafter, an arresting aspect of Lovedu culture is that there is only a vague connexion between the ancestor-gods and morality. It has been said for the South Bantu in general, and by more than one authority, that the ancestors 'are the guardians of the moral code, it is they in the first instance who are thought of as visiting on their descendants punishments for some omission or commission'[1] There is among Lovedu a vague idea that failure to carry out one's kinship obligations may bring ancestral displeasure in the form of bad luck, and there may also be some connexion between such displeasure and *mahava*, the force generated by complaints of living kin, which causes illness. But a careful study of Lovedu religious practices over a period of years has brought to light no single instance in which ancestors have complained about anything not immediately concerning their own personal relations with their descendants—their right to tendance, remembrance, and propitiation; the manner of their burial; their desire to be told of major events in the lives of living kin. No ancestor has ever been known to concern himself with the theft, witchcraft, murder, or adultery of any descendant, nor do they trouble about the breaking of taboos which prevent rain and vitally affect the welfare of all. Lovedu ancestors are not upholders of custom in general; they are concerned only with those customs and taboos which affect their own welfare and that of their kin. Even royal ancestors do not concern themselves with the breaking of taboos that lead to drought. This is not a reflection of their carelessness or supineness, for they are quick to complain if, for example their graves are desecrated. On one occasion in 1938, when two men had cut firewood in the bush near the royal burial grounds at Maulwi, the *zwidajani* wailed all night to indicate their displeasure. Again when Mologwane, deceased chief councillor and brother of the queen, held her

[1] A. W., Hoernlé, 'Religion in Native Life', in *Thinking with Africa*, edited by Milton Stauffer, 1928, p. 100. See also, W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, 1928, pp. 381–90.

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577 769 arms' to cause drought in 1938, it was because he had for personal reasons been buried, at his own express request made before death, in the Christian cemetery instead of in the damp shade of the forest, like his forebears.

577 593 It would appear that this lack of interest on the part of the ancestral gods in the morality of their descendants is in conformity with the pattern of the relationship between living parents and their children. Parental protection and care are given not by virtue of the morality or conduct of their children; it is one of the imperatives of the kinship bond. A parent loves his wayward, bad son as much as, if not more than, his well-behaved, virtuous children. It is only a bad personal relationship between parent and child or neglect of filial duty that could cause a parent to withhold his protection.

626 Sanctions for right behaviour are, first and most important, the pressure of public opinion and of the reciprocal arrangements of the political and social structure. A man conforms to the code because of his self-esteem and the high regard he has for his reputation for fairness and moderation, wisdom and ability to get on with others, generosity and helpfulness, not merely among his kin but in the wider circle of his friends and neighbours. The next important group of sanctions are the pain and misfortune that may follow if those he has injured use vengeance magic or resort to witchcraft and sorcery against him. Certain types of conduct carry their own automatic ritual sanctions which form a third group of deterrents, even though there is little pressure of public opinion against the conduct and no necessary or immediate consequence to the person himself, unless indeed he is repeatedly guilty. Finally, duties towards the ancestors, such as tendance and recognition, have the religious sanctions of ancestral anger in the form of illness, or misfortune. Ancestral displeasure can also be inferred as a sanction acting indefinitely and over a vague area of conduct to reinforce men's obligations to kin, generally those kin who stand to them in a relation of some authority. This inference may be made, not because ancestors ever directly cause misfortune to a descendant for breaches of correct behaviour to kin as they do in the case of neglect of themselves, but because bad luck may be attributed to failure in one's duties to kin.

626 769

[769] 577 Ancestor worship of the Lovedu plays hardly any part, then, in upholding tribal morality. Nor are people so delicately conditioned to the values of the society that they spontaneously react to conscience. Their moral code is not markedly internalized and Lovedu have no sense of 'sin'. Since there are few repressed fears the pressure of which on the mind can be removed by confession and atonement, a sense of guilt seldom moves men, and offenders very rarely repent merely at the dictates of conscience. Their sense of shame is more delicately internalized, but it drives men to make restitution only when the misdeed has been exposed or brought into relation with the system of reciprocities. Lovedu are sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system, and the moral code is upheld mainly

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by the institutions and by the reciprocal duties and responsibilities between individuals and groups inherent in the social structure. 577

Effects of Culture Contact

This picture of the world view of the Lovedu presents living practices and conceptions, not a dead and reconstructed past. Christianity has, indeed, modified some aspects of the culture: Christians are prevented from performing their kinship obligations in the traditional manner; they have accepted European ideas of trade for profit and use institutions such as the work-party for the exploitation of their fellows; but witchcraft, which they are supposed to have rejected, is as a result of increased tensions even more rampant among Christians than pagans. Christians substitute God for the ancestors, but continue to believe that the queen makes rain, albeit by the will of God. They tend to discredit the powers of charms but not of *vuŋaga*, while 'heat', *makhuma*, and 'shadow' are still real forces, and the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and misfortune still hold sway. Even these minor modifications have to be viewed in the light of the fact that Christians constitute only about 5 per cent. of the tribe and are relatively isolated. 177 795 771

The influence of Western culture as a whole is more insidious. The knowledge acquired by young men working in the towns and returning to the tribe holds implications as regards the nature of the universe and the destiny and purpose of man which they cannot harmonize with the traditional world view. They tend to despise what the old men cannot or will not make intelligible to them, such as the significance of the *digɔma* and the *zwidajani* which appear to them to be shams. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect for their elders and for traditional values and institutions. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older, begin to play a part and to have a stake in the culture. Moreover, they are sensitive to insinuations that their doubts are due to the white man's insidious influences and soon repress them as unworthy and disloyal. 177 771

The younger generation tend to shirk unpleasant responsibilities. Thus Jim refused to take over the family office of keeper of the rain-medicine, fearing the risk of sterility which handling of this medicine entails. The absence of many adult men, who are away as migrant labourers, makes the organization of the great ceremonials difficult. Reconciliation and the restitutive sanction are no longer the great forces they used to be, since the closely knit system of reciprocities, everyone's dependence upon day-to-day mutualities and the imperativeness for social life of co-operation, no longer exert the irresistible pressure on the parties to carry out compromises reached in the courts. Aggrieved litigants, reluctant still to invoke European intervention, increasingly resort to magicians who have developed a whole new system of revenge magic to even up matters. The trend is to put their faith in magical retaliation rather than in the sanction of reciprocity. 178

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *munywalo* scheme.

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagambi, a man of thirty-five, scorned to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*mugaula*) has in practice a high status.

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *mugaula*, and when he died the *mugaula* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *mugaula* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *mugaula* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *mugaula* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, even jealousies, between a man and his *mugaula* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Muhale complained, not that his son was living with a *mugaula*, but that the *mugaula's* laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *mugaula* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. A man who illicitly lives upon a woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*madilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father of the porridge bowls' (*ramadilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *munywalo* and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *munywalo* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *munywalo* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

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578 unmanageable complication arises, unless there is agreement between all the persons interested: the son to whom the cattle should have been allotted, the daughter from whose marriage they came, the house established by these cattle, and the father himself. Tensions arise in many other ways: neglect of one wife and favouritism of another in respect of economic services, interference with the independence of the houses, and so on. Unwillingness to co-operate in the home and in fulfilling the wider group obligations is a more potent cause of trouble than adultery; and witchcraft, except as a symptom of tensions otherwise created, takes a minor place; and neither adultery nor witchcraft as such can snap the *munywalo* bonds.

426 The character of these tensions may be briefly illustrated by the case
595 of Muvirwa and Mara. Faced with starvation, Mara obtained cattle
684 from Muvirwa (who was a friend, not a relative), promising, in accordance with the 'mud-stamper' institution, a daughter in exchange. In fact, this daughter, the little 'mud-stamper', as she is called, because she is too young to stamp mealies, was not yet in existence. That is not unusual in these transactions, which require that the 'mud-stamper' shall in due course be given gratuitously to the benefactor; and thereby the two lineages become cattle-linked, so that, for instance, Mara and his descendants would have to offer brides and receive cattle and Muvirwa and his descendants would offer cattle and receive brides. If Mara had no brides to offer, Muvirwa would still have to give cattle; otherwise the link might be broken. The 'mud-stamper', after reaching years of discretion, may dislike the benefactor, who is usually already old and decrepit, and that may lead to conflicts. In this instance, when Mara's daughter entered her *khoba* initiation, Muvirwa, as is customary, paid the *levala* goat, for a bridegroom for whom a bride is 'born' must, so to speak, nurse her and 'grow' her. Not long afterwards the 'mud-stamper' died. Mara offered another daughter and, as the girl had died before actual marriage, no further *munywalo* was required from Muvirwa. But the substitute, having grown up, married and then deserted Muvirwa, who was already very old; she ran away to a lover, Mara himself conniving at the desertion. Mara returned some cattle to Muvirwa, thereby severing the relationship, and promised the balance when the lover had paid *munywalo*.

684 Years passed and nothing happened. Muvirwa eventually brought an action, which Magaebia, Mara's wife, contested. She said that on the death of the 'mud-stamper' she had offered to return the cattle, but this was refused, that the substitute was forced to marry Muvirwa against her will, and that the religious ceremony was omitted. Muvirwa replied that he had already received seventeen of the twenty-four cattle (the number to which the original eight had increased), that it was thus not he who had broken the relationship, and that the religious ceremony, which for various reasons could not be held in Mara's village, had taken place at the village of Magaebia's brother. The court could not but side with Mara, but it tried hard to reduce his claim, for twenty-four cattle, it said, were an enormous number. Then recriminations broke out between Mara and his wife, which revealed a many-sided conflict in the

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643 578 After the fire rite there follows the rite of opening the door, which will determine the identity of the heir. No one knows for certain who will succeed. Some nobles, availing themselves of the interregnum, mobilize their supporters, and all come fully armed, for there is sure to be some display of hostility. Even in 1896, at the accession of Mujaji III, a son of a wife of Mujaji II and great councillor marched upon the capital supported by the Mahasha, but there was no strife, as Mujaji III's followers were prepared. The rival claimants, in the presence of the [342] assembled people, go one by one to the hut in which the queen died and which (like one of the queen's huts even to-day) has two doors. They approach the door one by one, address the spirit of the deceased, saying who they are, and lightly touch the door. It is arranged that the most ambitious claimants go first, and those who are indifferent as regards their prospects last, the true heir to whom the door will open taking his place between them.

The spirit of the deceased, by opening the door, chooses the successor. The new queen, taking the axe, spear, and shield of her royal predecessors, escapes by the other door. She may have to flee, if the party of a rival is too strong, but in time she will be formally presented by a great councillor to the people. There is doubt as to the fate of the person who held the door from within: some say he must die, others that he is given a wife and sent out of the country. There is much uncertainty and secrecy about what happened in 1896; it is even doubted whether the door was opened. The reason lay in the fear of European intervention, for just previously the Boer General had been deceived and the lowveld tribes conquered, as described in Chapter I. Cowed by disaster, the Lovedu wisely decided to emphasize, not their own ritual, but the formal confirmation of the accession by the European.

643 578 173 The opening of the door, as known among neighbouring tribes, serves chiefly to resolve conflicts between rivals to the throne. It sometimes co-exists with institutional predetermination of the heir—for instance, where he must be the chief son of a wife married with special ceremonies and with cattle contributed by the whole tribe, the issue of a house in which the tribesmen all have a stake. In such circumstances conflicts arise, and European authority throws its weight on the side of 'constitutional arrangements' rather than 'coincidence'. In some tribes the opening of the door serves to strengthen the claim of the institutional heir; that is the case where there is no great massing of institutions behind the chief heir and conflicts are liable to break out if there are several claimants of standing. Among the Lovedu, succession was quite uncertain, the personal choice of the chief, not primogeniture, being stressed. The great son seldom succeeded, it is said, because the second child was favoured; and that is one explanation of the origin of the Mamaila, Sekhɔpɔ, and Rakhwadu tribes, for the great son was driven out of the country. In traditional history the 'Filler of the Rivers', who was chief son and seized the throne, had to make way for the 'Drainer of the Rivers', who proved to be the choice of his father and to whom the rain secrets had been imparted. Khashani, the great son, was expelled by Mugɔdɔ, his younger brother (we do not know whether he was the second son), of whom it is

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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the 643
people. Khashani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as 578
well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugɔdɔ, 173
which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugɔdɔ was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwareni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by 643
them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by 644
an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong [847]
social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much 643
stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in 578
doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and 687
her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely 644
expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled

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643 to join him in exile. The conflict was so serious that the tribe seethed
578 with disaffection, though the queen seemed to be torn between love for
687 her daughter and disapproval of the whole episode. The present conflict
644 is in many respects typical. There is, as there used to be in the past, strife between the old councillors, who lose their power when the old queen dies, and the new councillors, who side with the new queen. The latter gradually supplant the former, but regard with fear the day when the friends of the heir in turn will oust them. This struggle is very real, and seems to reflect a more fundamental conflict; for the exalted purpose of the royal institutions exacts an unnatural sacrifice by the queen in order to make way for the heir she naturally loves.

643 The whole royal complex is perfectly logical once it is granted that there
644 must be queens, that succession is uncertain, and that ritual suicide is the guarantee of the chief's divinity. In a society in which the 'sister' (*khadi*) is priestess, her great religious role, still seen to-day among neighbouring tribes where chiefs are males, falls to the queen among the Lovedu. The ideal, imperfectly actualized since queens replaced kings, still persists that the *khadi* of the chief should have power and be given a large district to rule. In theory the brother of the chief is the great councillor, general, and judge. But in practice the complications set up by having queens throws these arrangements out of gear. True to pattern, the greatest district head is to-day a woman, who is a 'sister' to the queen and, though a 'sister' threefold (through mother, legal father, and paternal uncle), she is not the uterine or ritual 'sister'. At present the relatives through the queen's mother, not through Mujaji II her legal father, are important councillors, but it is not unlikely that in the next reign the great councillors will be the present heir's relatives through her legal father, the queen, who is also her physiological mother.

642 Owing to the inapplicability of the term 'council' to Lovedu arrange-
643 ments, we need say only a few words on this subject. There is no need
644 of a visible organization to support Lovedu court life, which is ceremonious, but not politically oriented. Power and authority derive from the queen's divine appointment, her exclusive secret of rain-making, and her strategic position in the social web. She is neither a military nor a political leader; she does not even have a priesthood organization to assist her in her function as high-priest. There are confidential advisers, but they neither constitute the more or less definite secret council (*sephiri*) of some neighbouring tribes nor necessarily function as political councillors; on the contrary the former, having assisted in the accession of the queen, are in institutional conflict with the latter, who later gain political control. The councillors represent the assertion of power by the rising generation of men in the sphere of law and politics as against women and the older generation in ritual, religion, and the social system. They are part mainly of the court (*khɔnɔ*) and the tribal gathering (*khiɔijɔ*), two indeterminate bodies.

644 Confidential advisers are mainly important district heads; councillors
643 are always residents in the capital. Both are relatives, but, in the case of
634 the confidants, not necessarily close relatives of the queen. In the inner royal circle, the closest kin are necessarily those reckoned through the

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If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own hut (and in the old days a cow into the bargain) and be allowed to co-habit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private councils of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Vafanoni* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *vafanoni*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads.

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *mufanoni* to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. Only some of the *vafanoni* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *vafanoni* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves Mujaji and they are described as 'the heads of Muhale', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing.

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noblemen she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *munywalo* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *munywalo* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *munywalo* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.'

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

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illustrated in a proverb the sense of which is that you may be the unsuspecting victim of the witchcraft of your closest friend, or, more literally, Belegwane, the enemy, does not care; [so intimate with him are you that] you eat with him. [yet] he is the foe that eats you (*Belegwane mulala a khi wena; u la nayo, gi mulala was hu la wena*). And people chased away as witches from one area or tribe never have any difficulty in being accepted into another. 754

Considerations such as the return of cattle are often strong enough to deter a man from chasing away a wife who has bewitched some one in the village (he would never chase away a wife merely for bewitching outsiders). When once we asked a man why he kept a wife who had been found guilty of bewitching her fellow wife, he replied, 'She is my witch' (*gi mulzi wa ga*). Being fond of her, he merely built her a separate village. Some people who have never been publicly accused of witchcraft are nevertheless known to be bad witches. In such cases, people may fear them and try to keep on good terms with them in order to avoid evil consequences.

One of the most fruitful studies in regard to witchcraft is the investigation of the relationship of the people who bewitch one another. Two main categories must be distinguished, viz. cases in which relatives bewitch one another and cases in which the evil is sent by non-relatives. The Lovedu maintain, and the opinion is borne out both by one's general impressions and by the facts, that witches injure mainly those with whom they are in close contact—that is, relatives and neighbours—and that it is difficult to bewitch a stranger. And it is remarkable that of fifty cases of witchcraft observed by us as they came before the *khoro* and given in the table below, 70 per cent. involve close relatives. Not all relatives are apt to bewitch one, but both men and women are equally liable to harm either men or women. A mother never, it is believed, bewitches her own children, and there is even a saying to the effect that a *mugome* who points out one's mother is not able to divine (*mugome u a tia vummahu a u khomi hu loula*); and, although brother and cattle-linked sister sometimes hate one another, openly as well as secretly, they cannot harm one another, it is said, because they would use 'the medicine bag of the [same] mother'. Similarly neither a son nor a daughter can bewitch the mother. 754 578

The most prolific single source of witchcraft is the conflict of co-wives (24 per cent. of all cases). Their relationship in the polygynous family is a difficult one; the houses are independent, not subservient to one another, yet they are in close contact, and the insistence upon compromises occasions many mental conflicts. Spouses also bewitch one another, but wives kill or injure their husbands more frequently than husbands kill their wives; it is said that a husband who has only one wife will never bewitch her, except perhaps among Christians, who can have only one wife. The conflict of spouses is an aspect of a wider institutional conflict, that between relatives-in-law. If they have irksome obligations towards one another, the society insists that their relationship shall be characterized by mutual respect and helpfulness and that their difficulties, especially *masymalo* difficulties, are to be resolved as far as possible by the methods and procedure of the *khoro*. These factors explain why, [595]

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754 578 despite the many sources of tension between them, the cases are not, as one might expect, overwhelmingly predominant: only 20 per cent. of the total given in our table are cases of wives or their relatives bewitching husbands or their relatives, and only 16 per cent. husbands or their relatives bewitching wives or their relatives.

What is even more arresting is the fact that easily aggrieved relatives who, as it is phrased, are 'very sensitive' and readily nurse grievances, never or rarely bewitch: such are cattle-linked brothers or sisters, father's sisters, fathers, father's brothers and grandparents. It is even clear from what we have already said that they are believed to have repressed complaints, but they cannot project as witchcraft the displeasures or misfortunes or failures upon those who must, but do not, respect and humour them. They can and do cause illness, but it is not by way of witchcraft, and the resolution of the conflict is by pardon and *hu phasa*, through the gods, not through *vulsi*. In other words, witchcraft is a reflection, not of tensions as such, whether open or repressed, but of tensions within the framework of cultural mechanisms for avoiding their being projected as witchcraft. They must be studied in the whole configuration of institutions and social values: the permissible or approved remedies, the interposition of the hierarchy of age and rank between competing individuals, the compromises and reconciliations that are insisted upon, and the extent to which mental drives are conditioned to the cultural pattern or allowed outlets or are blocked by culturally stressed values.

The incidence of witchcraft between strangers is much more intelligible to us, because it arises in situations of conflict that are not very different from our own. But the percentage of these cases (30 per cent.), even when we include the 10 per cent. of cases between distant kin who are neighbours rather than relatives, shows how largely the social structure is built upon the kin.

754 578 595 The following table represents a very broad analysis of fifty cases of witchcraft that we observed as they came before the *khoro* and that may be simplified for statistical presentation:

Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (*a*) House or co-wife against house or co-wife	Co-wife	Co-wife	1	Jealousy about lovers; neglect by husband	
	Co-wife	Co-wife and child of co-wife	2	Jealousy about children and husband's attention	
	Co-wife	Child of co-wife	2	Disagreements about *munyuolo*	

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (*a*) House or co-wife against house or co-wife—*cont.*	Co-wife and her mother	Co-wife's child	2	Favouritism of husband and other mixed motives	
	Inherited wife	Co-wife and her children	2	Use of cattle of one house by another and questions of prestige	
	Widow	Fellow widow's child	1	Property arrangements	
	Wife of brother	Wife of another brother	1	Complex jealousies	
	Son of co-wife	Chief son and his wife	1	Status and position	24
(*b*) Wife against husband	Wife	Husband	2	Friction, favouritism of other wives, position	
	Wife and/or wife's mother	Husband's adulterine child or lover	4	Sexual jealousy and neglect of wife	
	Wife	Husband's sister's child	1	Disagreement about marriage of children and *munywalo*	
	Wife	Husband's brother, his wife, or his child	2	Position, jealousy	
	Wife's mother	Husband's child	1	Disagreements	20

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
(c) Husband against wife	Husband	Wife	1	Pre-marital seduction and *munywalo* trouble	
	Husband	Wife's adulterine child	2	Husband impotent; sexual jealousy	
	Husband	Wife's sister	1	Husband jilted	
	Husband	Brother's son's wife and her mother	1	Revenge for misfortune (illness)	
	Husband	Wife's brother's daughter's husband	1	Wife's brother refused his daughter as wife to witch's son	
	Husband's mother	Wife		Unfaithfulness of wife	
	Husband's mother	Wife's sister	1	Wife's sister jilted witch	16
(d) Parent and own child	Son	Father	1	Son wished to oust father from position as district head	
	Father	Son	1	Son cohabited with young wife of father	6
	Father	Son's wife	1	Son cohabited with inherited wife of father	
(e) Uterine brothers and sisters	Elder sister	Younger sister	1	Younger sister jilted elder sister's husband	
	Sister (and mother)	Brother's child	1	Brother resents power of sister, and *munywalo* trouble	4
Total relatives					70

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
II. *Strangers* (*a*) Sexual conflicts	Girl	Lover	1	Lover jilted girl	
	Boy	Lover	1	Lover engaged to her cross-cousin	
	Adulterer	Married woman's child	2	Loss of fine and right to woman or child	
	Commoner (orphan)	Girl of noble birth	1	Refusal of marriage by parents who had adopted orphan	10
(*b*) Various conflicts	Man and his mother	Whole village	1	Status, loss of prestige and amenities	
	Woman	Distant male relative	1	Refusal to implement economic arrangement *re* partner-ploughing	
	Widow	Distant male relative	1	Indirect economic rivalries	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Stranger held cattle that came from witch as *munywalo*	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Envy of sewing machine acquired in town by neighbour	
	Man	Driver of car	1	Jealousy *re* privileges secured because he could drive car	
	Male friends	Man	1	Man's popularity with girls, owing to dancing ability, resented	
	Woman	Rival	1	Rivals for councillor's attention, sexual and otherwise	
	'Mother' of *khɔba*	*Khɔba* initiate	1	Initiate who is to marry cross-cousin wanted by witch as daughter-in-law	
	Shangana-Tonga	Lovedu man	1	Competition for job in town	20
Total strangers					30

It will take us too far afield to discuss the nature of the conflicts in detail in the various cases. But a few observations are perhaps necessary.

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754 578 Firstly, the cause of the conflict is not necessarily the one assigned by the parties, though the objective situation is often seen by others. Sometimes very trivial causes are given, but they have to be interpreted in their total setting. Secondly, as regards non-relatives, it is said that nobles are sometimes 'seen in the dice', but they are never publicly accused by mere commoners; it will be noticed that, on the other hand, there is one case of a noble accusing a commoner. Rich people who are not nobles enjoy no special immunity; unpleasant people, especially those who are quarrelsome, ambitious, or competitive, are often accused. Conflicts arise owing to close contacts, but may continue after the parties are separated, and witchcraft may be sent any distance, even as far as Johannesburg. Thirdly, the table does not give a number of types of cases; they are merely the cases that came before the court, many of them being dismissed as nonsense. Finally, although the motives are complicated in most of the cases, it is possible to say that jilted love or refusal of sexual advances is an important factor in about 32 per cent. of the cases recorded.

But we must not think of Freudian repressions, for sexual affairs are given recognition in the institution of *vuḓabu*. We must consider lovers' conflicts in the cultural setting. The sexual urge is not repressed, but the lover whose advances are rejected, though he has opportunities elsewhere, feels aggrieved. The girl, whose choice of a marital partner is limited, seeks extra-marital adventure, but it must be clandestine and occasions difficulties, and the situation between lover, husband, and wife is an uneasy one in which ill-feeling readily arises. The man who has a child by a lover has no institutional claim on that child, and he may be given away by the woman and have to pay a heavy fine, with the result that he is angered. There are also dangers in sexual intercourse and, if a man or woman suffers as a result, he may take revenge. In other words, the conflict situation must be ascribed, not to repressions, but to the incidents of the whole cultural system. Similar considerations apply whenever we analyse any of the other situations of conflict. It is far beyond the purpose of this book to undertake an analysis of the psychological aspects of these conflicts, but we would say that witchcraft is to be explained mainly, not by psycho-pathology, but by a relativistic psychology, arising out of the values and institutional configuration of the culture.

When a man is ill he will immediately, if he has an enemy or has had a quarrel, think of the possibility of witchcraft. This impulse is encouraged by the technique of the dice, which, while indicating the totem or sex of the witch, leaves the client to decide to whom among his friends, enemies, or relatives these must apply. A person with a grievance or an unpopular person is more likely than others to be thought responsible for harm. When some cattle of the queen, usually used by Mudumi for ploughing, were traded to a European, he complained most bitterly. A week later when lightning struck a storage enclosure in the royal village Mudumi was immediately suspect. Some of the cattle belonging to Setemane's inherited wife had been taken by the police, together with those of her husband, in settlement of a debt. She grumbled continuously about her loss. A year and a half later, on the death of a child of her fellow wife, she was suspected at once and, after consultation of the

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bones, her husband chased her away. A person with an unpleasant face very often earns the reputation of being a witch, even though nothing has been definitely attributed to him. A very old person, too, is apt to be thought a witch; his long life is attributed to his bartering the lives of younger relatives for his own. Just as people with grievances are suspected of witchcraft, so successful ones are thought to be specially liable to being bewitched—those who reap better crops than others, successful hunters, those favoured by their European masters. On the other hand, their success is also liable to be attributed to witchcraft on their part.

It has been said that witchcraft is a reflection of the intense hatreds of which the Bantu mind is capable. True, the European is appalled at the seriousness of the crimes attributed to witches for the most trivial reasons. The mother's brother's wife kills the child of her husband's sister who is living with them because he eats too much: 'he finishes our corn'; because a woman no longer loves him, a man not only causes intense suffering to her during a prolonged birth, but also kills the child; jealous of the large crop reaped by his neighbour, a man sends lightning to destroy his whole harvest. These things do not, however, present themselves in this way to the mind of the Lovedu. A Lovedu argues, not from real cause to effect in such matters, but from effect to cause, which makes it all appear in a somewhat different light. A child dies and he looks around him for a possible cause. He thinks of possible motives and enemies, but can find none. He consults the dice, which point to a woman of such-and-such a totem. The only one to answer this description is the mother's brother's wife. She happens to be known as ungenerous, perhaps she was one day heard to comment on having an extra mouth to feed. The misfortune is thus projected upon her: but it is not a psychopathic, it is an approved cultural escape technique or compensation. In cases of illness or death, people tend to seek the cause in the direction of traditional jealousies. A wife of the queen dies in childbirth. The cause cannot be a jilted lover, because she and the father of the child were on the best of terms. But he is a married man, and women are known through jealousy to cause difficult childbirth to the lovers of husbands. The death must have been caused by his wife (even though she lives miles away). Nothing is done in the matter; moreover, there is no general agreement in the verdicts of different doctors. Six months later a young girl in the village dies suddenly of blood poisoning; her mother is known to have had quarrels with the deceased wife of the queen. It is therefore generally rumoured that the grave must have been treated to 'send back' death and the death of the child indicates that her mother was the witch responsible. Nothing more is said of the lover's wife.

Witchcraft provides an explanation of the worst evils, such as sickness and death, that befall man; it is the principle of evil, the Bantu Satan. Illness caused naturally or by ancestors is generally curable; it is only witchcraft that really kills. It was at first a source of great amazement to us that a man could find it possible to live on socially good terms with some one who had killed his father, attending the same beer-parties and able to converse in friendly fashion. But unless the case has been publicly dealt with and the witch smelt out, the evidence is considered incomplete,

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177 (workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian
795 reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians
184 are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement, occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities, Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion, develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.

177 There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the
795 tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft
184 which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of
● 578 the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to
754 administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers. Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven underground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain, albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witchcraft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witchcraft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the 177
groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when 146
we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is 182
right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one 177
of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was 825
that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police 177
boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doc- 754
tored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European 578
justice are compensated by magic (*hu nicicla*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digɔma* and the *zwiḍajani* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching 177
but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugɔ*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*figehela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *dere*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home- 634
stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, 562
a married woman who does not live in the area was made 429
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from 604
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting 592
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable 604
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's 634
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to 643
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The 634
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some- 602
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thoga monye bo dula muduhulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging 592
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance 592
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portion 591
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become 591
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels 577
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that 583
Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be 588
averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maseriba because she is *khadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho ruka leloko*)'. This desire to keep alive 582
the links between brother and sister and to maintain and 581
renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dzoss moloko*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter 582
marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations con- 583
nected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 2a), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there 586
were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1930's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's 582
daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the 58
mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price 602
are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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between descendants of brother and sister that is valued. In cases where a man has received cattle on the 'security' of a small girl, to all appearances a predominantly economic transaction, the creditor also hands over cattle a second time when the girl comes over to be married. This is puzzling. When asked about it the Lobedu usually quote the proverb '*mobula ndo oa nywala*—the opener or establisher of a "house" pays marriage cattle', i.e., every girl commands bride-price. The explanation possibly lies in regarding the passing of property in the case of wife No. 2 of D in Figure 2a and also the first handing over of property in an economic transaction on the security of a girl as the creation of a cattle-link similar to handing over to a brother the bride-price of his sister to acquire

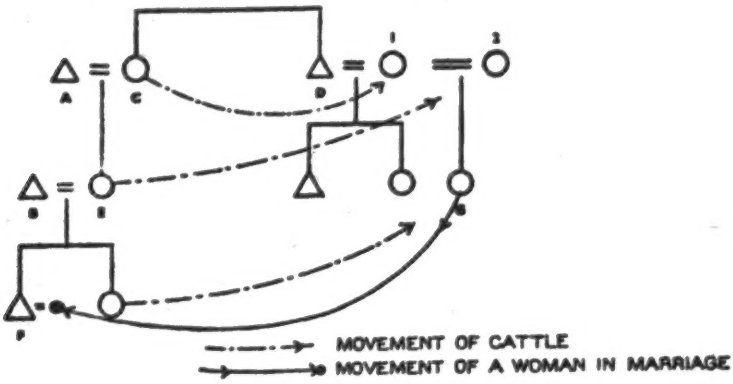

FIG. 2A.

a wife. The subsequent transactions are then on a par with ordinary preferential marriage between the children of cattle-linked brother and sister.

If, in contrast to the case illustrated in Figure 2a where the cattle-linked sister has no son to marry her brother's daughter, it is the brother who has no daughter to give in marriage to his sister's son then sometimes, as in a recent case, the preferred marriage takes place in the next generation. Here (see Figure 2b) the daughter (G) of the son of C's cattle-linked half-brother (D) married the son (F) of the son of the cattle-linked sister (C). In this case E had a brother to use her cattle and there was no need for her cattle to be sent to the mother's brother to establish a new 'house' or 'open a gate', as it is sometimes phrased.

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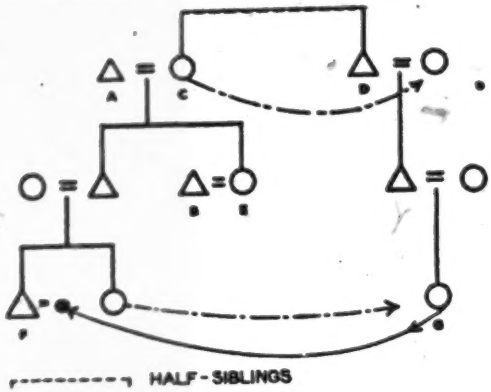

FIG. 2B.

Once a marriage has taken place, even where originating in an economic arrangement, the relationship is self-perpetuating as is shown in Sedena's case. Sedena's elder brother (A in Figure 3) used the bride-price of their only sister; so when Makeakati, his daughter (C), was born this elder brother said to Sedena (B), 'There are your cattle', indicating his baby daughter. When the girl was eight years old and her father already dead, Sedena (B) took her to Mogodo (D), a relative (a classificatory 'sister's son', descendant of his father's half-brother), and, indicating that she was his *ledolo*, asked for cattle to marry a wife. He was given cattle which he used to marry Marita (E). In due course when Makeakati (C) grew up she was sent to marry Mogodo (D), who gave five head of cattle as bride-price (five to eight is the usual amount). Many years later Marita's only daughter, Mojaji (F), followed her 'sister'

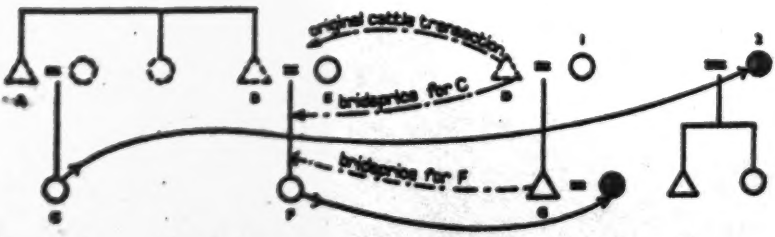

FIG. 3. Preferential marriages arising out of an economic arrangement.

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58 602 597 and married Nakampe (G), Mogodo's son by another wife. Makeakati's (C's) 'house' had first claim on the daughter of the man (her father's brother) who had used her cattle, but as her son was a Christian the girl was given to the son of a different 'house'.

Once a link has been created by a marriage a bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship follows, which tends to be reinforced not only by one but by numerous subsequent marriages. Thus, A married a girl from lineage B. Both his sons and his grandson followed in his footsteps (see Figure 4).

595 602 The same tendency is present in Lobedu polygyny where the sororate is very popular. Most Lobedu who are not Christians have more than one wife. But it will almost always be found

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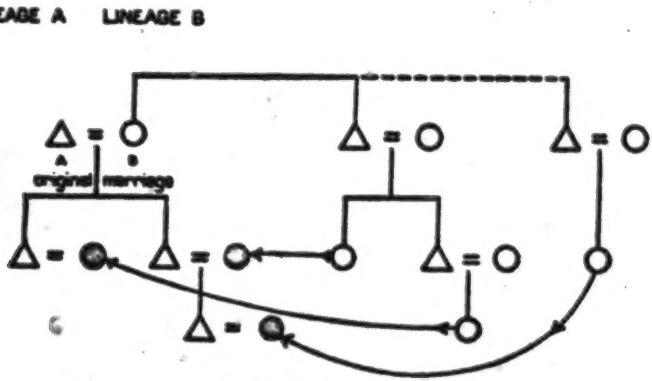

FIG. 4. Reinforcement down the generations of a marriage link between two lineages.

595 602 that at least one is a sister or younger relative of one of the other wives. Thus M, a chief councillor, married seven wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's daughter; (2) his mother's half-brother's daughter; (3) his mother's half-brother's daughter's son's daughter; (4) a non-relative; (5) a non-relative; (6) his mother's brother's son's daughter (brother's daughter to No. 2 and therefore a wife's brother's daughter); (7) a sister to (1) by the same father but a different mother.

S, a man in his thirties, has three wives: (1) his mother's mother's brother's daughter; (2) a non-relative and (3) the uterine sister of his first wife.

Old K had five wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

(h) The incidence of cross-cousin marriage and its variations in two generations of descendants of A (counting only the actual members of his lineage as shown in Figure 9) over a time-span of over sixty years (i.e., from about 1895 to 1962) was 31 per cent (nine out of twenty-nine marriages). 582 613

The arrangements in the above lineage segment are by no means unusual. This lineage is that of a district head, but it is representative of numbers of cases that could be chosen from among non-Christian traditionalists who still form the majority of the tribe. 58 613 178

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CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Mate selection and marriage exchanges as reflections of the social structure—social and psychological aspects of nuptial rites—the handling of the themes of sex and concubinage, of barrenness and premature death in the marriage situation.

FROM mummeries and masks we turn to marriage and *munyualo* (bride-price). The secrecy of the *digoma* contrasts strangely with the publicity of marriage ceremonial; but they are both cultural devices for dealing with cultural problems. The hidden forces in nature and man are intractable and can be brought under control only by rephrasing them as mysteries, the fear of which is overcome by man-made initiations and cults. Marriage is also an initiation, but its complicated ceremonial is concerned chiefly with laying the concrete foundations of the social structure. This is a gigantic and delicate task, almost beyond the capacity of the culture. Fortunately, we can see more clearly than in the case of the *digoma* how this task has been accomplished, but unfortunately we shall have space merely to glance at the larger features instead of examining closely the exquisite workmanship and superlative ornamentation.

It is not easy to appreciate the immense implications of marriage among the Lovedu. For one thing, the concomitant cattle exchanges transform it into something wholly unlike the contract between two individuals of different sex among us. The fact that a Lovedu woman may, just like a man, marry a wife, warns us that we are in a world entirely different from our own. The elaborate ceremonial reflects the enormous importance of marriage and of the network of links that are forged by the cattle that pass. The bonds that are created in this manner can be put to all manner of uses. They form the basis of the *munyualo* ring of exchanges. They hold together the political system, incorporating as they do foreign elements in the tribe, and casting the net of relationship over the whole country. Marriage and *munyualo* provide the pattern even for dealing with homicide: the murder is not avenged; by handing over cattle or by giving his daughter, the murderer and his relatives become enmeshed in the network of exchanges; he is transformed from criminal to kinsman and a potential blood feud is turned into the reciprocal relations between the people of the bride and those of the groom. A man threatened with starvation when his crops have failed and his cattle have died can, by linking himself to the *munyualo* ring of another, save both himself and his family.

But the most startling proof of the importance of Lovedu marriage lies therein that the tribunals of the *khoro*—in other words, the organization that corresponds to our legal system—are mainly concerned with marriage and *munyualo* tangles; the *raison d'être* of the *khoro* and its law appear to be the preservation of the marriage system. The whole genius of *khoro* law and of *khoro* judicial proceedings is the genius of resolving tensions within the gigantic superstructure built upon marriage and its

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581 associated institutions. In these circumstances, it is patently absurd for
182 us to orientate ourselves as if marriage affects only personal relationships
612 between two individuals. To regard marriage as primarily a sexual partnership or even as an institution for promoting the procreation and rearing of children is to misunderstand completely its great role in the social organization.

581 As the main function of marriage is to create and perpetuate alliances
582 between groups of people, sexual or temperamental compatibility between the prospective spouses is not regarded as an ideal. Emphasis on romantic love, and pre-marital sexual experimentation, with a view to testing out compatibility, would be incongruous with the prevailing type of marriage. Mate selection in its ideal form is socially regulated, and the ideal form is the basic pattern of all marriages. The social organization determines whom one shall marry, and the parents, not the individuals concerned, set the machinery of the organization into motion. The ideal marriage is marriage of a man with his mothers' brother's daughter or of a woman with her father's sister's son. This does not mean that all cross-cousins are preferred mates. It is, for instance, considered irregular for a man to marry his father's sister's daughter; that cases of such marriages are found should not surprise us. There are irregularities in every sphere of culture, and the rules of mate selection are particularly liable to be upset because of the complex interrelations that arise in the social system. The fundamental rule is that a man must marry, not the daughter of any brother of his mother, but the daughter of that brother who has used his mother's marriage cattle to obtain a wife for himself. His mother and his mother's brother are cattle-linked sister and brother because, when she married, the cattle that came in were handed to the brother for obtaining a wife: the cattle of the sister are said to 'build a hut for her brother'. We may thus say that a man must marry a daughter of his cattle-linked maternal uncle, and we may call her his 'cattle-linked cross-cousin'.

But the Lovedu phrase the matter rather differently and more significantly. They say that the sister has 'built the house of her brother' (the cattle-linked brother), that therefore she 'has a gate' by which she may enter his house, this gate being 'the gate which the cattle seek', and that it is her right to demand from the 'house built by her cattle' a daughter who must come to her as her daughter-in-law to stamp and cook for her. Note that the right is not phrased as the right of her son to obtain his wife from that house; note further that the right is in respect of the house—that is, of the wife of the cattle-linked brother, not in respect of the brother. That wife is the *mmoyi* (returner) of the sister, the person who is obliged to return her daughter to the place whence the cattle came; and it does not matter if in the house of the sister there is no son to marry this daughter. The *mmoyi* must send her daughter if requested, and, if cattle are offered, to be the daughter-in-law of her husband's cattle-linked sister, whether that sister has a son or not; for it is the sister's right to be served and helped, especially in her old age, by the daughter of the house which she has established. The ideal is that a girl should not be married to her father's sister's husband or, in

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other words, that a man should not marry his wife's brother's daughter. 581 582
But one finds a suggestive number of cases of this marriage and, what is noteworthy is that even to-day a girl still jokingly calls her father's sister's husband *mamma* (husband) and, it is said, not long ago regularly called him 'husband', while the girl's own husband was 'child' (*ymana*) to her. These vestiges may reflect a rather different system, not unknown in tribes further north which Lovedu *manywalo* arrangements have reshaped.

The sister may, as we have said, demand that her cattle-linked brother send his daughter either to be the wife of her son or, if she has no son, to be her daughter-in-law and, in the latter case, the sister 'marries' her cattle-linked brother's daughter on behalf of a supposititious son. If the demand is not acceded to, whether the reason be that the daughter refuses to go or her parents refuse to fulfil their obligation, the results may be disastrous. The sister (or her husband) may 'pull down the house she built at her brother's' by taking back her cattle, and she may give them to some one else who will establish a house that is prepared to fulfil its obligations; or, if the cattle have already passed on, in the chain of exchanges, from the wife of the cattle-linked brother to that wife's brother or, further still, the 'roots of the cattle' may be 'followed', perhaps involving the snapping of the chain at several points. The whole system of interrelations created by the cattle may, in such a case, be thrown out of gear and the repercussions may be so widespread that the whole country is said 'to be spoilt'. There are, however, many safety devices and the genius for effecting compromises ensures the isolation of the stresses and strains to manageable limits.

The ideal form of marriage, that of a man with his cattle-linked cross-cousin, turns out to be an inevitable consequence of the whole social system, the ground pattern of which is determined by kinship obligations though the detailed arrangements are regulated by the cattle-linking exchanges. It is conceived of not so much as a cross-cousin marriage as of a niece performing an obligation towards her cattle-linked aunt. The conception of a marriage is not wholly submerged, but it stands out far less boldly than the conception of the duty of a niece to love, cherish, and obey her cattle-linked aunt. The central feature, the pivot upon which the whole system is conceived to turn, is the passing of the cattle from a sister, by whose marriage they come in, to her uterine brother, to be used by him for the purpose of acquiring a wife; and from the wife of the brother they pass on to her uterine brother and so on *ad infinitum*. Brother and sister of the same house are cattle-linked, but each is also linked to a partner by the marriage validated by the cattle. The sister-brother cattle link and the husband-wife marriage-plus-cattle link form a continuous chain from sister to brother to wife of brother to brother of wife of brother and so on, which is doubled and redoubled in the second generation, when the same interlinking takes place and the son of the sister marries the daughter of the brother, the brother receiving cattle and the sister a daughter-in-law, while the son of the brother marries the daughter of the brother of his wife. It will be noticed that the three essential links are those between brother and

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581 sister, between husband and wife and between cattle-linked cross-cousins,
582 and these links, as well as the whole network of subsidiary links, arise from the implications of marriage and cattle-linking. The brothers who receive the cattle from the sisters return daughters to them and again receive cattle; the brothers become the nucleus of a group providing brides, and hence, from the point of view of the sisters and their children, they are the brides or parents-in-law (*vamakhulu*), while the sister's husbands are, from the point of view of the brothers and their children, the group supplying bridegrooms (*vatsani*) or sons-in-law (*vaguhulu*). The *vamakhulu* give brides and receive cattle; the *vaguhulu* give cattle and receive brides.

582 That is the complex network in which cross-cousin marriage is enmeshed. Cattle-linked cross-cousins are said to be 'born for' one another; a man is said to marry where his father has married, a woman is said to go to her father's sister (thus marrying where the latter has married). Actually over 60 per cent. of the men marry the cattle-linked cross-cousin 'born for them'; and she, whether married first or last, becomes the chief wife. This means that she bears the chief son. It may happen that she is not married at all during the lifetime of the man she was 'born for'; she may be too young or he may die prematurely; yet she will be the wife who must, for any important purpose, bear the chief son. If the husband
588 'born for her' has died or never comes into existence, and a successor to him is required in any position of importance, such as headship of a district, she will nevertheless be married to him; the cattle will pass and he who 'enters' will be some one else, chosen not by her, but by the group of the bridegrooms or, more precisely, the house of the non-existent bridegroom (which in practice more often than not means the mistress of that house). Of course, the system is not inflexible. When nothing of importance as regards status or position is at stake or, if the girl is headstrong and refuses to allow the chosen one to enter, she may 'pick up children in the bush'. But she has no right to marry any one else, though sometimes she is inherited by the brother of her supposititious spouse as if she were a widow; sometimes she merely goes to cook for her cattle-linked aunt and there bears children as if she were the chief wife of that aunt's son.

It is only a step from this situation to the further elaboration that allows a woman to marry a wife, not for her son, but for herself. If the system logically implies that a woman may have in her service a husbandless daughter-in-law doing all the work of a wife, by a slight extension of this conception she may actually marry a wife. There is ample precedent for this elaboration in the fact that the queen has wives; she is their 'husband' and to the children of her wives she is 'father' (*vubabe*). This model is followed by other women, especially women of importance and women who, as doctors and potters, have cattle of their own with which to obtain wives. In general, however, such women call their wife 'daughter-in-law', as though they had been married, not for themselves, but on behalf of a son.

582 It is not only these peculiar elaborations that result from the pivotal institutions of cattle-linked brother and sister and 'being born' for one

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583 There are scores of aspects we cannot even touch upon. There are rules as to the kind of cattle or other beasts that may properly be used as *munywalo*: the rules may seem curious to us, but they have their reason in social and other arrangements. The number seven is taboo, for [801] the seventh finger 'points', as does a witch when he says, 'You'll *see*,' and it is wrong so to point at one's in-laws, with whom co-operation is [825] essential. Similarly, as the size of the testicles of full-grown male animals is an insult, because it is a challenge, such uncastrated animals cannot be part of the *munywalo*. So also yellowish cattle presage jealousies between co-wives; they will cause the bride to run away. Marriage is patrilocal, otherwise a man is said 'to have been married by his wife'; it is good to live near, but not too near, one's wife's people; for, if proximity is an economic and social advantage, to live under the roof of the parents-in-law is to relinquish all authority in one's own home. Generally speaking, the bride's family do not call the bridegroom to help them with actual work, such as building huts or ploughing. But the idea of service instead of, or in addition to, *munywalo* is faintly reflected in the fact that men now still living were required towards the end of the ceremonial to build a hut for their parents-in-law. The rule was that, when bridegroom had completed the hut, he climbed to the roof and refused to come down until the bride was immediately released to go home with him and she by greeting (*hu lɔsha*) signified her willingness to come. Such a hut in case of divorce counted as one head of cattle. And perhaps we should add, though it is clearly implied in all we have said, that no one except the boy's parents contributes and no one except the house of the girl's mother receives the *munywalo*. More than that, a man cannot help the son of one house by taking the cattle of another, for it is said, 'One house cannot eat the property of another,' though this, as everything else, is subject to the supreme principle that 'if they agree', the rigidity of the rule may be relaxed. It may involve difficult readjustments, but agreement is conceived as being able to overcome the difficulties. Sometimes also a relative who has brought up the bride is given one of the beasts of her *munywalo*, but it is not a custom as in many tribes, it is merely a matter of agreement.

● 581 The sexual aspect of marriage is treated with great moderation. Among us, where love looms large and represents a romantic ideal when we are young, it more often than not ends in disillusionment when we are old. The structure of Lovedu society lays no stress upon sexual compatibility, and marriage almost completely ignores sexual adjustments. Co-operation and agreement as regards its main purposes, both economic and structural, not companionship of husband and wife, is the ideal. Agreement is the watchword of the society, the guarantee of harmonious relations between spouses as well as co-wives. In describing the possible relations and dispositions within the family, no phrase is more frequently used than the phrase, 'if they agree'. No custom, no rule, no arrangement, decreed by the laws of the family, are absolute; and because the *khɔrɔ* judicial proceedings deal with difficulties in the family and in the social structure, they also are guided and controlled by agreement and compromises. And so it is agreement, not sexual compatibility, which is the

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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense 581
marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the 837
muḑavu institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of completely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the purposes of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suckling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried people who have their lovers (*vaḑavu*). Nevertheless, a European finds it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grandmothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our preferences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should as often as not be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient 831
of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their 848
spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the 684
other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the *vyali*) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Ṭonga. The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men, but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy and was proudly worn by her younger sister; if not, the girl's people had to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity 831
be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. 848
Girls are still examined, especially at the *khoba*, but the matter is private; 847
and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sins 753
of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*ḑere* or *vulwedẓe vya vasadi*). A man gets *ḑere* from intercourse with a woman who has had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death from *ḑere* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter. 593

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *munywalo* scheme.

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagambi, a man of thirty-five, scorned to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*mugaula*) has in practice a high status.

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *mugaula*, and when he died the *mugaula* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *mugaula* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *mugaula* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *mugaula* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, even jealousies, between a man and his *mugaula* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Muhale complained, not that his son was living with a *mugaula*, but that the *mugaula's* laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *mugaula* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. A man who illicitly lives upon a woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*madilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father of the porridge bowls' (*ramadilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *munywalo* and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *munywalo* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *munywalo* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

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'I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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ships between the families involved but upon it rests the whole character of the domestic group. Payment of bride-price transfers the reproductive powers of the woman to the husband's agnatic group. The husband has genetricial as well as uxorial rights. Genetricial rights apply not only to any children born after the marriage whoever their biological father might be, but also in retrospect, so that any child born before marriage automatically becomes the child of whoever pays the bride-price, with full rights of succession and inheritance from its sociological father. There is thus, in contrast to other tribes such as the Zulu, no way in which a Lobedu man can obtain the right to his biological child other than by marrying its mother. Emphasis on sociological as opposed to biological fatherhood among the Lobedu is very strong and this is an important factor in Lobedu social structure. The rights of a father to a child involve control over it; the right to the bride-price of a daughter (subject to the right of her brother to marry with his sister's cattle and of her mother to the services of the woman married with her daughter's bride-price); and corresponding to his right to his daughter's bride-price the duty to help his son to marry. A father may and often does marry an additional wife with his daughter's bride-price. A father also has the right to be cared for in his old age by his sons.

The levirate is practised, the junior levirate being more common than the senior levirate. The brother raises seed to the deceased and takes over the responsibility of a father and husband though the children he begets are counted as belonging to his deceased brother. Frequently the heir, eldest son of the chief 'house' inherits a young wife of his father. In this case, similarly, the children born of the union are looked upon as the deceased's, i.e., as brothers and sisters of the heir, not his children. The sororate also is practised in all its forms, sororal polygyny being very common. Where a sister is sent to 'awaken the house (*ho dsosa ndo*)' of a barren or deceased wife full bride-price is due for her although, since bride-price is never an absolutely fixed amount, less may be asked for than in the first marriage.

The marriage of a woman transfers to her husband's group the right to her labour. Initially it is the husband's mother even more than the husband himself that benefits, as we shall

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Monoalo a o feds*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tsetse* (or *muduhulu*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*muduhulu*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that 583
Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be 588
averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maseriba because she is *khadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho ruka leloko*)'. This desire to keep alive 582
the links between brother and sister and to maintain and 581
renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dsosa moloko*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter 582
marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations con- 583
nected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 2a), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there 586
were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1930's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's 582
daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the 58
mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price 602
are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

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its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old. M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

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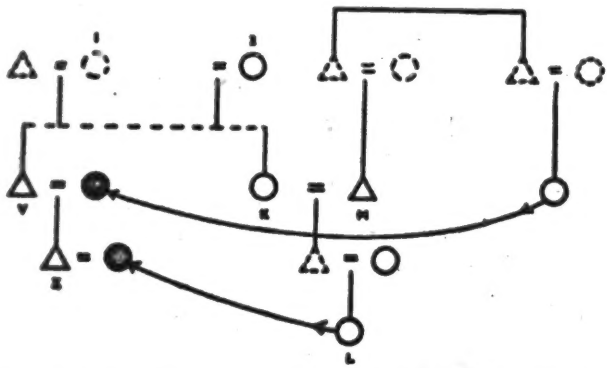

FIG. 7. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*ruka leloko*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine 582
brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor 613
worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and 769
mother's sides so that they become *moloko o motes*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an 755
illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage 853
(which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions 603
to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their 769
lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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and children. Sometimes, in the absence of his brother in town, a man 595
may be consulted by his brother's wife, but he has no real right over her. For a man to beat his brother's wife or order her about, as is said to be the case among Pondo, is quite unheard of. There is nothing special in the relationship between sisters, except that they may marry the same husband, for, quite apart from considerations of the sororate, it is thought at all times good to marry sisters, who will be less liable to make quarrelsome fellow-wives than unrelated girls. Obligations towards classificatory sisters and brothers, children of the mother's sister or father's brother, are not the same as those to brothers by the same father, and the tie is not nearly so close.

Lovedu society is characterized by a very special relationship between 593
brother and sister, a relationship that is given shape to and maintained 604
by the Lovedu pattern of bride-price involving marriage with the 582
mother's brother's daughter and supplemented by the role of women in the religious system. With this are also bound up the close links between two groups of people, the *vamakhulu* and *vaḓuhulu*—a man's own people and those of his mother or wife. The linking of uterine brothers and sisters in pairs, in order that the brother may obtain a wife with the cattle received for the sister, creates this special relationship between them and obliges the man to send his daughter to marry at his sister's place. No man will accept a suitor for his daughter until he has ascertained whether his linked sister wants the girl or not, for though in general it is the sister's son who marries the girl, it is the sister who receives a bride to stamp for her and lessen the labours of her old age. The sister has, in fact, a legal right to the girl. If the girl were to run away or be married to some one else, the court would support the father's sister's claim to the girl or the return of the cattle her brother used. Legally, it is even possible for the sister to dissolve the marriage of her brother by demanding back these cattle, but in practice this is rarely found. It is a common custom for a bridal party to call in at the village of the sister, by means of whose cattle the bride has been obtained, 'to show her the girl who is to bear a bride for her son'. A goat will then be slaughtered by her husband for the bridal party to show their pleasure in the marriage. A value that is constantly being expressed in Lovedu society is that it is fitting and desirable for a girl to 'cook for' her father's sister.

The house of the brother is thought to have been created by the sister 593
whose cattle made the marriage possible. That is why, when he builds a new village, it is the sister who has to draw the magic circle of protection [789]
which renders it safe from witches. When the sister visits her old home, it is in the house of this wife that she will 'put her things' and make herself at home and, when she is called to beer, she will be given a special pot in the house of this wife. The sister even wields a certain amount of authority in the house of her brother, as was well illustrated at a gathering we attended where the man of the house was quarrelling with his wife about an uninvited guest. In the midst of the uproar a voice was heard: 'This is my village which I have built. I will have no unseemly behaviour here.' It was the sister rebuking her brother, who subsided immediately and went on with the ceremonial as if nothing had happened. So strong

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602 son (whom she has always with her). The mother's side of the family, no doubt because of this love, are thought to be peculiarly suited to the [736] rearing of a child whose mother has died. Such a child is, in Lovedu society, never left in the hands of a fellow wife of its mother, but goes to its mother's mother, if she is alive, or its mother's brother or even a mother's sister—any one, in fact, an the mother's side who is kind-hearted enough to wish to rear an orphan.

604 In constrast to Shangana-Tonga, there is in Lovedu society no joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother. Your mother's brother may be kind to you, but you have to show him respect: if he asks you to go on a message or to help him in the fields you cannot refuse; while, if he needs you, you may be sent to herd for him or help nurse his small children. Moreover, he may one day be your father-in-605 law and his wife your mother-in-law. The people whom one is privileged to tease to one's heart's content, and with whom one may exchange ribald jokes, are one's cross-cousins, the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister or their children, cross-cousins once-removed, a generation below. When very young, a child may be conditioned to this type of easy relationship by being given a stick and told, 'Go and beat your cross-cousin. Show him your cousinhood,' whereupon he is expected playfully to beat his cousin. If the cousin cries, they will pacify him, saying, 'Gracious! How can you cry? Don't you know it's your cousin? You too can beat him some other time.' Or they will give him a stick and say, 'Go and avenge yourself.' Whenever one finds people behaving uproariously in each other's company or calling out vulgar jokes, one can be quite sure they are cross-cousins. Cross-cousins marry each [582] other; but while cases of a man marrying his father's sister's daughter sometimes occur, specially in the royal family, they are regarded as not quite regular and mother's brother's daughter marriage is by far the most usual. When a man tries to make love to his father's sister's daughter, she may tease him, saying, 'Away with you. We marry you, not you us. We are the husbands who find wives in your family.' The joking relation-[584] ship between a man and his cousin gives place, immediately marriage negotiations are begun, to one of strict avoidance between prospective bride and groom and a certain amount of respect even between the boys in the two families. Men say they can often tell by the attitude of their cross-cousin that there is an understanding between him and their sister even before negotiations have begun.

602 Relatives-in-law are quite as important as relatives by blood. Where marriage with the mother's brother's daughter has taken place, the marriage strengthens an existing blood link, giving far greater meaning and intimacy to the bond. The importance of relatives-in-law lies in the fact that there is conceived to be a lasting bond between the two families for generations to come, since where a man has married there his son will find a wife. The bond is kept alive by various social usages, not least among which is the beer that is always passing (about once a year, unless the harvest is bad) from the village of the wife's family to that of their son-in-law. Moreover, a man's relatives-in-law become to his children the mother's side of the family, which plays so important a part

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581 associated institutions. In these circumstances, it is patently absurd for
182 us to orientate ourselves as if marriage affects only personal relationships
692 between two individuals. To regard marriage as primarily a sexual partnership or even as an institution for promoting the procreation and rearing of children is to misunderstand completely its great role in the social organization.

581 As the main function of marriage is to create and perpetuate alliances
582 between groups of people, sexual or temperamental compatibility between the prospective spouses is not regarded as an ideal. Emphasis on romantic love, and pre-marital sexual experimentation, with a view to testing out compatibility, would be incongruous with the prevailing type of marriage. Mate selection in its ideal form is socially regulated, and the ideal form is the basic pattern of all marriages. The social organization determines whom one shall marry, and the parents, not the individuals concerned, set the machinery of the organization into motion. The ideal marriage is marriage of a man with his mothers' brother's daughter or of a woman with her father's sister's son. This does not mean that all cross-cousins are preferred mates. It is, for instance, considered irregular for a man to marry his father's sister's daughter; that cases of such marriages are found should not surprise us. There are irregularities in every sphere of culture, and the rules of mate selection are particularly liable to be upset because of the complex interrelations that arise in the social system. The fundamental rule is that a man must marry, not the daughter of any brother of his mother, but the daughter of that brother who has used his mother's marriage cattle to obtain a wife for himself. His mother and his mother's brother are cattle-linked sister and brother because, when she married, the cattle that came in were handed to the brother for obtaining a wife: the cattle of the sister are said to 'build a hut for her brother'. We may thus say that a man must marry a daughter of his cattle-linked maternal uncle, and we may call her his 'cattle-linked cross-cousin'.

But the Lovedu phrase the matter rather differently and more significantly. They say that the sister has 'built the house of her brother' (the cattle-linked brother), that therefore she 'has a gate' by which she may enter his house, this gate being 'the gate which the cattle seek', and that it is her right to demand from the 'house built by her cattle' a daughter who must come to her as her daughter-in-law to stamp and cook for her. Note that the right is not phrased as the right of her son to obtain his wife from that house; note further that the right is in respect of the house—that is, of the wife of the cattle-linked brother, not in respect of the brother. That wife is the *muvoyi* (returner) of the sister, the person who is obliged to return her daughter to the place whence the cattle came; and it does not matter if in the house of the sister there is no son to marry this daughter. The *muvoyi* must send her daughter if requested, and, if cattle are offered, to be the daughter-in-law of her husband's cattle-linked sister, whether that sister has a son or not; for it is the sister's right to be served and helped, especially in her old age, by the daughter of the house which she has established. The ideal is that a girl should not be married to her father's sister's husband or, in

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other words, that a man should not marry his wife's brother's daughter. But one finds a suggestive number of cases of this marriage and, what is noteworthy is that even to-day a girl still jokingly calls her father's sister's husband *munna* (husband) and, it is said, not long ago regularly called him 'husband', while the girl's own husband was 'child' (*ywana*) to her. These vestiges may reflect a rather different system, not unknown in tribes further north which Lovedu *munywalo* arrangements have reshaped.

The sister may, as we have said, demand that her cattle-linked brother send his daughter either to be the wife of her son or, if she has no son, to be her daughter-in-law and, in the latter case, the sister 'marries' her cattle-linked brother's daughter on behalf of a supposititious son. If the demand is not acceded to, whether the reason be that the daughter refuses to go or her parents refuse to fulfil their obligation, the results may be disastrous. The sister (or her husband) may 'pull down the house she built at her brother's' by taking back her cattle, and she may give them to some one else who will establish a house that is prepared to fulfil its obligations; or, if the cattle have already passed on, in the chain of exchanges, from the wife of the cattle-linked brother to that wife's brother or, further still, the 'roots of the cattle' may be 'followed', perhaps involving the snapping of the chain at several points. The whole system of interrelations created by the cattle may, in such a case, be thrown out of gear and the repercussions may be so widespread that the whole country is said 'to be spoilt'. There are, however, many safety devices and the genius for effecting compromises ensures the isolation of the stresses and strains to manageable limits.

The ideal form of marriage, that of a man with his cattle-linked cross-cousin, turns out to be an inevitable consequence of the whole social system, the ground pattern of which is determined by kinship obligations though the detailed arrangements are regulated by the cattle-linking exchanges. It is conceived of not so much as a cross-cousin marriage as of a niece performing an obligation towards her cattle-linked aunt. The conception of a marriage is not wholly submerged, but it stands out far less boldly than the conception of the duty of a niece to love, cherish, and obey her cattle-linked aunt. The central feature, the pivot upon which the whole system is conceived to turn, is the passing of the cattle from a sister, by whose marriage they come in, to her uterine brother, to be used by him for the purpose of acquiring a wife; and from the wife of the brother they pass on to her uterine brother and so on *ad infinitum*. Brother and sister of the same house are cattle-linked, but each is also linked to a partner by the marriage validated by the cattle. The sister-brother cattle link and the husband-wife marriage-plus-cattle link form a continuous chain from sister to brother to wife of brother to brother of wife of brother and so on, which is doubled and redoubled in the second generation, when the same interlinking takes place and the son of the sister marries the daughter of the brother, the brother receiving cattle and the sister a daughter-in-law, while the son of the brother marries the daughter of the brother of his wife. It will be noticed that the three essential links are those between brother and

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581 sister, between husband and wife and between cattle-linked cross-cousins,
582 and these links, as well as the whole network of subsidiary links, arise from the implications of marriage and cattle-linking. The brothers who receive the cattle from the sisters return daughters to them and again receive cattle; the brothers become the nucleus of a group providing brides, and hence, from the point of view of the sisters and their children, they are the brides or parents-in-law (*vamakhulu*), while the sister's husbands are, from the point of view of the brothers and their children, the group supplying bridegrooms (*vatsani*) or sons-in-law (*vaduhulu*). The *vamakhulu* give brides and receive cattle; the *vaduhulu* give cattle and receive brides.

582 That is the complex network in which cross-cousin marriage is enmeshed. Cattle-linked cross-cousins are said to be 'born for' one another; a man is said to marry where his father has married, a woman is said to go to her father's sister (thus marrying where the latter has married). Actually over 60 per cent. of the men marry the cattle-linked cross-cousin 'born for them'; and she, whether married first or last, becomes the chief wife. This means that she bears the chief son. It may happen that she is not married at all during the lifetime of the man she was 'born for'; she may be too young or he may die prematurely; yet she will be the wife who must, for any important purpose, bear the chief son. If the husband
588 'born for her' has died or never comes into existence, and a successor to him is required in any position of importance, such as headship of a district, she will nevertheless be married to him; the cattle will pass and he who 'enters' will be some one else, chosen not by her, but by the group of the bridegrooms or, more precisely, the house of the non-existent bridegroom (which in practice more often than not means the mistress of that house). Of course, the system is not inflexible. When nothing of importance as regards status or position is at stake or, if the girl is headstrong and refuses to allow the chosen one to enter, she may 'pick up children in the bush'. But she has no right to marry any one else, though sometimes she is inherited by the brother of her supposititious spouse as if she were a widow; sometimes she merely goes to cook for her cattle-linked aunt and there bears children as if she were the chief wife of that aunt's son.

It is only a step from this situation to the further elaboration that allows a woman to marry a wife, not for her son, but for herself. If the system logically implies that a woman may have in her service a husbandless daughter-in-law doing all the work of a wife, by a slight extension of this conception she may actually marry a wife. There is ample precedent for this elaboration in the fact that the queen has wives; she is their 'husband' and to the children of her wives she is 'father' (*vubabe*). This model is followed by other women, especially women of importance and women who, as doctors and potters, have cattle of their own with which to obtain wives. In general, however, such women call their wife 'daughter-in-law', as though they had been married, not for themselves, but on behalf of a son.

582 It is not only these peculiar elaborations that result from the pivotal institutions of cattle-linked brother and sister and 'being born' for one

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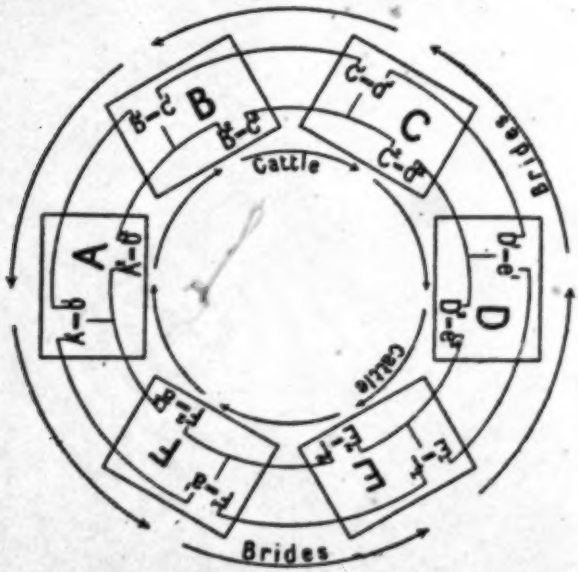
another. On the one hand, the whole marriage ceremonial is based upon the assumption that it should subserve these primary arrangements; and, on the other hand, the range of permissible marriages (except marriage outside the kin) is circumscribed by their logical implications. We shall turn first to the preferential marriages. A marriage is obligatory or approved, or discouraged or strongly disapproved or absolutely interdicted, quite apart from considerations of incest, according as it strengthens and upholds or harmonizes with or strains or to a lesser or greater degree conflicts with the foundations and superstructure of the edifice erected by the cattle. We must conceive of the bonds of reciprocity between cattle-linked brothers and sisters extending eventually to the whole *manymalo* chain, which from one point of view is a chain of cattle and from another a chain of brides and bridegrooms. The cattle move in one direction, the brides in the opposite direction.



At the risk of over-simplification, we may represent the position by the diagram above, though it must be clearly understood that nothing so definite and regular will be found in the society, nor does the chain in practice form the complete ring represented for greater convenience in the diagram. The six rectangles represent, not complete patrilineal lineages, but nuclei in the patrilineal lineages of A, B, C, D, E and F. Thus A^2 is that son of the house A^1b^1 who marries where his father father A^1 married, viz. a daughter b^2 of the house B^1c^1 which has been built by the cattle coming in by the marriage of b^1 and passing to her brother B^2. If we may call the houses A^1b^1 and B^1c^1 cattle-linked, we may designate the houses A^2b^2 and A^2b^2 cattle-descent houses. The cattle-descent houses then constitute the nuclei of

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582 the patrilineal rectangles, while the links between the cattle-linked houses are the primary links between these nuclei. Each nucleus, it will be observed, is linked to its immediate neighbours on the right as well as on the left. To the left it sends brides and in return receives cattle (e.g. a^2 goes to marry F^2 and the cattle for her are received by the house A^1b^1); to the right it sends the cattle so received and in return receives brides (i.e. the cattle coming in from the marriage of a^2 and received by the house A^1b^1 pass on to the house B^1c^1, whence a daughter b^2 is returned as a bride of A^2). Thus brides move continuously from the right to the left, but ordinarily only between two immediately adjacent nuclei, while cattle move right round in a clockwise manner, so that the same cattle or their offspring are in turn used by A, B, C, D, and so on. It will also be seen that each nucleus is both doubly obligated and doubly entitled. A is bride-obligated to F and cattle-obligated to B; but A is also bride-entitled in respect of B and cattle-entitled in respect of F. These are the primary reciprocal relations, but they are extended by the operation of kinship bonds beyond the nuclei of cattle-descent houses—that is, from the core of the lineage they extend to the whole lineage. The cattle-descent houses in the rectangle F, which is the group of bridegrooms in respect of A, are the core of A's sons-in-law (*vaduhulu*); while B similarly are the core of A's parents-in-law (*vamakhulu*) because the brides of A come from B. The core is segregated out from the larger groups by the arrangements implied in the *munywalo* system.

The vast implications of this system need not be further elaborated. But from the point of view of preferential marriages some points may be referred to. Difficulties obviously arise where in the cattle-descent houses there is an unequal number of daughters and sons. The primary cattle-linking of brother and sister, which is the pivot of the system and of the strongly institutionalized reciprocity pattern between uterine brother and sister, is necessarily thrown out of alinement by such an inequality. If in any house there are more sons than daughters, some of the sons may have to receive the cattle they need, not from their uterine sisters, but from elsewhere. Should the cattle be acquired by their own labours or the labours of their parents, there need be no upsets, for the sons may continue to marry into the group where their father married. But a new alliance may be dictated by a variety of circumstances and in that case new alinements are created: the son and his descendants become a new cattle-descent nucleus, cattle-obligated to the group whence the son's wife came. The cattle for the marriage of a son may, however, come from a relative, and in that case the simple primary arrangements of the whole system become greatly complicated.

To attempt an analysis of the complications is beyond our present purpose. All we need point out is that, provided the cattle come from the right direction (in the diagram from the left) the essential pattern is maintained and the marriages that logically follow upon the basic principle, that where a man receives cattle he must send brides, are approved. Suppose, for instance, that A^2 has no sister and hence is given the cattle that come in from the marriage of a^1, his father's sister; in that case A^2 must send his daughter to marry a^1's son F^1, and F^1 marries his cattle-

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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linked cross-cousin-once-removed (*mudzwalatzwalani*)—that is, his mother's brother's son's daughter. This is a common and strongly approved arrangement, for the cattle-descent houses maintain their dispositions towards one another, brides from A still go to F, and cattle still move from F to A—in short, this is merely a variation upon the fundamental theme. Suppose the house A^1b^1 has only daughters, the most approved arrangement would be for b^1 to send some of the cattle to B^1, her brother, who establishes a second house from which daughters-in-law may come, and to use some to set up a house of a supposititious son through whom the cattle-descent nucleus may be continued. But if A^1 used the cattle to obtain a second wife for himself complications arise, both in the *munywalo* arrangements and in the relationship between A^1's daughter and his second wife, for, though this second wife is the daughter's *mmasi* (small mother), the daughter has rights over that *mmasi*'s house, rights of authority incompatible with the status of a daughter. Yet the essential *munywalo* configuration, though greatly complicated, is maintained, and the arrangement is possible, though not approved. What is really surprising is an arrangement that, upon the pattern of cross-cousin marriage, appears legitimate, but turns out to be absolutely prohibited. It is said that 'two sisters cannot eat one another's property'—that is, the cattle accruing to the house of one sister though the marriage of her daughter cannot be used to provide a wife for the son of the other sister. The reason for this rule lies again in the *munywalo* configuration. If the two sisters have married into the same cattle-descent lineage, the one will be giving cattle to the other, who must return brides, and the same lineage will be both cattle- and bride-obligated to itself; if, on the other hand, they have married into different lineages, the reciprocities arising in respect of giving cattle or brides are incompatible with their possibly generations-old configuration.

Whether the system described in outline is the result of the merging of cattle exchanges and antecedent intermarrying lineages or of an elaboration of the arrangements implied in the cattle-linking of brothers and sisters superimposed upon cross-cousin marriage, it is unnecessary to determine. We are merely concerned to indicate how mate selection is regulated by its fundamental principles and thus harmonizes as completely as possible with the social organization. A man cannot marry his father's sister's daughter, because such marriage reverses cattle- and bride-giving reciprocities. But this type of marriage, though rare, does occur, and the irregularity illustrates the extreme complications in the system. Marriage with the wife's brother's daughter, which does not disturb the fundamental alinements, is quite regular; but marriage with the wife's brother's wife is impossible, as in Lovedu phraseology it is tantamount to taking back one's cattle. Seizure of this wife is a method, however, of vicariously bringing pressure to bear upon the lineage of the wife's brother, should one's wife desert. For by taking her, which is usually done only by order of court, one breaks the link between the wife's brother and the people of his wife. The wife's brother, having been deprived of his wife, can claim back his cattle from her people, and so is enabled to return the cattle to his sister's husband, thereby releasing

582 his wife. The measure is a drastic means of getting back one's cattle, and negatives any conception of marrying the wife's brother's wife.

582 The *manyualo* configuration is, of course, incompatible with brother-
602 sister exchange; the cattle cannot both come from and go into the same direction. So also does it exclude marriage of ortho-cousins, though complications introduced by reckoning relationship though the queen as if she were a male and the stress upon maintaining the purity of the royal blood lead to arrangements that appear to be based on such marriages. The children of all the queen's wives are brothers and sisters, but unless their natural fathers are identical, the formal relationship recedes before the physiological, and these brothers and sisters can and do intermarry. Moreover, in the society generally and especially among royal kin, a man may be related to another man or to a woman in many ways; what they will call one another depends upon status or rank or arrangements agreed upon between the families, and is often determined by personal choices and adjustments. A man who wishes to 'play with' his classificatory sister (reckoning relationship through, say, the father) will call her cross-cousin (reckoning relationship through, perhaps, the mother). How such a situation can arise is at once clear when we remember that a man may have a woman as his legal father, even taking her lineage name; but it arises in many other ways, such as the tremendous entanglements in the *manyualo* system. Among many neighbouring tribes a special ritual of 'cutting the kin' sometimes makes possible the marriage of incestuously related mates; among the Lovedu such a device is unknown. Many tribes have a highly developed technique of love
[532] charms; the Lovedu regard love charms as illegal, akin to sorcery and witchcraft, though there is one interesting exception, a rite based upon a religious pattern. Resort to love charms, except in the service of the arrangements of the social structure, would obviously strike at the basis of the conception that spouses are 'born for' one another.

513 We may now turn very briefly to the marriage ceremonial which, in harmony with the leading part played by the institution it supports, is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu life. Apart from its function of transferring the cattle and laying the foundations of a structure within which the greater part of human interrelations are enacted, the ceremonial stresses many values unconnected with marriage. The general plan of the ceremonial is patterned to the needs of the ideal form of marriage, that with the cattle-linked cross-cousin. In some neighbouring tribes, a man must bespeak his cross-cousin by paying a special beast; in others he must hand over an additional beast for her; but among the Lovedu all marriages are arranged on the one model, as if there were no other competing forms of marriage. Because the girl is said 'to be
514 born' for the boy, his parents simply send the 'goat of the skin cradle' to intimate that he is coming. It is a most appropriate action for, as she is 'born for' him, his people must provide the wherewithal in which to carry her, the cradle symbolizing nursing, tender care, and upbringing. Marriages to strangers, nevertheless, are initiated in the same way, as if the conception of being 'born for' the boy and its implications were projected upon them. It is only in the case of cross-cousin marriage that

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

881 established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on either
794 side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dajane* or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, wailing manner.

794 An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tendency for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools, to set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where they are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they are a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Highveld have no *komana*; but a Narene man who has come to live in the area has brought *komana* drums and holds schools to which many Dikxale go.

836 Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowveld
837 tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa in having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved of by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adultery, which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in any way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widows, especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even though
[684] they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attached to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness is better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where there is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act will
[695] send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the bare word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepted.
[684] Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adultery, with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head of cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more than a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in the fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the parties concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a boy whose people they do not consider suitable.

582 Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution of
[71] preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu-Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully 40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with the

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

mother's brother's daughter, and in contrast to all surrounding Sotho 582
tribes, Pedi to the south and Highveld tribes to the west where it is
common, marriage with the father's brother's daughter is not con-
idered possible. Cross-cousin marriage with the father's sister's
laughter is known only among the Lobedu, where it is common [184]
within the royal clan, Khaha, where it is rare, and Moila's Venda.
The prevalence of marriage with the mother's brother's daughter by
which a girl is said to be 'born for' a son of a certain house and
knows all her life she will marry there, has been a stabilizing influence
eading to very much less illegitimacy resulting from the absence in
owns of young men than is found in other areas where this type of
marriage has broken down. A girl knows she will have to 'cook for'
er father's sister, her future mother-in-law (indeed there is a definite
oral value attached to this), and even in the absence of her husband-
o-be will be married by the family. If, as a young married woman
he has a child in the absence of her husband, it is an irregularity with-
ut serious social consequences. On the death of a spouse, sororate
d levirate are common; marriage with the wife's brother's daughter
found where the wife is barren or dead, and full inheritance of a
oung wife of one's own father is quite common.

The custom of a woman being 'married' by a woman, so common 588
the Lowveld, is one often misunderstood by Europeans. Since
girl is 'born for' the son of her father's sister whose cattle made
r father's marriage and her own birth possible, her father's sister
ay, even if she has no son, nevertheless 'marry' the girl, who
ill come and cook for her and have children by some appointed
lative or by private lovers of her own choice. It is possible,
ough much rarer, for a woman rich in cattle to 'marry' a non-
lative.

Though in the Lowveld as elsewhere the person responsible for 583
yment of bride-price in a man's first marriage is his father or
ardian and brothers and sisters are usually coupled, the cattle for
e girl being used by the boy, it is not customary in the Lowveld,
is the case elsewhere, for any other relative to contribute. Here, 583
en a man has no cattle, instead of begging from various relatives, 426
will proceed to 'show the knee' to a man rich in cattle, i.e., he
ll borrow cattle on the understanding that his first daughter will

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and re-alignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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A	B	C	D	E	F

Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.
[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-195. See category 116.--Analyst]
[Facing kinship diagram.]

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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
559 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[834] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1943 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term mojoko or
613 *leloko* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[789] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhobo* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours
[476] and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

[562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[582] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhobo*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Monoalo a o fede*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tsetse* (or *mudukulu*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*mudukulu*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even 582
a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 583
'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her 604
husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked 588
brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that 604
even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *nagi* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, [601]
who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The 588
children take the surname of the husband of the woman just 604
as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises 851
as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own 553
cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mashu*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage 588
—for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an 613
heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the [584]
girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the 588
lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. 583
Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman 851
the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on 582
behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband' 588
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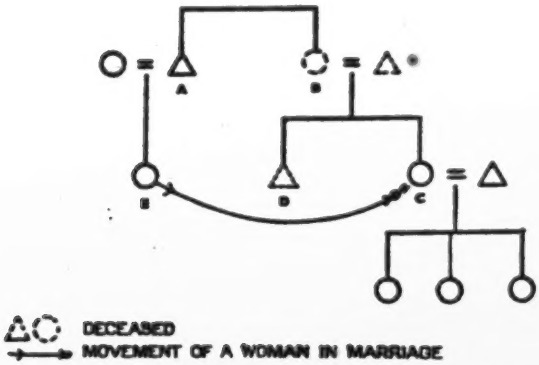

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepize's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepize (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepize's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepize and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepize (*o mo bekile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepize (E) not '*nesji*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mohadibo*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

[601]

562 588 601 (*monna wa ka*) by their '*wives*' *batanoni* when they marry on behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

● 582 583 Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maseriba's bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batamedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that 583
Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be 588
averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maseriba because she is *khadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho ruka leloko*)'. This desire to keep alive 582
the links between brother and sister and to maintain and 581
renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dsosa moloko*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter 582
marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations con- 583
nected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 2a), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there 586
were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1930's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's 582
daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the 58
mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price 602
are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

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58 602 between descendants of brother and sister that is valued. In cases where a man has received cattle on the 'security' of a small girl, to all appearances a predominantly economic transaction, the creditor also hands over cattle a second time when the girl comes over to be married. This is puzzling. When asked about it the Lobedu usually quote the proverb '*mobula ndo oa nywala*—the opener or establisher of a "house" pays marriage cattle', i.e., every girl commands bride-price. The explanation possibly lies in regarding the passing of property in the case of wife No. 2 of D in Figure 2a and also the first handing over of property in an economic transaction on the security of a girl as the creation of a cattle-link similar to handing over to a brother the bride-price of his sister to acquire

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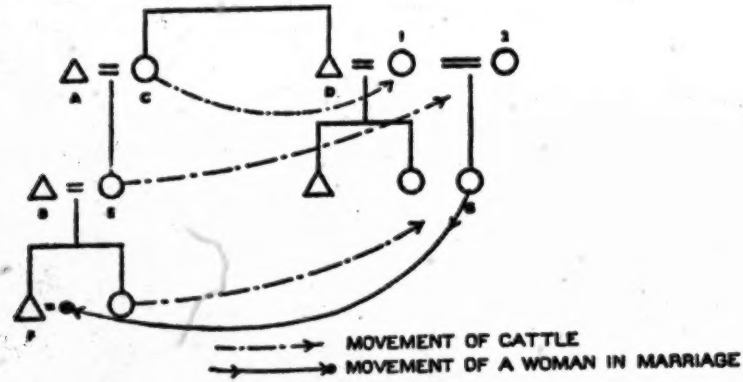

FIG. 2A.

58 602 a wife. The subsequent transactions are then on a par with ordinary preferential marriage between the children of cattle-linked brother and sister.

If, in contrast to the case illustrated in Figure 2a where the cattle-linked sister has no son to marry her brother's daughter, it is the brother who has no daughter to give in marriage to his sister's son then sometimes, as in a recent case, the preferred marriage takes place in the next generation. Here (see Figure 2b) the daughter (G) of the son of C's cattle-linked half-brother (D) married the son (F) of the son of the cattle-linked sister (C). In this case E had a brother to use her cattle and there was no need for her cattle to be sent to the mother's brother to establish a new 'house' or 'open a gate', as it is sometimes phrased.

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its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old. M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

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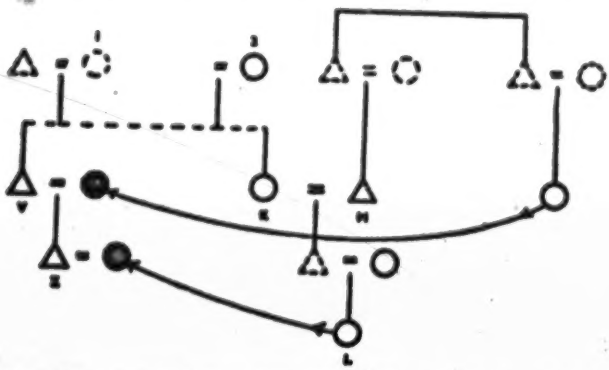

FIG. 7. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*ruka leloko*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine 582
brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor 613
worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and 769
mother's sides so that they become *moloko o motes*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an [755]
illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage [583]
(which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions 603
to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their 769
lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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Conclusion

182 Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of
421 property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu
571 social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

595 The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the
602 Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djealane ke ba khonane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and
[613] their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

582 An important principle in the social structure is preferential
602 marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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one hand a means of binding the women of the lineage, even after their marriage, by strong links to their father's family and on the other of maintaining from generation to generation the bonds with the maternal kin created by the marriage of the parents.

A woman has a dual role in the social structure. On the one hand by establishing a 'house' in her husband's lineage, she is the means whereby his lineage is perpetuated and its numbers increased; for even after the death of her husband his brothers will raise seed to his name and in the absence of sons she can herself ensure the continuation of her husband's lineage by marrying a woman on behalf of a fictitious son. On the other hand a woman remains important to her own lineage: if she is the eldest child of her 'house' she will officiate at all important religious offerings (if her brother is older he may officiate but she will always be called to collaborate with him); when she dies her name and those of her sisters will be included among the names of ancestors called upon in prayer; she divides out the inheritance on the death of her uterine brother; she guards the interests of the children of her cattle-linked brother's 'house' whence she will obtain a daughter-in-law; upon her falls the responsibility in the absence of her parents of providing an heir in her mother's 'house' (of her father's lineage) should there be no son; and she may even act in the place of her deceased father as ruler over a district until the heir is of age or until one can be raised.

The maintenance of links with married sisters and its complement marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter, by means of which one's links with one's wife's (or mother's) family are perpetuated, are supreme values in Lobedu society. That is why a wife who has no son has little difficulty in persuading her husband to hand over her daughter's bride-price to her brother rather than create links with a strange family. It is possible thereby to 'build a house' (or 'make a gate') at her brother's home from which her daughter's son will obtain a wife. This may at first sight appear to be very like the transfer of rights from mother to daughter but this is not the case. It is made possible by the transfer of cattle belonging to the daughter's husband and is bound up with the great desire to maintain links between the descendants of brother and sister. The right

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of a woman to 'someone to stamp for her' from the 'house' created by her bride-price also enables the father of a woman who has no uterine brother to control to some extent, by the placement of his daughter's cattle, the marriage of her sons. Her husband 'follows the tracks of his cattle' to find a wife for his son but it is her father who determines where these 'tracks' will lead to.

There are thus to be found in Lobedu social structure a neat balance between the various kinds of kin; a combination of patrilineal principles with strong matrilineal bonds; a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family; and an equality in the importance of paternal and maternal kin which is seen on all social and ritual occasions and is reflected also in the composition of local groups.

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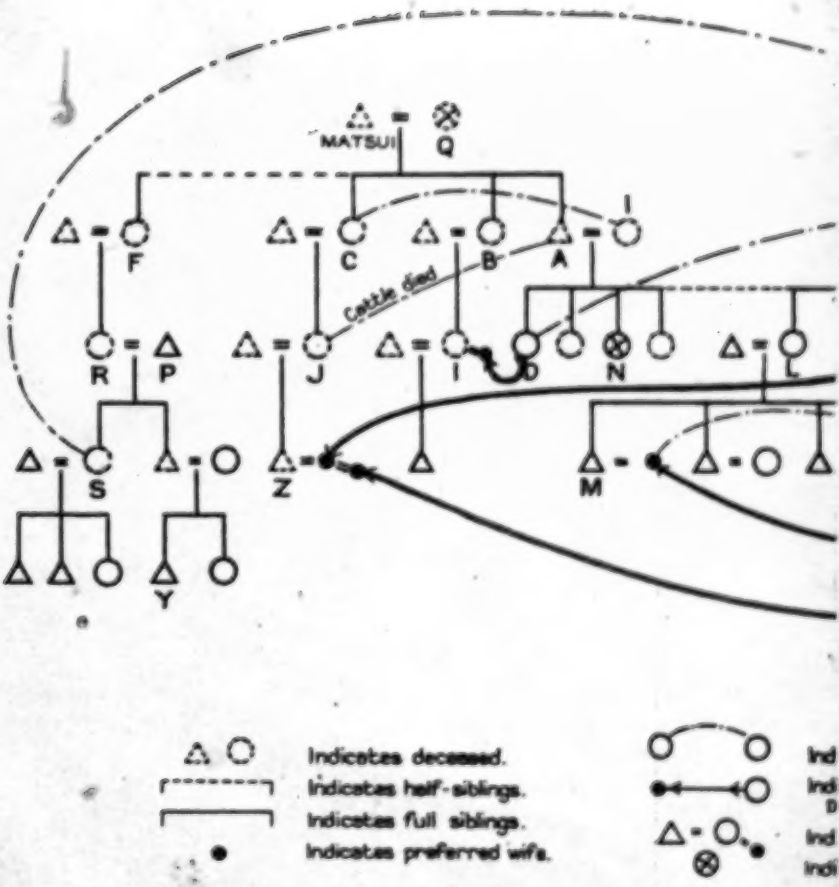

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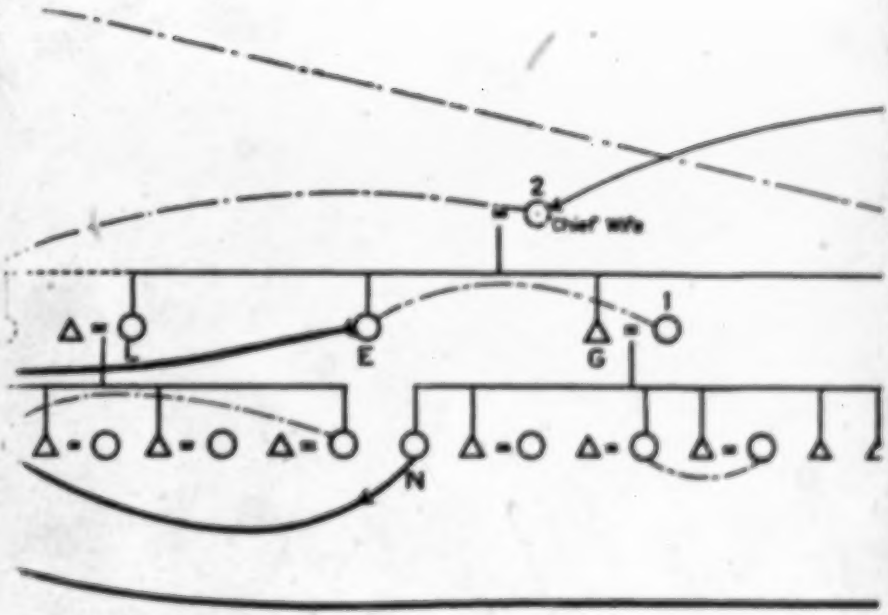

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a woman in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wives
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her de

Indicates women marriage of a girl with a married female relation.

Indicates a women who is or has been a motsanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[p. 192-B]

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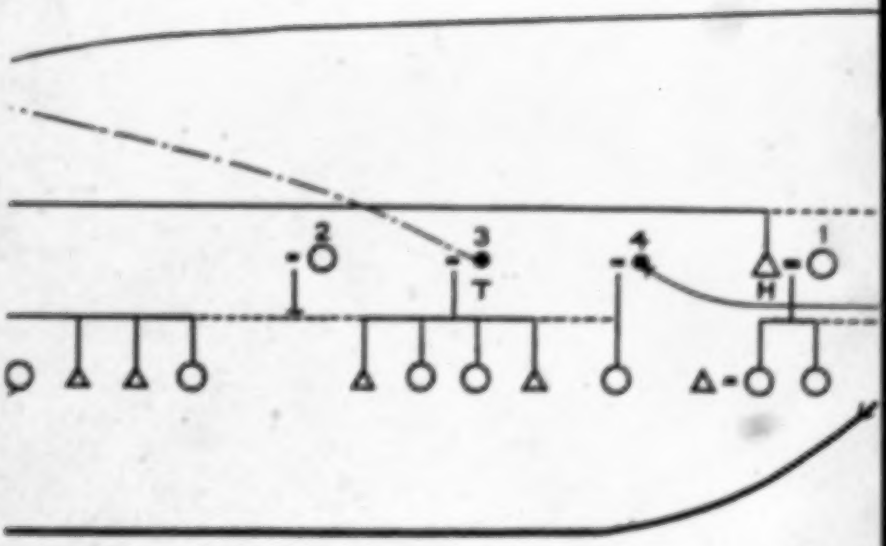

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
rranging wives from the same lineage.
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FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a line

[p.192-C]

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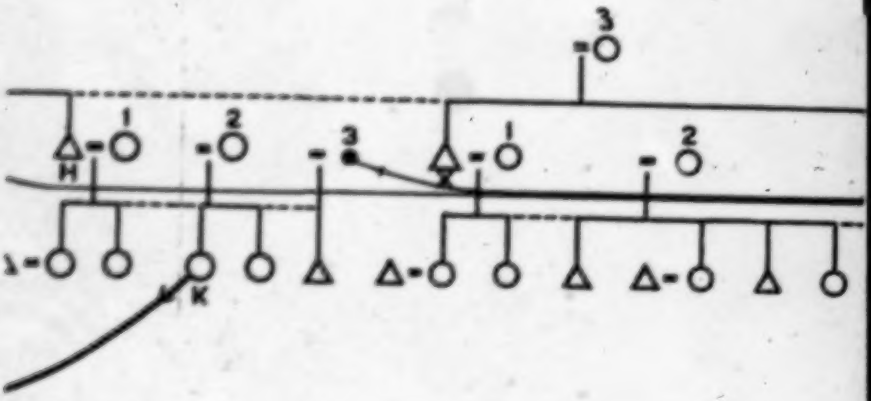

• links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-3]

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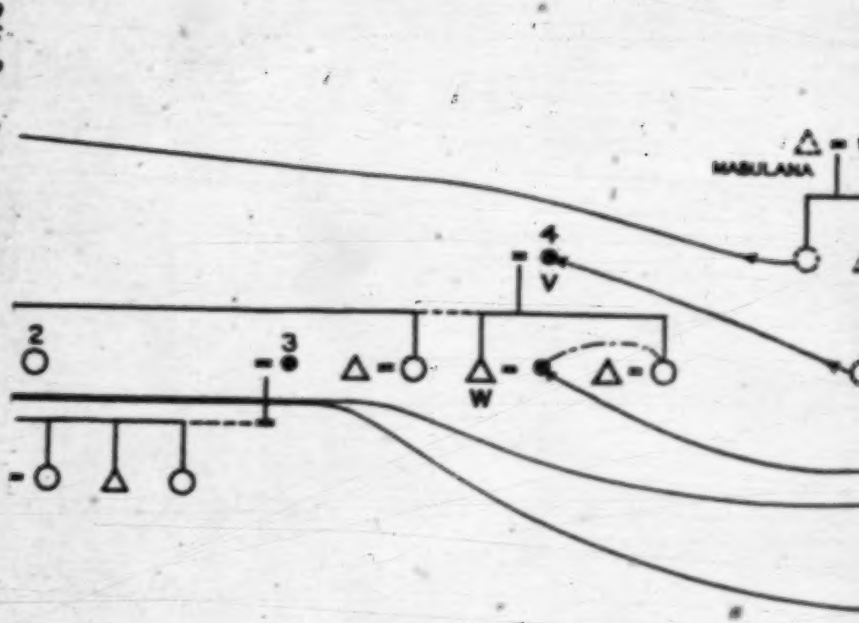

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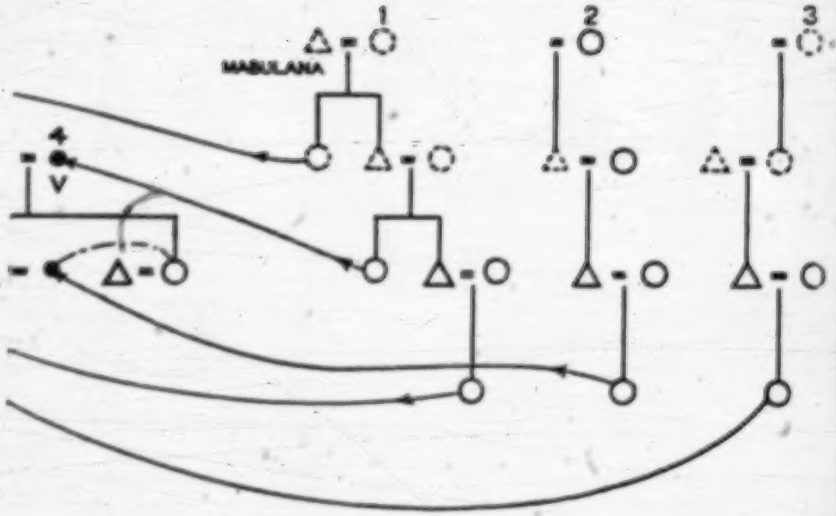

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

APPENDIX I

THE manner in which many of the characteristics of Lobedu marriage arrangements operate in practice is illustrated in the case of the lineage segment of A and his descendants set out in Figure 9. The arrows in the diagram all represent the passage of women in preferential marriage from their parental home to that of their husband: single arrows indicate women of the mother's brother's family (i.e., the Mabulanas) who have married into A's lineage (Matsui); double arrows indicate the departure of women of A's lineage to marry at their father's sister's. The following are points to be noted: 582 591 602 613

(a) The tendency for Lobedu polygynists to marry more than one wife from the same family is seen in Figure 9 in A's marriage to his fourth wife who was his second wife's brother's daughter. [595]

(b) The manner in which cross-cousin marriage perpetuates links with the wife's kin down the generations is illustrated by the marriages of A's sons G, H, W and X. G's fourth wife, H's third wife and W's first wife all come from the same lineage, that of their mothers (A's second and fourth wives). A's son X's third wife is also his uterine cross-cousin but it was not practicable to indicate her family of origin also in the diagram.

(c) Besides reinforcing links with the maternal kin, mother's brother's daughter marriage serves also to knit together descendants of a man and his sisters. The bonds between A and his sisters B and C have been kept alive over a span of two generations of their descendants by the marriage of A's daughter D to I (daughter of his sister B) as indicated by the double arrow in Figure 9, and the marriage of A's daughter E to Z (son of J, and grandson of A's sister, C). Similarly G's daughter N by his first wife is married to the son (M) of his sister L (see double arrows), and H's daughter K is married to her father's sister E, widow of Z, a marriage which took place in 1961.

(d) The part played by cattle links in ensuring preferential marriage is also illustrated in the diagram; but it is clear too that children of brother and sister who are *not* cattle-linked often also marry one another. Z married E because of cattle-links two generations above him as is explained below. But when E grew old and needed a 'wife' G had no suitable daughter; so H's daughter K 'married' her. Cattle-links also did not account for the marriage of A's daughter, D, to his sister I, nor of G's daughter N to his sister L's son M. These indicate the tremendous value attached to maintaining links with married sisters. The reasons for the marriage of 582 583 591 602 613

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582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realizing he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

582 591 (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I, that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. [634] In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *motanosi* of the queen.

613 582 581 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.

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(h) The incidence of cross-cousin marriage and its variations in two generations of descendants of A (counting only the actual members of his lineage as shown in Figure 9) over a time-span of over sixty years (i.e., from about 1895 to 1962) was 31 per cent (nine out of twenty-nine marriages).

The arrangements in the above lineage segment are by no means unusual. This lineage is that of a district head, but it is representative of numbers of cases that could be chosen from among non-Christian traditionalists who still form the majority of the tribe.

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2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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to prevent promiscuity among young boys and girls are no longer in evidence, and complications are liable to arise where there is a *gɔsha*. The economic aspect of the *gɔsha*, except where it originates in a visit of condolence or is sent to supplicate for rain, is that the host, whether he himself originally invited the dancers or not, may send back a 'revenge' *gɔsha* to get back the beast he killed for the performers. He gets back very little, only the *musumo*, perhaps a leg of the beast, and the performers do not work for him to compensate him for what they have eaten. The *gɔsha* is not conceived of as a debt-collecting institution, it never originates in a debt, and once it is set into motion, its real function is to maintain reciprocal relations. A man may start the chain of reciprocity by inviting a *gɔsha* from elsewhere; on the other hand, a party of dancers out for merriment sometimes descend upon any one they like, but he may refuse the entertainment as too costly or for other reasons. To notify the host that a *gɔsha* is coming is usual; but a man whose *gɔsha* has been accepted by another may stop (*hu thiva*) the latter from returning the compliment (and getting back his beast) by sending *khirula* beer; he will do so, for instance, when he has no beast to kill or is reluctant to part with one.

The *gɔsha* may be a cumbrous instrument to effect exchanges of commodities, but it throws the social concomitants of these exchanges boldly into relief, magnifying them to such an extent that the gift exchange is completely obscured. This is in accordance with Lovedu conceptions, for they have a great dislike of anything that is clearly and primarily a commercial transaction. The *gɔsha* stresses the interchange of goodwill; the guests, drawn perhaps from three or four areas, come to display their skill for the delectation of their hosts; and the latter, hurriedly collecting their dancers, come forth with their drummers and *ensemble* of flute-players to challenge their guests. First the one party, then the next give their performances; it is a social gala occasion and the competition is carried on in the friendliest spirit. The spectators are the judges: an old man passing gives his verdict, perhaps after having heard only one set of performers; an old woman, after a dance of ecstasy (*hu pɛbɛla*), sets the crown, be it merely a leg-ring or necklace, upon the head of her favourite performer; and when the next party dances, the verdicts are reversed and the honours paid anew. In the end neither party is victor or vanquished. The object has been self-expression, without stress upon individual performance, and entertainment in which the competitive element is present merely to heighten the enjoyment. The boys and girls of the competing areas intermingle and there are many lovers' intrigues; the girls give their favourites cloths to wear as if they were knights; it is truly an occasion for the renewal of the ties of friendship, ties between relatives and ties between districts. The reciprocity is generally at long range, for distant districts are brought into relationship. Resting upon a relationship between two individuals, it draws into its sphere, through the dancing, food, and sleeping arrangements, whole territorial units.

The most impressive of all the gift exchanges, however, involves the two groups of people between whom, by reason of a marriage, brides are exchanged against cattle (*munyɪwalo*). This exchange is as far

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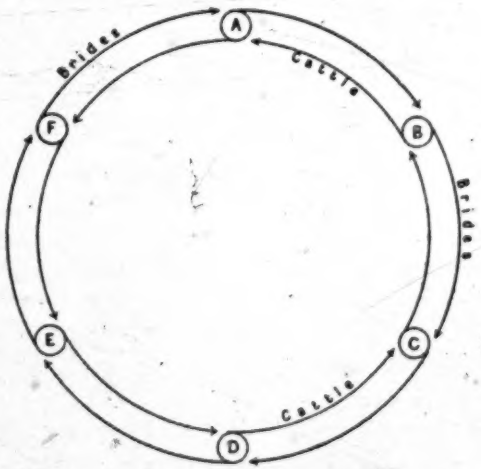
431 from a commercial transaction as is an engagement ring among us from
●533 buying a bride. It constitutes almost 54 per cent. of the total gift-barter economy, but also over 34 per cent. of the total exchanges in the tribe. In order to understand the Lovedu *munywalo* ring—we might almost borrow the name *kula* ring from Melanesia—we have to imagine a number of groups of people arranged in a circle. We have described the institution elsewhere[1] and merely repeat here what is necessary to understand its working. Each group consists of patrilineal relatives and, in the very simplest configuration, each is doubly linked to two other groups. Thus A is linked to both B and F: to B it owes brides and from



B it receives cattle; from F it receives brides and to F it owes cattle. B is cattle-obligated to A; A is bride-obligated to B. In the figure, brides pass clockwise round an outer circle and cattle move anti-clockwise along an inner concentric circle; the two circles cut through the groups A, B, C, D, E, and F, which are all both cattle-linked and bride-linked. In real life there are no concentric circles and so simple an arrangement is never found; even the general configuration of the groups is obscured by a hundred complications. A polygynist—and about one-third of the
[595] men have more than one wife—does not take all his wives from the same group. A man who uses his sister's marriage cattle must return a daughter to be the daughter-in-law of the sister or, in other words, the wife of the man's son; if he had used the cattle of two sisters whose husbands belong to different groups, his sons marry into these different groups. Endless new linkages and complications arise in this and in other ways. Essentially, however, the exchange pattern remains: one kind of valuable (cattle)

[1] Chap. ix. See also J. D. Krige, 'The Significance of Cattle Exchange in Lovedu Social Structure' *Africa*, vol. xii, no. 4.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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travels in one direction, another (brides) in the opposite direction. Usually so many groups are involved that the circular reciprocity cannot be seen. But what is clear is that each man has a link (we may say a partner) in each direction; on the one hand, a cattle-linked sister, to whose son he must give his daughter if he is offered *munywalo*; on the other hand, his wife's cattle-linked brother, from whom his wife may demand a daughter-in-law.

The partners are primarily cattle-linked brothers and sisters, but secondarily also the lineage of the brother and the lineage into which the sister has married; for the primary obligations readily extend to descendants and even collaterals in the groups concerned. But the partnership is not conceived as part of an economic scheme. Partners do not bargain for advantages: the transaction is institutionalized, and the values and equivalences are fixed. There is no need to use love-charms, magically to dispose one's partner to favour one's suit; the structure of the society stresses the need for reciprocity and harmonious exchanges. There is no way of manipulating the exchange to one's personal benefit or of making it serve a commercial purpose. If a man has more daughters than sons, he will not be enriched; nor will he be impoverished if he has more sons than daughters. In the first instance, the cattle coming in must be used to 'build houses' where the sons of the daughters may find wives, and in the second a variety of arrangements within the group and between it and other groups that are cattle-obligated to it meets the situation. The system of exchanges, like the working of the social structure itself, relies upon reciprocity and not upon commercial incentives and motives.

In such a society it is not surprising that the Lovedu, unlike the Shangana-Tonga in their midst, have no aptitude for barter and that frankly commercial exchanges are insignificant. Where the scale of values against which people exchange commodities is familiar and standardized, money barter is looked upon much as is barter; but where it is not, as in the case of the 6*d*. tins used for exchanging salt, money barter is as suspect as money exchange. The comparatively large proportion of money exchange (24 per cent.) is due not to inclination, but to necessity. People must buy cloths, dress material, and men's wear from the stores. One of the main causes of tension and even divorce between spouses is the burden of dressing a wife. Likewise, only money can buy the poles and planks, the nails and wire, that are needed for building; even for grass, headmen are beginning to exact a fee. It is true that European contact has touched but lightly the equipment of the Lovedu home and articles of Western manufacture are relatively scarce; nevertheless, people have to buy petrol tins, axes, basins, lanterns, and blankets, not to mention soap and matches; and towards the end of the season much of the maize improvidently sold to stores has to be bought back. Perhaps the most important purchases with money are agricultural implements, sacks, and donkeys. There is a very distinct aversion from all transactions of a commercial nature; and the aversion is minimized only where the trading situation has been institutionalized.

Trade is, however, of no great consequence: it is not the basis of

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582 his wife. The measure is a drastic means of getting back one's cattle, and negatives any conception of marrying the wife's brother's wife.

582 The *munywalo* configuration is, of course, incompatible with brother-
602 sister exchange; the cattle cannot both come from and go into the same direction. So also does it exclude marriage of ortho-cousins, though complications introduced by reckoning relationship though the queen as if she were a male and the stress upon maintaining the purity of the royal blood lead to arrangements that appear to be based on such marriages. The children of all the queen's wives are brothers and sisters, but unless their natural fathers are identical, the formal relationship recedes before the physiological, and these brothers and sisters can and do intermarry. Moreover, in the society generally and especially among royal kin, a man may be related to another man or to a woman in many ways; what they will call one another depends upon status or rank or arrangements agreed upon between the families, and is often determined by personal choices and adjustments. A man who wishes to 'play with' his classificatory sister (reckoning relationship through, say, the father) will call her cross-cousin (reckoning relationship through, perhaps, the mother). How such a situation can arise is at once clear when we remember that a man may have a woman as his legal father, even taking her lineage name; but it arises in many other ways, such as the tremendous entanglements in the *munywalo* system. Among many neighbouring tribes a special ritual of 'cutting the kin' sometimes makes possible the marriage of incestuously related mates; among the Lovedu such a device is unknown. Many tribes have a highly developed technique of love
[832] charms; the Lovedu regard love charms as illegal, akin to sorcery and witchcraft, though there is one interesting exception, a rite based upon a religious pattern. Resort to love charms, except in the service of the arrangements of the social structure, would obviously strike at the basis of the conception that spouses are 'born for' one another.

● 583 We may now turn very briefly to the marriage ceremonial which, in harmony with the leading part played by the institution it supports, is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu life. Apart from its function of transferring the cattle and laying the foundations of a structure within which the greater part of human interrelations are enacted, the ceremonial stresses many values unconnected with marriage. The general plan of the ceremonial is patterned to the needs of the ideal form of marriage, that with the cattle-linked cross-cousin. In some neighbouring tribes, a man must bespeak his cross-cousin by paying a special beast; in others he must hand over an additional beast for her; but among the Lovedu all marriages are arranged on the one model, as if there were no other competing forms of marriage. Because the girl is said 'to be
584 born' for the boy, his parents simply send the 'goat of the skin cradle' to intimate that he is coming. It is a most appropriate action for, as she is 'born for' him, his people must provide the wherewithal in which to carry her, the cradle symbolizing nursing, tender care, and upbringing. Marriages to strangers, nevertheless, are initiated in the same way, as if the conception of being 'born for' the boy and its implications were projected upon them. It is only in the case of cross-cousin marriage that

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We may single out for brief consideration a few of the many aspects of the marriage ceremonial. First there is the *munywalo*, the things of marriage (*hu nywala*). Of about thirty institutionalized gifts, each with its special name and special function, some pass in connexion with a ceremony, others mark the beginning or the end of a stage in the proceedings. The average *munywalo* is eight cattle, seven goats, £11 cash and odds and ends of clothes and cloths, beads and leg-rings to the value of about £2. There are variations, but they are not determined by the rank of the bride or the affluence of the bridegroom's people; poverty of the boy's family or general scarcity of cattle in the tribe affects some individual cases or lowers the amount as a whole. The cattle, which constitute over 70 per cent. of the value of the *munywalo*, are the cattle which came in through the marriage of a girl in the family of the bridegroom. The actual average corresponds very closely to the socially approved norm to-day, which is eight cattle, eight goats, £10, and various odds and ends; yet we must not imagine that the theoretical norm weighs heavily with the people. One rather gets the impression of a muddling through, of wide latitude allowed to personal inclinations, of no one striving consciously towards absolute conformity, yet somehow attaining it.

Munywalo, above all, 'builds villages': from the point of view of a man, it 'builds a hut for his brother-in-law', because it is he who in turn uses the cattle to *nywala* (marry) a wife; from the point of view of a woman, it 'builds the house where she [as cattle-linked sister] may put her things' and which will produce a daughter-in-law for her. Her cattle are the 'cattle of the gate' which open the way for her to the house. When a wife dies, the husband reports to her people that 'the house has fallen' and they may, if they like, re-establish it with a girl who 're-opens the door'. Even underlying the names of the main gifts that pass there is the same idea; these gifts appear symbolically to build a complete village and a complete herd. The value placed upon erecting a village is intelligible, but the insignificance of the role of cattle as food is in strong contrast to the emphasis in the terminology upon building up a herd. Among the *munywalo* animals are: the 'cow-and-calf of the men's *khɔrɔ*' (*ʑwɛɖɛ ya khoroni*), the 'cow-and-calf of the women's place', the 'axe of the *khɔrɔ*' or its 'branch', which refers to the instruments or materials with which it is built; the 'string to tie the cattle', so that they can be milked; the 'knife' that enables the recipients to exercise the supreme right of killing them and that symbolizes the acquisition of control over them; the 'manure of the cattle', which represents a commodity of value in keeping the hut tidy, and, to mention only one other, the 'beast for bartering' (*khiʃuɖɔ*), which is to be traded for the grain that will sustain the household. The names are all associated with the cattle, the courtyard, the things that go to make up a home.

There is no notion of compensation for the loss of the bride. The home which is built is linked up, through the girl, with other homes, and the same cattle continue to build homes in an endless, interlinked series which firmly holds them all together. But to build for an all-comprehensive ideal is not enough. The individual builders must be made to feel

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that they have a personal stake in the social investment; their desire for 583
recognition cannot be ignored; to maintain their interest at the requisite intensity, they must be significantly rewarded. And so the 'cow-and-calf of the women's place' is conceived to be a personal reward to the bride's mother; it is her special property, not, indeed, to be detached from the chain of exchanges, for *munywalo* cattle must remain *munywalo* cattle and can never become unencumbered property of an individual, but to be preserved by her, if she so desires, in order that she may help her youngest son, who succours her in her old age. Often in the old days [831] when the bride's chastity was an honour to be displayed, but rarely to-day, because absence of chastity is a disgrace to be concealed, the 'cow-and-calf of the woman's place' was withheld or claimed back if the bride proved not to be a virgin. As things are to-day, this gift mainly recognizes, as it also did in the old days, the special contribution of the mother to the health and strength and virtues of her daughter, the bride. The 'beast for bartering' is a contribution to help the mother of the bride, but not so much in her personal capacity as in her capacity as food-provider of the home; owing to the aversion to killing cattle, this beast passes to-day only in times of shortage when the bride's mother is really in need of grain.

The 'cow-and-calf of the courtyard' recognizes the special interest of the father and vicariously his male relatives; it is a gift that acknowledges their special services in bringing up the bride. The situation must be made acceptable also to the bride herself, for marriage is not an easy matter, involving new and heavy responsibilities and partially severing the bride from her home. In the old days the girl was usually given the *musubullo*, a cow, said to provide a change of clothing for her; to-day she is given £5 or £6 worth of clothes. But the rule that she forfeited this wedding outfit if she were found to be deflowered is in disuse to-day, since young men object to the public humiliation of their brides.

There are many other gifts which, apart from contributing to the main result, recognize particular aspects of the situation. The sending of the 'cradle', for instance, intimates that the sister lays her claim to the bride as her daughter-in-law and, when the goat is killed and members from both families partake of the meat, it is the tacit consent to the projected alliance to which the families, rather than the boy and girl, are the true parties. Or, again, the 'calabash of water', usually a goat, signifies that the boy is asking the girl to come and set up home with him, while the girl's people equally indicate with the 'goat of killing' their satisfaction that all they asked has been duly given and that, as far as they are concerned, the bride may now leave.

All too soon we must pass on to some other aspects of marriage cere- 584
monial. The absence of strained relations between the parties makes unnecessary the subterfuges and displays of hostility often found elsewhere in marriage negotiations. The go-between, whatever message he brings from the boy's family, is well received, for 'The messenger sent to swear at a king must fulfil his mission and cannot be harmed'. His first announcement is direct and to the point: 'I am sent by So-and-so to ask whether you will *beba* them' (that is, carry the girl in the cradle). This

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583 There are scores of aspects we cannot even touch upon. There are rules as to the kind of cattle or other beasts that may properly be used as *munywalo*: the rules may seem curious to us, but they have their reason in social and other arrangements. The number seven is taboo, for [801] the seventh finger 'points', as does a witch when he says, 'You'll *see*,' and it is wrong so to point at one's in-laws, with whom co-operation is [825] essential. Similarly, as the size of the testicles of full-grown male animals is an insult, because it is a challenge, such uncastrated animals cannot be part of the *munywalo*. So also yellowish cattle presage jealousies between co-wives; they will cause the bride to run away. Marriage is patrilocal, otherwise a man is said 'to have been married by his wife'; it is good to live near, but not too near, one's wife's people; for, if proximity is an economic and social advantage, to live under the roof of the parents-in-law is to relinquish all authority in one's own home. Generally speaking, the bride's family do not call the bridegroom to help them with actual work, such as building huts or ploughing. But the idea of service instead of, or in addition to, *munywalo* is faintly reflected in the fact that men now still living were required towards the end of the ceremonial to build a hut for their parents-in-law. The rule was that, when bridegroom had completed the hut, he climbed to the roof and refused to come down until the bride was immediately released to go home with him and she by greeting (*hu lɔsha*) signified her willingness to come. Such a hut in case of divorce counted as one head of cattle. And perhaps we should add, though it is clearly implied in all we have said, that no one except the boy's parents contributes and no one except the house of the girl's mother receives the *munywalo*. More than that, a man cannot help the son of one house by taking the cattle of another, for it is said, 'One house cannot eat the property of another,' though this, as everything else, is subject to the supreme principle that 'if they agree', the rigidity of the rule may be relaxed. It may involve difficult readjustments, but agreement is conceived as being able to overcome the difficulties. Sometimes also a relative who has brought up the bride is given one of the beasts of her *munywalo*, but it is not a custom as in many tribes, it is merely a matter of agreement.

581 The sexual aspect of marriage is treated with great moderation. Among us, where love looms large and represents a romantic ideal when we are young, it more often than not ends in disillusionment when we are old. The structure of Lovedu society lays no stress upon sexual compatibility, and marriage almost completely ignores sexual adjustments. Co-operation and agreement as regards its main purposes, both economic and structural, not companionship of husband and wife, is the ideal. Agreement is the watchword of the society, the guarantee of harmonious relations between spouses as well as co-wives. In describing the possible relations and dispositions within the family, no phrase is more frequently used than the phrase, 'if they agree'. No custom, no rule, no arrangement, decreed by the laws of the family, are absolute; and because the *khɔrɔ* judicial proceedings deal with difficulties in the family and in the social structure, they also are guided and controlled by agreement and compromises. And so it is agreement, not sexual compatibility, which is the

: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

other's brother's daughter, and in contrast to all surrounding Sotho 582
bes, Pedi to the south and Highveld tribes to the west where it is
mmon, marriage with the father's brother's daughter is not con-
lered possible. Cross-cousin marriage with the father's sister's
ughter is known only among the Lobedu, where it is common [184]
thin the royal clan, Khaha, where it is rare, and Moila's Venda.
e prevalence of marriage with the mother's brother's daughter by
hich a girl is said to be 'born for' a son of a certain house and
ows all her life she will marry there, has been a stabilizing influence
ding to very much less illegitimacy resulting from the absence in
wns of young men than is found in other areas where this type of
rriage has broken down. A girl knows she will have to 'cook for'
r father's sister, her future mother-in-law (indeed there is a definite
ral value attached to this), and even in the absence of her husband-
be will be married by the family. If, as a young married woman
has a child in the absence of her husband, it is an irregularity with-
serious social consequences. On the death of a spouse, sororate
d levirate are common; marriage with the wife's brother's daughter
ound where the wife is barren or dead, and full inheritance of a
ng wife of one's own father is quite common.

The custom of a woman being 'married' by a woman, so common 588
the Lowveld, is one often misunderstood by Europeans. Since
irl is 'born for' the son of her father's sister whose cattle made
father's marriage and her own birth possible, her father's sister
y, even if she has no son, nevertheless 'marry' the girl, who
l come and cook for her and have children by some appointed
tive or by private lovers of her own choice. It is possible,
ugh much rarer, for a woman rich in cattle to 'marry' a non-
tive.

Though in the Lowveld as elsewhere the person responsible for 583 ●
ment of bride-price in a man's first marriage is his father or
rdian and brothers and sisters are usually coupled, the cattle for
girl being used by the boy, it is not customary in the Lowveld,
s the case elsewhere, for any other relative to contribute. Here, 583
en a man has no cattle, instead of begging from various relatives, 426
will proceed to 'show the knee' to a man rich in cattle, i.e., he
borrow cattle on the understanding that his first daughter will

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

583 be handed over to the lender to become, in most cases, the wife of
[426] his son. To-day this custom is not as common as it used to be, owing to the fact that girls now often resist such a marriage, knowing that the European authorities will support them. No cattle or presents from the girl's people are ever handed over in marriage, and there is therefore nothing corresponding to the Zulu–Xhosa *endisa*. But there is all over the Lowveld a special name and function associated with each beast and goat that is handed over, which, together with the fact that there is generally no fixed number, no organized bargaining, such as that which characterizes Pedi procedure, and that very few people complete payment of bride-price before marriage, illustrate the non-commercial character of this arrangement.

585 The most characteristic feature of marriage ceremonial in the Lowveld is the slow and tedious procession from the girl's to the boy's home, the bridal party having to be persuaded to move at each step by means of gifts, till finally on reaching their destination they have to be carried in on the backs of women from the boy's home, weeping loudly in their distress. There is no central marriage feast, though a goat is killed for the girls who accompany the bride, and no one from the girl's home, except for the bridesmaids, is present. The brilliant competitive dancing displays, mutual vituperations between the two families and general feasting which form part of Nguni marriage ceremonial, all are conspicuously absent in this area where the arrival of a bride hardly disturbs the even tenor of everyday life. It is of common occurrence for a bride, before arrival at her husband's kraal, to be taken to the village of the sister whose cattle the husband has used in the marriage. The sister must see the woman who will bear a wife for her son and will kill a goat in her honour. Blood-mixing ceremonies between bride and bridegroom to eliminate all dangers of sex intercourse are common over the whole area.

586 Barrenness and adultery are not grounds for divorce, though when a woman is barren her parents generally offer her sister, for whom, however, cattle must again be handed over. A peculiar feature of divorce in the Lowveld to-day is that the husband almost always keeps both the children and the cattle, except in rare cases where it can be proved that he has wrongfully driven away his wife, when he receives neither children nor cattle.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and realignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.
[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-195. See category 116.--Analyst]
[Facing kinship diagram.]

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*metanesi*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledola*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge na khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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ships between the families involved but upon it rests the whole 581
character of the domestic group. Payment of bride-price trans- 581
fers the reproductive powers of the woman to the husband's 583
agnatic group. The husband has genetricial as well as uxorial 593
rights. Genetricial rights apply not only to any children born 851
after the marriage whoever their biological father might be, but also in retrospect, so that any child born before marriage automatically becomes the child of whoever pays the bride-price, with full rights of succession and inheritance from its sociological father. There is thus, in contrast to other tribes such as the Zulu, no way in which a Lobedu man can obtain the right to his biological child other than by marrying its mother. Emphasis on sociological as opposed to biological fatherhood among the Lobedu is very strong and this is an important factor in Lobedu social structure. The rights of a father to a child involve control over it; the right to the bride-price of a daughter (subject to the right of her brother to marry with his sister's cattle and of her mother to the services of the woman married with her daughter's bride-price); and corresponding to his right to his daughter's bride-price the duty to help his son to marry. A father may and often does marry an 595
additional wife with his daughter's bride-price. A father also has the right to be cared for in his old age by his sons.

The levirate is practised, the junior levirate being more 587
common than the senior levirate. The brother raises seed to 851
the deceased and takes over the responsibility of a father and husband though the children he begets are counted as belonging to his deceased brother. Frequently the heir, eldest son of the chief 'house' inherits a young wife of his father. In this case, similarly, the children born of the union are looked upon as the deceased's, i.e., as brothers and sisters of the heir, not his children. The sororate also is practised in all its forms, sororal 595
polygyny being very common. Where a sister is sent to 'awaken the house (*ho dosa ndu*)' of a barren or deceased wife full bride-price is due for her although, since bride-price is never an absolutely fixed amount, less may be asked for than in the first marriage.

The marriage of a woman transfers to her husband's group 581
the right to her labour. Initially it is the husband's mother 582
even more than the husband himself that benefits, as we shall

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Mosesele a o fele*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tutse* (or *mudulule*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*mudulule*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *seji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*masha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepise in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

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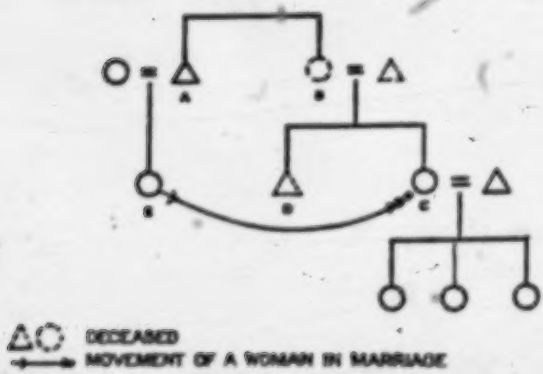

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepize's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepize (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepize's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepize and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepize (*o ne bekile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepize (E) not '*mori*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mahadile*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

[601]

562 588 601 (*mama na ka*) by their 'wives' *batanani* when they marry on behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

582 583 Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maseriba's 583 588 bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batamedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that 583
Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be 588
averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maseriba because she is *khadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho ruka lelako*)'. This desire to keep alive 582
the links between brother and sister and to maintain and 581
renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dusa moloko*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter 582
marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations con- 583
nected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 22a), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there 686
were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1990's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's 582
daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the 58
mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price 602
are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

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between descendants of brother and sister that is valued. In cases where a man has received cattle on the 'security' of a small girl, to all appearances a predominantly economic transaction, the creditor also hands over cattle a second time when the girl comes over to be married. This is puzzling. When asked about it the Lobedu usually quote the proverb '*mobula ndo oa nywala*—the opener or establisher of a "house" pays marriage cattle', i.e., every girl commands bride-price. The explanation possibly lies in regarding the passing of property in the case of wife No. 2 of D in Figure 2a and also the first handing over of property in an economic transaction on the security of a girl as the creation of a cattle-link similar to handing over to a brother the bride-price of his sister to acquire

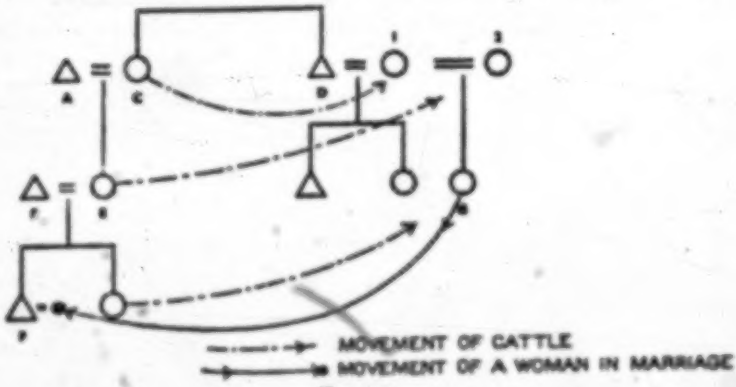

FIG. 2A.

a wife. The subsequent transactions are then on a par with ordinary preferential marriage between the children of cattle-linked brother and sister.

If, in contrast to the case illustrated in Figure 2a where the cattle-linked sister has no son to marry her brother's daughter, it is the brother who has no daughter to give in marriage to his sister's son then sometimes, as in a recent case, the preferred marriage takes place in the next generation. Here (see Figure 2b) the daughter (G) of the son of C's cattle-linked half-brother (D) married the son (F) of the son of the cattle-linked sister (C). In this case E had a brother to use her cattle and there was no need for her cattle to be sent to the mother's brother to establish a new 'house' or 'open a gate', as it is sometimes phrased.

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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a different mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*mosila mobe o boya le noto ea hwe*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu husband is expected to play his part in producing food for his 595 241 family. Every married man, therefore, has a field of his own which he cultivates with the help of his wives. The produce of [462] this field is used for any beer- or work-parties that the man may wish to give and is a kind of bank upon which his wives may draw when they run short. If, however, a man helps one wife from his personal stores he must give all his wives an equal amount irrespective of their needs. When he first marries, the husband works with his wife in their common field. On marrying a second wife he acquires a field of his own (in addition to the one for his new wife) which his wives take it in turn to weed. It is said that if he had no field of his own but were merely to help each wife in turn to cultivate her field there would be endless trouble in maintaining equality between them. One of them for instance might say, 'How is it that when you come and work in my field you just sit but when you go to the field of the mother of So and So even the shade doesn't tempt you!'

A father is responsible for helping his sons to marry. But 593 since a man seldom possesses cattle other than those already 583 involved in bride-price exchange and a son uses the cattle of his sister, boys in a 'house' in which there are no girls often have to go out and work or with the help and advice of their father acquire bride-price in other ways. In the old days an [464] orphan usually hired out his services to carry salt or iron ore from far countries in order in this way to acquire marriage hoes or cattle. Expenses in goats and money over and above the cattle given in marriage are met by the boy himself with the help of his father. A father should see to it that his son is provided with a field when he marries but in practice it is very often the mother who concerns herself with this problem. The father has jural control over his sons and is responsible for their debts.

The wives in a polygynous household differ in status. The 595 chief wife is the daughter of the mother's brother—the cattle-linked or any uterine mother's brother or mother's half-brother. She will bear the heir and future head of the village. Where there has been no marriage with the mother's brother's daughter it is the first wife, the one married with his father's cattle that is chief wife. A chief wife exercises no control over

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also an economic unit, the Lobedu wife enjoys considerable economic freedom in the disposal of her property. Though she should act in consultation with her husband in the disposal of livestock or large amounts of surplus crops she will often, especially if on bad terms with her husband, act on her own. All these activities, it should however be remembered, are for the advancement of her 'house', which belongs to the husband's lineage. These goods can neither accrue to nor be used by the wife's own relatives. If, for example, she leaves her husband or is divorced she cannot take any of the produce of her fields with her. On the other hand the husband could use such crops or livestock only for the advancement or to feed the children of that 'house,' not for other 'houses'. The only goods a woman may take with her on divorce are cattle or other livestock earned by practising as a doctor because in this case, it is said, she has spirits guiding her which are of her own, not her husband's family.

The Lobedu husband does not in the manner of the Nguni allocate cattle to the 'house' of each wife (milk plays little or no part in the diet). It is said, however, that even if a cow were to be allocated to a house for milking purposes it would not belong to that 'house'. Cattle that come in from the marriage of a daughter are the property of her mother's 'house' and should be used for acquiring a wife for a son of that house. If the son is young and the husband wishes to use his daughter's cattle for a wife for himself, such wife would have to cook for the woman of that house from which the cattle came in the manner of a daughter-in-law. In theory a husband has the right to decide how the cattle of any 'house' are to be used. But he rarely in practice acts against the wishes of the wife. Her right over any woman acquired by the cattle of her daughter gives her great power and makes it difficult for her husband to marry a wife with them himself against her wishes. The bride might run away or her people refuse to let her marry if they hear that the woman the bride will have to 'stamp for' opposes the marriage. That is why so often cattle are handed to the wife's brother in the manner described above.

It is said, '*mosha ha e le je mongwe*—houses do not eat one another', i.e., the property of one house cannot be used for the advancement of another. Hence bride-price of the girl of one

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house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's *side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families)* and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[602] he also is a *muduhulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

748 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[607] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
● [573] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

748 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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wife also died, he sent the children to her sister to be reared and 768
gave her his deceased's wife's fields to cultivate to provide food
for the children. When they are big they will be brought back [591]
with a gift of beer and their father will give a thanking gift of [431]
an ox or money for the rearing of the children.

The utensils of a deceased wife remain in her hut to be used 428
by her children or son's wives; and her eldest son has the right [768]
to inherit her fields. Until twenty years ago when it was still [583]
the custom for a mother to receive a cow and calf on the marriage of her daughter (if a virgin) in recognition of having reared her, this portion of the bride-price was the special inheritance of the youngest son with whom she generally lived until her death.

When the father of a polygynous family or the head of a homestead dies there is, owing to the property arrangements characteristic of the Lobedu and their attitude to its possession, never a great deal of heritable property. The property of each house is inherited by the eldest son of that house. The heir to [592]
the position of head of the homestead is the eldest son of the chief wife. Only he or the uterine brothers of his father are responsible for his father's debts—not the sons of other houses. It is generally stated in discussions that any cattle or goods acquired by the father as his personal possessions should be inherited by the chief son and heir. In practice it is more common to divide out such property among all the sons and daughters.

When Ramalepe, a rain doctor, died about three years ago all his cattle and goods were divided equally among his sons. His rain medicines and his field went to his chief wife's son; his mealies (from his own field) were equally divided between his wives and his uterine sisters. When Philip's father died there was no sister of his father still living so Philip went to the queen and asked her what to do. She told him to call his sisters and to divide out the property in consultation with them. He then called his sisters (eldest and other daughters of his father) and showed them the property—thirty-six goats. They agreed on dividing the goats as follows: the deceased's two elder daughters by his first wife were given ten goats each; Philip, a son by the second wife, received eight; Mutzere, sister's son to deceased, was given one goat to kill and eat at his home; one goat was

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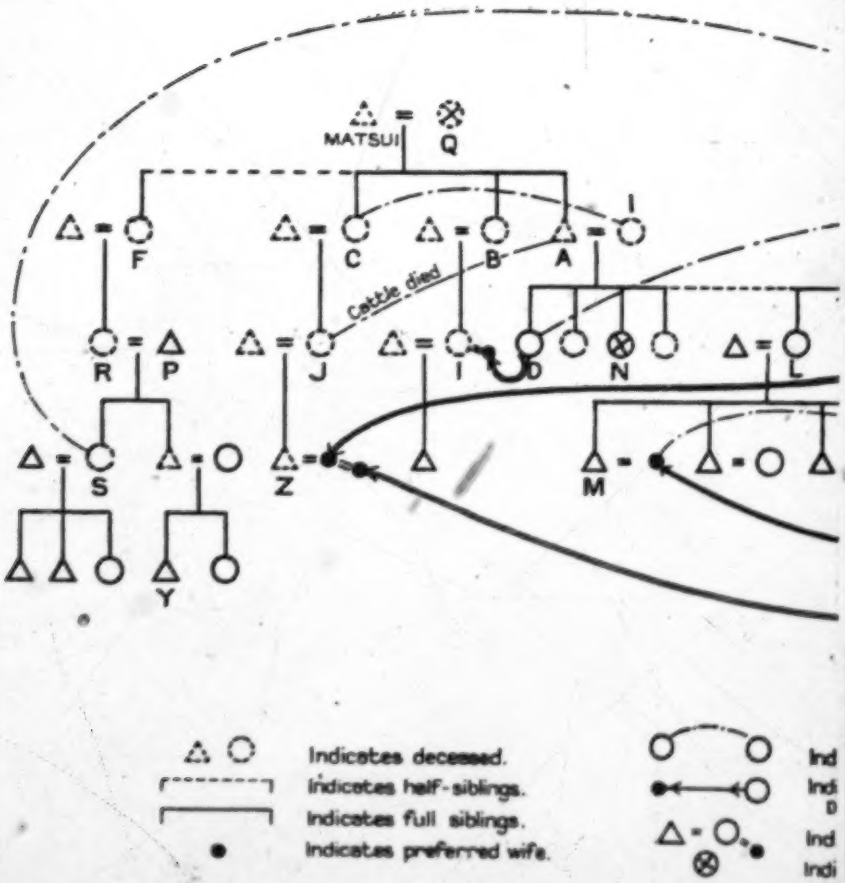

[p. 192-A]

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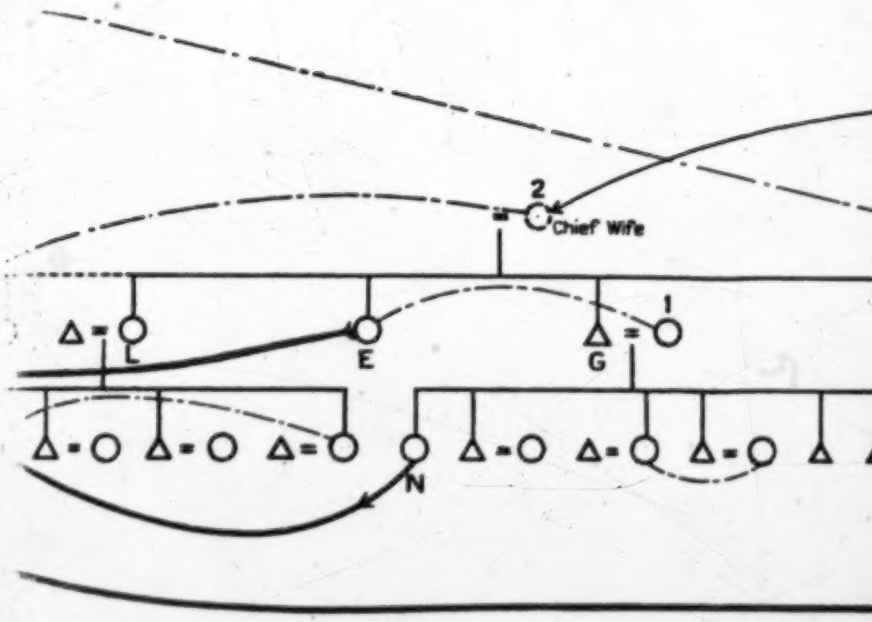

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a women in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wives
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her da

Indicates woman marriage of a girl with a married female relation.

Indicates a woman who is or has been a motanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[p. 192-B]

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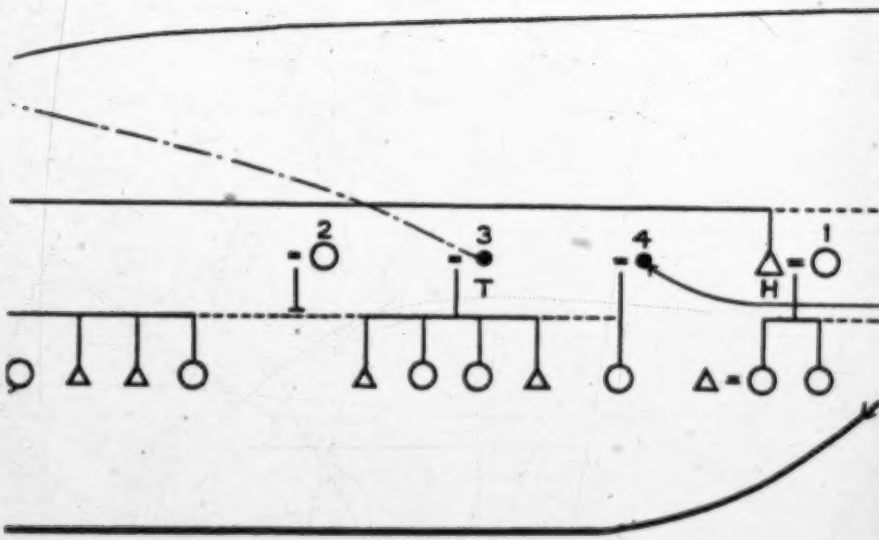

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
nooming wives from the same lineage.
ter or her descendant.
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the queen.

FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a lineo

[p.192-C]

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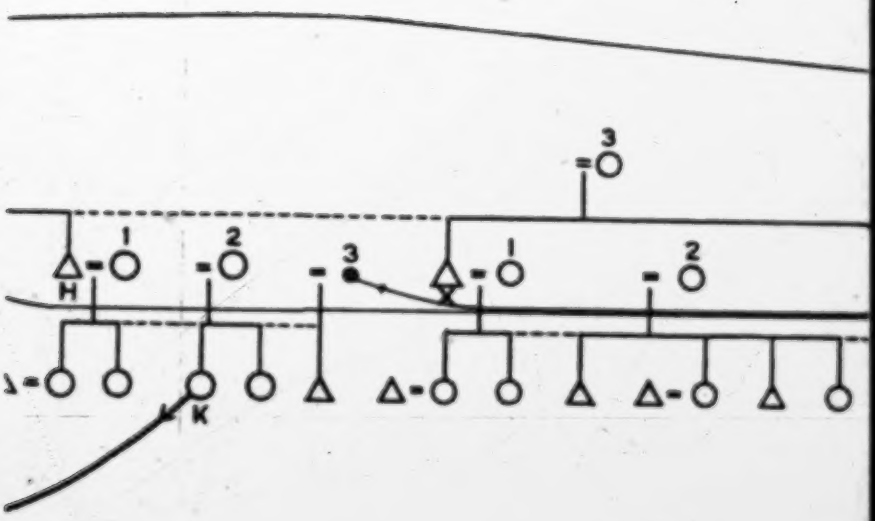

e links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-D]

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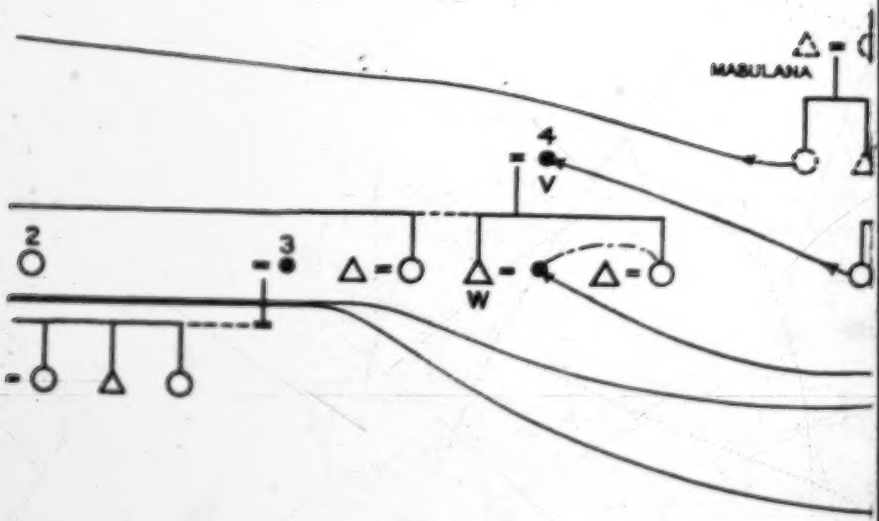

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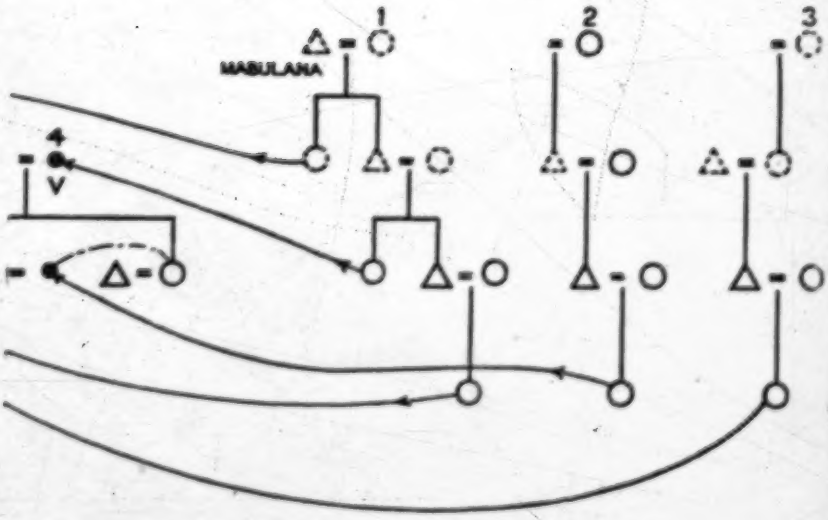

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

APPENDIX I

THE manner in which many of the characteristics of Lobedu marriage arrangements operate in practice is illustrated in the case of the lineage segment of A and his descendants set out in Figure 9. The arrows in the diagram all represent the passage of women in preferential marriage from their parental home to that of their husband: single arrows indicate women of the mother's brother's family (i.e., the Mabulanas) who have married into A's lineage (Matsui); double arrows indicate the departure of women of A's lineage to marry at their father's sister's. The following are points to be noted:

(a) The tendency for Lobedu polygynists to marry more than one wife from the same family is seen in Figure 9 in A's marriage to his fourth wife who was his second wife's brother's daughter.

(b) The manner in which cross-cousin marriage perpetuates links with the wife's kin down the generations is illustrated by the marriages of A's sons G, H, W and X. G's fourth wife, H's third wife and W's first wife all come from the same lineage, that of their mothers (A's second and fourth wives). A's son X's third wife is also his uterine cross-cousin but it was not practicable to indicate her family of origin also in the diagram.

(c) Besides reinforcing links with the maternal kin, mother's brother's daughter marriage serves also to knit together descendants of a man and his sisters. The bonds between A and his sisters B and C have been kept alive over a span of two generations of their descendants by the marriage of A's daughter D to I (daughter of his sister B) as indicated by the double arrow in Figure 9, and the marriage of A's daughter E to Z (son of J, and grandson of A's sister, C). Similarly G's daughter N by his first wife is married to the son (M) of his sister L (see double arrows), and H's daughter K is married to her father's sister E, widow of Z, a marriage which took place in 1961.

(d) The part played by cattle links in ensuring preferential marriage is also illustrated in the diagram; but it is clear too that children of brother and sister who are *not* cattle-linked often also marry one another. Z married E because of cattle-links two generations above him as is explained below. But when E grew old and needed a 'wife' G had no suitable daughter; so H's daughter K 'married' her. Cattle-links also did not account for the marriage of A's daughter, D, to his sister I, nor of G's daughter N to his sister L's son M. These indicate the tremendous value attached to maintaining links with married sisters. The reasons for the marriage of

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582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realizing he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

582 591 (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I; that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. [594] In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *matsumi* of the queen.

613 582 591 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.

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602 son (whom she has always with her). The mother's side of the family, no doubt because of this love, are thought to be peculiarly suited to the [72] rearing of a child whose mother has died. Such a child is, in Lovedu society, never left in the hands of a fellow wife of its mother, but goes to its mother's mother, if she is alive, or its mother's brother or even a mother's sister—any one, in fact, an the mother's side who is kind-hearted enough to wish to rear an orphan.

604 In constrast to Shangana-Tonga, there is in Lovedu society no joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother. Your mother's brother may be kind to you, but you have to show him respect: if he asks you to go on a message or to help him in the fields you cannot refuse; while, if he needs you, you may be sent to herd for him or help nurse his small children. Moreover, he may one day be your father-in-
605 law and his wife your mother-in-law. The people whom one is privileged to tease to one's heart's content, and with whom one may exchange ribald jokes, are one's cross-cousins, the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister or their children, cross-cousins once-removed, a generation below. When very young, a child may be conditioned to this type of easy relationship by being given a stick and told, 'Go and beat your cross-cousin. Show him your cousinhood,' whereupon he is expected playfully to beat his cousin. If the cousin cries, they will pacify him, saying, 'Gracious! How can you cry? Don't you know it's your cousin? You too can beat him some other time.' Or they will give him a stick and say, 'Go and avenge yourself.' Whenever one finds people behaving uproariously in each other's company or calling out vulgar jokes, one can be quite sure they are cross-cousins. Cross-cousins marry each [512] other; but while cases of a man marrying his father's sister's daughter sometimes occur, specially in the royal family, they are regarded as not quite regular and mother's brother's daughter marriage is by far the most usual. When a man tries to make love to his father's sister's daughter, she may tease him, saying, 'Away with you. We marry you, not you us. We are the husbands who find wives in your family.' The joking relation- •[514] ship between a man and his cousin gives place, immediately marriage negotiations are begun, to one of strict avoidance between prospective bride and groom and a certain amount of respect even between the boys in the two families. Men say they can often tell by the attitude of their cross-cousin that there is an understanding between him and their sister even before negotiations have begun.

602 Relatives-in-law are quite as important as relatives by blood. Where marriage with the mother's brother's daughter has taken place, the marriage strengthens an existing blood link, giving far greater meaning and intimacy to the bond. The importance of relatives-in-law lies in the fact that there is conceived to be a lasting bond between the two families for generations to come, since where a man has married there his son will find a wife. The bond is kept alive by various social usages, not least among which is the beer that is always passing (about once a year, unless the harvest is bad) from the village of the wife's family to that of their son-in-law. Moreover, a man's relatives-in-law become to his children the mother's side of the family, which plays so important a part

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in their lives and, where a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, 602
his relatives-in-law are his mother's people. The term *tsezi* (bridegroom) has in Lovedu society a very special connotation. The *tsezi* is greatly honoured by his wife's people. He is given the best of everything. When he visits, he is brought a rush mat to sit upon and beer in a special small calabash or pot as his own. Christians invite the 'bridegroom' or his people to all most feasts connected with confirmation, baptism, and other ceremonies (heathens have practically no meat feasts), while a mother-in-law never visits at her son-in-law's place without bringing some gift. One day, when Mudiga's wife was on the point of leaving on a visit with beer she had specially brewed to take with her, a *tsezi* (her husband's sister's husband) unexpectedly turned up. So, much to her disgust, her visit had to be put off, 'for one cannot take beer from a *tsezi*'. The honour accorded a *tsezi* is given also to his brothers, own and classificatory, when they visit his relatives-in-law.

While a bridegroom is accorded great honour by his relatives-in-law, he has many obligations towards them. When they bring beer, he must slaughter a goat for them and wish them godspeed with another 10s. after the feast. If they ask him to help them plough or weed, he must do so. Batamodi, for instance, every year ploughs the field of his wife's grandmother—but they will always entertain him with beer for his trouble. If they have to pay a heavy fine, but have not the wherewithal, they will approach the 'bridegroom', and, if they need more cattle or goats for the marriage of their son, it is again to the daughter's husband that they look for help. A friend of ours, a Christian, is even paying for the schooling of his wife's brother. Hence it is that, in spite of the fact that bride-price is more or less fixed within certain limits, it is always [576] said 'bride-price never ends', for a bridegroom can never refuse to help his wife's relatives. He may not even suggest that they are demanding too much, for this would be a breach of good manners reparable only by the handing over of a pardon goat. His only policy is to remain respectful, promise to 'look for' what they require, then later to send a message that he has been unsuccessful, even if he has many goats and they know it.

The Lovedu do not have that strict system of lasting avoidances 602
between certain relatives-in-law that is to be found among Nguni, where 431
it involves the use of separate paths by the married women of the village and even proscribes the use of words with syllables contained in the names of the husband or his relatives. Avoidances associated with marriage are, among the Lovedu, found also on other occasions. When a girl comes from her puberty ceremony or a boy from circumcision, he will respectfully greet all his relatives and neither rise nor speak till they ease him by giving him a small gift (6*d.* or soap or a leg or arm ring). Similarly, when a woman has a new baby, she will cover its face from inmates of the village till they ease her to see it. Similar avoidances, ended by means of a gift, are associated with marriage.

As soon as a marriage has been agreed upon, prospective bride and 534
groom avoid each other. They may not be together nor speak to each 431
other and, if by chance they should meet, the bride will cover her face with one of the clothes she wears and turn half aside. Often several

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584 courting visits are paid by the boy without seeing the girl at all. He is
831 entertained by the bridesmaids. After a few such visits, the boy will give 10s. or £1 to 'see the girl', to remove this taboo. The bride and her sisters similarly avoid all brothers of the groom till they rose her by means of a small gift after the marriage. One often sees such boys teasing these girls to try to get an answer to some question, but they keep resolutely silent. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system, there are areas such as the queen's district, where most of the inhabitants are related in some way. Here many men and women cannot speak to each other because the men cannot afford to rose all the brides of the family. After some years the women will tire of the avoidance and begin to speak to these men.

585 On arrival at the village of the husband, a bride avoids every one (by
831 not speaking) till given a small gift. Her mother-in-law gives her a gift
606 during the first week while she is still secluded, but the father-in-law usually waits longer. On the arrival of any visitor, the bride will lie down on her side in respectful salutation till given some small gift. As soon as a boy begins to avoid his prospective bride, he avoids also her mother. They may not be together in the same hut, the mother may not serve food to the boy, and, should they happen to come near each other, the woman will avert or partially cover her head. But whereas avoidance between groom and bride ends before marriage, that between a man and his mother-in-law ends usually about a year after the marriage, when the woman is given 10s. or a blanket. Andreas gave 15s. after the birth of his first child. Nevertheless, a man will always take care never to talk loudly or angrily in the company of his mother-in-law. If he does, she will walk away and if a man were to have words with his mother-in-law or scold her in a bout of drunkenness, he would have to pay a pardon goat to her family.

607 The most lasting form of avoidance is that between a man and his wife's brother's wife, especially the one who had been obtained with the cattle he handed over for his wife and who will bear the future wife of his son. Frinda always covers her face when meeting her husband's sister's husband. If he is in a hut, she may not enter it. Beyond exchanging greetings, she does not sit with him or talk directly to him and she may not herself serve him with food. The uterine sister of the husband of
[835] Madinji married Nagambi and so, according to all the rules, she should avoid him; but in reality she is his lover. He, Madinji, is known to be the father of one of her, Nagambi's, children, yet they are not socially ostracised nor have their actions been publicly condemned.

835 That this sort of breach of accepted standards is neither directly punished nor actively disapproved, unless forcibly brought before the public eye in a case, is in keeping with the haphazard nature of Lovedu social arrangements. Letjavula, who, on the death of his parents, came to live with his grandfather (mother's mother's brother), has had four children by the wife of his mother's brother, the son of his grandfather, though he himself is a married man. We were at first inclined to attribute this state of affairs partly to culture contact conditions, which have kept the woman's husband in town, though not determining her choice of

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582 his wife. The measure is a drastic means of getting back one's cattle, and negatives any conception of marrying the wife's brother's wife.

582 The *manyuale* configuration is, of course, incompatible with brother-
609 sister exchange; the cattle cannot both come from and go into the same direction. So also does it exclude marriage of ortho-cousins, though complications introduced by reckoning relationship though the queen as if she were a male and the stress upon maintaining the purity of the royal blood lead to arrangements that appear to be based on such marriages. The children of all the queen's wives are brothers and sisters, but unless their natural fathers are identical, the formal relationship recedes before the physiological, and these brothers and sisters can and do intermarry. Moreover, in the society generally and especially among royal kin, a man may be related to another man or to a woman in many ways; what they will call one another depends upon status or rank or arrangements agreed upon between the families, and is often determined by personal choices and adjustments. A man who wishes to 'play with' his classificatory sister (reckoning relationship through, say, the father) will call her cross-cousin (reckoning relationship through, perhaps, the mother). How such a situation can arise is at once clear when we remember that a man may have a woman as his legal father, even taking her lineage name; but it arises in many other ways, such as the tremendous entanglements in the *manyuale* system. Among many neighbouring tribes a special ritual of 'cutting the kin' sometimes makes possible the marriage of incestuously related mates; among the Lovedu such a device is unknown. Many tribes have a highly developed technique of love
532 charms; the Lovedu regard love charms as illegal, akin to sorcery and witchcraft, though there is one interesting exception, a rite based upon a religious pattern. Resort to love charms, except in the service of the arrangements of the social structure, would obviously strike at the basis of the conception that spouses are 'born for' one another.

513 We may now turn very briefly to the marriage ceremonial which, in harmony with the leading part played by the institution it supports, is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu life. Apart from its function of transferring the cattle and laying the foundations of a structure within which the greater part of human interrelations are enacted, the ceremonial stresses many values unconnected with marriage. The general plan of the ceremonial is patterned to the needs of the ideal form of marriage, that with the cattle-linked cross-cousin. In some neighbouring tribes, a man must bespeak his cross-cousin by paying a special beast; in others he must hand over an additional beast for her; but among the Lovedu all marriages are arranged on the one model, as if there were no other competing forms of marriage. Because the girl is said 'to be
584 born' for the boy, his parents simply send the 'goat of the skin cradle' to intimate that he is coming. It is a most appropriate action for, as she is 'born for' him, his people must provide the wherewithal in which to carry her, the cradle symbolizing nursing, tender care, and upbringing. Marriages to strangers, nevertheless, are initiated in the same way, as if the conception of being 'born for' the boy and its implications were projected upon them. It is only in the case of cross-cousin marriage that

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one speaks of 'binding the kin'; but the ceremonial of all marriages 584 ●
significantly stresses this aim. The boy takes no prominent part in the proceedings; it is his mother who, as cattle-linked sister of his maternal uncle, is entitled to ask the uncle for a daughter and, as we have seen, he can refuse her only at the peril of having his house broken down. His sense of obligation, owing to the cattle he received, explains why the transaction must be in a ceremonial form.

There is no trace of hostility between the *vaphalala* (sister's sons) and the *vamakhulu* (the people of the brother who gives the bride); they are always on the best of terms, even in the midst of the marriage negotiations. Structurally, the relationships between the two groups are liable to strains and tensions—so much so that *Mkwe* proceedings mainly turn upon, and have developed their special genius for effecting compromises in connexion with them. But equally the social system strives to set up reciprocities and to further smooth relations between them. An aggressive potentiality in the social system is converted into a co-operative actuality. We must expect no recriminations between the intermarrying groups, no bargaining for advantages, and no competitive displays; and indeed there are none.

All communications of a formal nature go through a *Mkwage* (umpire, one who settles disputes) or *madiala* (one who goes on the road between the parties); and both sides have such an umpire. In a cattle-linked cross-cousin marriage these umpires appear on the stage, not when the 'cradle' is sent, but only later. Their main function is phrased as being official witnesses of the gifts that pass and, in actual fact, in the courts it is always upon the evidence of the *mwage* that reliance is placed; the *Mkwe* hardly ever decides what has to be returned upon divorce without calling them as witnesses. It is possible that their intervention between the parties in the marriage negotiations adds to the dignity and decorum of the situation; but they do not appear to be there to avoid the friction that in other tribes accompanies the hard bargaining. The gifts that may be asked are institutionalized and the idea that one party is trying to outwit the other is utterly foreign. The bride's people ask for what they want; the bridegroom's people do not always give it, but they never refuse: they say they will go and 'look for' it. It is a familiar formula—people are always 'looking for' the things they owe others; they may never find them, but that on the whole does not matter; what is important is the expression of their willingness. Bargaining and calculation are abhorrent; they cannot co-exist with the great reliance of the social structure upon mutuality and co-operation. And so in the marriage negotiations there is never any inquiry as to the resources of the boy's people, no tacit, much less express, agreement beforehand as to how much is to be handed over for the bride. The *mayonale* for a princess is no different from the *mayonale* for a commoner. The transactions move on slowly, perhaps over a period of many years. One may roughly distinguish certain stages, and here and there a stage, for some reason, not necessarily connected with the end result, is emphasized, marked by the delivery of a special beast or thrown into relief by a significant ceremony; but on the whole there is not the gradual unfolding of a plan such as in the initiations.

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that they have a personal stake in the social investment; their desire for 583
recognition cannot be ignored; to maintain their interest at the requisite intensity, they must be significantly rewarded. And so the 'cow-and-calf of the woman's place' is conceived to be a personal reward to the bride's mother; it is her special property, not, indeed, to be detached from the chain of exchanges, for *mayanale* cattle must remain *mayanale* cattle and can never become unencumbered property of an individual, but to be preserved by her, if she so desires, in order that she may help her [133]
youngest son, who succeeds her in her old age. Often in the old days when the bride's chastity was an honour to be displayed, but rarely to-day, because absence of chastity is a disgrace to be concealed, the 'cow-and-calf of the woman's place' was withheld or claimed back if the bride proved not to be a virgin. As things are to-day, this gift mainly recognizes, as it also did in the old days, the spiritual contribution of the mother to the health and strength and virtues of her daughter, the bride. The 'beast for bartering' is a contribution to help the mother of the bride, but not so much in her personal capacity as in her capacity as food-provider of the home; owing to the aversion to killing cattle, this beast passes to-day only in times of shortage when the bride's mother is really in need of grain.

The 'cow-and-calf of the courtyard' recognizes the special interest of the father and vicariously his male relatives; it is a gift that acknowledges their special services in bringing up the bride. The situation must be made acceptable also to the bride herself, for marriage is not an easy matter, involving new and heavy responsibilities and partially severing the bride from her home. In the old days the girl was usually given the *mandalla*, a cow, said to provide a change of clothing for her; to-day she is given £5 or £6 worth of clothes. But the rule that she forfeited this wedding outfit if she were found to be deflowered is in disuse to-day, since young men object to the public humiliation of their brides.

There are many other gifts which, apart from contributing to the main result, recognize particular aspects of the situation. The sending of the 'cradle', for instance, intimates that the sister lays her claim to the bride as her daughter-in-law and, when the goat is killed and members from both families partake of the meat, it is the tacit consent to the projected alliance to which the families, rather than the boy and girl, are the true parties. Or, again, the 'calabash of water', usually a goat, signifies that the boy is asking the girl to come and set up home with him, while the girl's people equally indicate with the 'goat of killing' their satisfaction that all they asked has been duly given and that, as far as they are concerned, the bride may now leave.*

All too soon we must pass on to some other aspects of marriage cere- 584
monial. The absence of strained relations between the parties makes unnecessary the subterfuges and displays of hostility often found elsewhere in marriage negotiations. The go-between, whatever message he brings from the boy's family, is well received, for 'The messenger sent to swear at a king must fulfil his mission and cannot be harmed'. His first announcement is direct and to the point: 'I am sent by So-and-so to ask whether you will *hebe* them' (that is, carry the girl in the cradle). This

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584 applies to marriages between strangers, for in the case of marriages between persons 'born for' one another, there is no go-between at this stage. The girl may dislike the proposed alliance and, though there is great social pressure on her to accept a proposal coming from the father's cattle-linked sister, she is not quite powerless. The society dislikes resorting to any form of compulsion. A proverb warns people that an unwilling bride is liable to commit suicide or to suffer some misfortune, and it is legitimate to send back the answer, 'We have no power. Ask the girl.' This formula seems to contradict *mayuolo* dispositions, but the culture is full of apparent contradictions testifying to its flexibility and to the subjection even of institutional arrangements to the desire for agreement and compromise. At the formal betrothal, involving a public exchange of gifts, it is quite often not the bridegroom, even if he is available, but his sister or even his daughter that acts for him. One often sees a man's daughter paying what we would call the formal courting visits not merely on occasion, but from the beginning throughout all the years of negotiation until the end of the actual wedding. Indeed, the wedding itself may be by what we would call 'proxy'.

The courtship visits provide the prospective bridegroom with an opportunity for self-expression and contact with the age-mates of his bride, at least if he is not already an old man. Certainly, however, courtship is a conception very different from ours. The young man always takes a companion (if his sister or daughter goes, she also will take with her a girl friend) who serves as a link between him and the bride's friends. These are the affairs of the young people, which provide a whole side-show of their own, with its own rules, its observances, its entertainments and so on. There is no set number of visits and, except for the last visit, no development in the formal relations of the parties. The bride never reciprocates these visits. Restraint and caution characterize the bridegroom's, not his companion's, attitude, but he does not resist, or require any persuasion to accept the hospitality. Similarly, the bride maintains her distance, veiled in her blanket and inaccessible to her suitor, but her companions are not so reserved. The whole outward behaviour pattern is almost exactly that which is expected when a son-in-law or any member of his group visits his parents-in-law or any member of their group, with this addition that the bridegroom and bride are subject to special taboos, while by contrast, in private at least, their companions relax to an extent which we might regard as licentious.

In olden days there was a custom called *ku khatwa ditsai*, whereby the leader of the group of girls placed cakes of porridge one on top of the other on her left hand and thus offered food to the visiting bridegroom and his companion, but the last cake, the one resting on her hand, could not be eaten by them. It had to be left, just as nowadays some of the food given by the girls to the visitors must be left in the basket, as a sign, they say, of their good manners. There are countless observances of this nature, designed to impress upon the visitors the importance of good manners and dignified behaviour, and upon the hosts the necessity of being hospitable to their future brother-in-law. These things are of

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supreme consequence in supporting the structure that the marriage will 584
eventually build up. Courtship visits are concerned, not with courting, but with laying the foundations of the new pattern of reciprocity between the young people. They were cross-cousins before, free and easy in their relations with one another; after the marriage they are in-laws, between whom the delicate balance of adult privileges and responsibilities must be evenly maintained.

The courtship visits have other functions. They would hardly appeal to the young if there were no lighter side to the heavy burden of their serious purpose. All Lovedu ceremonial recognizes the need for diversity, for dramatic interest, for ringing the changes between the serious and the superficial, the purposeful and the playful, the grave and the comic. The bridegroom, unseen by his bride though he be, has a thrill in displaying his best clothes. He sometimes deliberately breaks taboos. In the old days the *mundulo* used to 'reveal' the bride, for only after it the bridegroom could see her and speak to her in private, a privilege he [431]
obtains to-day by a gift of a few shillings or more (*ha mosa*) long before the *mundulo* is given. Nevertheless, there is to-day adventure in going to the store, where, besides making her wishes felt by requiring this or that as part of her *mundulo* (change of clothes), the bride must be coaxed by gifts to look at one thing, to handle another, and at every step. After he brings the calabash of water, 'the beast of asking the bride to come home with him', the bridegroom and his companion come on the *ha ntle* visit. *Ha ntle* means that they will 'trouble' the girl and her companions. In other tribes the parents have to be 'begged' to release the bride; the Lovedu *ha ntle* is designed to irritate the parents so that they will be impatient of the bride's unwillingness to go and will bring pressure to bear upon her. For the *mosyoulo* has all passed and the will of the bride must not be allowed to cause them discomfort. The boy's companion especially makes things unpleasant. He interferes with the work of the girls, worries and annoys them at night when they want to sleep. He tries to stir their hearts by playing a plaintive stringed instrument, pinches and beats them. But what is really effective is his interference with their cooking: he throws sticks and filth into the porridge pots, and the older people, always particular about the cleanliness of their food, complain bitterly and say that the bride had better go.

The drama ends usually with an exciting 'elopement' of the couple. 585
It is not a true but an institutionalized elopement. Sometimes it does 431
not occur and sometimes it occurs even after a religious ceremony with which, strictly speaking, it is incompatible. Indeed, theoretically the giving of the *mundulo* is supposed to exclude resort to an elopement. But the 'elopement' is so common that it is the only form usually described. One night the bridegroom, having left 11., 'the thing resting under the mat', which in the old days was an arrow, surreptitiously escapes with the bride and her companions. The 'thing under the mat' explains the flight. The journey to the bridegroom's village is painfully slow: at each stop the girls call a halt and have to be persuaded by gifts (*ha mosa*) to move on; they may even have to be pushed, threatened, carried. The bride is completely covered with a blanket amid the troop of girls as they

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *seji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mzaka*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepise in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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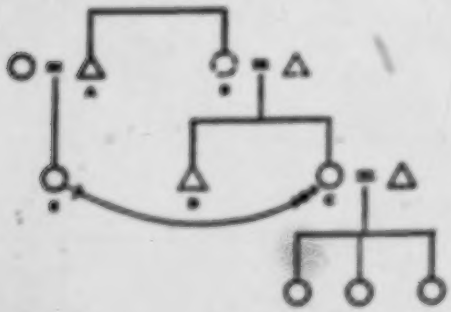

DECEASED
MOVEMENT OF A WOMAN IN MARRIAGE

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepise's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepise (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepise's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepise and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepise (*o ne bekile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepise (E) not '*mafi*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mokadzi*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

[601]

562 (*mama na ka*) by their 'wives' *katanani* when they marry on
588 behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children
601 of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

582 Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter
583 appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maseriba's
583 bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years
588 later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batsumedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

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595 house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is
422 done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and
593 another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

595 A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on
422 the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to
602 exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields
[422] from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still
593 young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though
602 it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

595 Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives
602 of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's
767 side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families) and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

● 594 In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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to roast. 'Let's ask riddles,' intervenes Khiebe. 'Here's one: Riddle-me-riddle-me-ree (*thaiii*), the witches are dancing on the thorns.' 'Stupid,' scornfully rejoins Mudumi. 'We all know that one. Hailstones, of course, for they bounce as they fall on the grass.' After pondering a moment he challenges: '*Thaiii*, the ox of my father has entered the pool, I remain holding its tail.' Roars of derision issue from the rest, 'A porridge-twirler,' they answer almost all together. The spiked head of a twirler is like the horns of an ox; it is thrust into the pot of water, while one holds it by its handle. 'Here's something you don't know,' comes from Mudumpani. '*Thaiii*, the nest of the water bird hangs down over the pool.' The company is silent, then there are some guesses, but it is beyond them, and they give it up. 'The eyelashes, of course,' says Mudumpani, 'because they hang over one's eyes.' Once the ball starts rolling, riddles follow one another in rapid succession. 'The babbling of a brook' turns out to be a calabash cup, for down its long handle beer gurgles as you drink; 'They always stand looking at each other' are the doorposts of a hut; and 'The chief entering the crimson (muddy) pool' is sunset. It is impossible to capture the poetry of these riddles; you cannot render their alliteration or play upon words in English. But it is clear that these youngsters are well versed in them. The time when riddles are most popular is, however, when a wedding party is present and the young people have to entertain them in their hut. On such an occasion riddles provide a mild form of competition between the two parties, that of the bride and that of the groom.

The men have retired to their huts, whence they will not reappear. The women have eaten the evening meal informally round the fire and are just chatting. In a hut three girls are sitting by candlelight, one of them, who has been to school, writing a love-letter for her friend to her lover in town. 'Why are you throwing me over?' she asks. 'Why don't you write? Please send me a nice cloth and a blanket, but not one like that which you gave your wife!' In another hut some children have persuaded Mamujaji, an elderly woman, to tell them tales. She begins, '*Ngano-Ngano* (a story, a story).' They reply, '*Ngano*.' 'Once upon a time,' she continues, but before she gets further they again interject, '*Ngano*.' Then she goes on, 'There lived a boy who had sores all over his body.' '*Ngano*,' they repeat whenever the speaker hesitates or takes breath. 'One day when the girls went to fetch grass. . . .' This is the beginning of a story about a bird who gives away the girls who kill the boy. A marked characteristic is the frequent occurrence of a song and refrain, during the telling of the tale, in this case, '*Phogo, Phogo ya Dzowa*, &c. ('Bird, bird of the south'), so that what with the interjections and singing of the chorus of the refrain, the listeners appear to take an active a part in the story as the narrator herself. At the end of each tale there is a long-drawn-out '*Ngananee*' and all spit into the fire. In the small villages of to-day story-telling has almost completely died out. Where there are only one or two present a story loses most of its charm, and there are many young men and women who know practically no stories, more particularly among Christians, whose parents prefer them to learn their lessons rather than tell them stories.

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584 courting visits are paid by the boy without seeing the girl at all. He is
431 entertained by the bridesmaids. After a few such visits, the boy will give 10s. or £1 to 'see the girl', to remove this taboo. The bride and her sisters similarly avoid all brothers of the groom till they *see* her by means of a small gift after the marriage. One often sees such boys teasing these girls to try to get an answer to some question, but they keep resolutely silent. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system, there are areas such as the queen's district, where most of the inhabitants are related in some way. Here many men and women cannot speak to each other because the men cannot afford to *see* all the brides of the family. After some years the women will tire of the avoidance and begin to speak to these men.

●585 On arrival at the village of the husband, a bride avoids every one (by
431 not speaking) till given a small gift. Her mother-in-law gives her a gift
606 during the first week while she is still secluded, but the father-in-law usually waits longer. On the arrival of any visitor, the bride will lie down on her side in respectful salutation till given some small gift. As soon as a boy begins to avoid his prospective bride, he avoids also her mother. They may not be together in the same hut, the mother may not serve food to the boy, and, should they happen to come near each other, the woman will avert or partially cover her head. But whereas avoidance between groom and bride ends before marriage, that between a man and his mother-in-law ends usually about a year after the marriage, when the woman is given 10s. or a blanket. Andrew gave 15s. after the birth of his first child. Nevertheless, a man will always take care never to talk loudly or angrily in the company of his mother-in-law. If he does, she will walk away and if a man were to have words with his mother-in-law or scold her in a bout of drunkenness, he would have to pay a pardon goat to her family.

607 The most lasting form of avoidance is that between a man and his wife's brother's wife, especially the one who has been obtained with the cattle he handed over for his wife and who will bear the future wife of his son. Frieda always covers her face when meeting her husband's sister's husband. If he is in a hut, she may not enter it. Beyond exchanging greetings, she does not sit with him or talk directly to him and she may
[835] not herself serve him with food. The uterine sister of the husband of Madinji married Nagambi and so, according to all the rules, she should avoid him; but in reality she is his lover. He, Madinji, is known to be the father of one of her, Nagambi's, children, yet they are not socially ostracised nor have their actions been publicly condemned.

835 That this sort of breach of accepted standards is neither directly punished nor actively disapproved, unless forcibly brought before the public eye in a case, is in keeping with the haphazard nature of Lovedu social arrangements. Lejacula, who, on the death of his parents, came to live with his grandfather (mother's mother's brother), has had four children by the wife of his mother's brother, the son of his grandfather, though he himself is a married man. We were at first inclined to attribute this state of affairs partly to culture contact conditions, which have kept the woman's husband in town, though not determining her choice of

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XII. THE BRIDE BECOMES A WIFE

(a) "LITTLE BROW OF HORNS, MINE AND THINE"

(b) FINAL IN HER POWER, THE BROW BROKEN WITHIN

[facing p. 145]

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supreme consequence in supporting the structure that the marriage will 584
eventually build up. Courtship visits are concerned, not with courting, but with laying the foundations of the new pattern of reciprocity between the young people. They were cross-cousins before, free and easy in their relations with one another; after the marriage they are in-laws, between whom the delicate balance of adult privileges and responsibilities must be evenly maintained.

The courtship visits have other functions. They would hardly appeal to the young if there were no lighter side to the heavy burden of their serious purpose. All Lovedu ceremonial recognises the need for diversity, for dramatic interest, for ringing the changes between the serious and the superficial, the purposeful and the playful, the grave and the comic. The bridegroom, unseen by his bride though he be, has a thrill in displaying his best clothes. He sometimes deliberately breaks taboos. In the old days the *mundulo* used to 'reveal' the bride, for only after it the bridegroom could see her and speak to her in private, a privilege he [431]
obtains to-day by a gift of a few shillings or more (*ku sosa*) long before the *mundulo* is given. Nevertheless, there is to-day adventure in going to the store, where, besides making her wishes felt by requiring this or that as part of her *mundulo* (change of clothes), the bride must be cossed by gifts to look at one thing, to handle another, and at every step. After he brings the calabash of water, 'the beast of asking the bride to come home with him', the bridegroom and his companion come on the *ku ula* visit. *Ku ula* means that they will 'trouble' the girl and her companions. In other tribes the parents have to be 'begged' to release the bride; the Lovedu *ku ula* is designed to irritate the parents so that they will be impatient of the bride's unwillingness to go and will bring pressure to bear upon her. For the *mungwalo* has all passed and the will of the bride must not be allowed to cause them discomfort. The boy's companion especially makes things unpleasant. He interferes with the work of the girls, worries and annoys them at night when they want to sleep. He tries to stir their hearts by playing a plaintive stringed instrument, pinches and beats them. But what is really effective is his interference with their cooking: he throws sticks and filth into the porridge pots, and the older people, always particular about the cleanliness of their food, complain heavily and say that the bride had better go.

The drama ends usually with an exciting 'elopement' of the couple. 585
It is not a true but an institutionalised elopement. Sometimes it does 431
not occur and sometimes it occurs even after a religious ceremony with which, strictly speaking, it is incompatible. Indeed, theoretically the giving of the *mundulo* is supposed to exclude resort to an elopement. But the 'elopement' is so common that it is the only form usually described. One night the bridegroom, having left 11., 'the thing resting under the mat', which in the old days was an arrow, surreptitiously escapes with the bride and her companions. The 'thing under the mat' explains the flight. The journey to the bridegroom's village is painfully slow: at each stop the girls call a halt and have to be persuaded by gifts (*ku sosa*) to move on; they may even have to be pushed, threatened, carried. The bride is completely covered with a blanket amid the troop of girls as they

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585 431 walk in single file. The bride (and sometimes her companions too) weeps, fearful of the new life full of responsibilities. They visit the boy's cattle-linked sister to be offered a goat and as a reminder that it is that sister who with her cattle has erected the new home. There may be a dumb show as the girls, marching up and down, display their final reluctance to give up the bride and, by contrast, the old women humorously mock the girls. At the gate of the boy's village they have to be carried in, and at last, as they humbly crawl to enter the hut, some one pours water on the roof and you hear the song, 'Little bride of ochre, seek shelter, you are raining wet'.

This is merely the general plan; there are many embellishments and many variations. But of some significance and worth mentioning as illustrative of the comprehensive nature of the ceremonial are the last few gifts just before the bride leaves home. There is a goat or, 10s. to 'lift' the bride from maiden to wife, for every important new step she takes may, in Lovedu phraseology, be made the occasion for asking something; another goat to 'take out the stamping block', symbolizing the transference of the bride's chief economically productive power; and still another to 'finish the complaints' of the bride's mother. Among neighbouring tribes there are similar gifts, but sometimes with different names and often, though having the same name, with different functions. A study of their reinterpretation by, and merging with the purposes of, each culture cannot be undertaken here. To two points we may, however, briefly refer. Occasionally among the Lovedu there are reciprocal feasts entailing the slaughter of a beast, first by the bride's and then by the bridegroom's family, and ending with an extra beast given by the latter to 'fill up the *masyusulo*'. These feasts belong to a very different pattern, found, for instance, among the Ulwa, where bride and bridegroom before the final acts are made to sit together on a mat, are offered advice and given presents. Secondly, and in strong contrast to many other tribes, the bride comes to her new home without any presents from her people. The troop of girls carry a woven basket (*Ikirudzuma*) in which there are certain grains from the bride's village, but everything else except the grains, even her clothes, have been given her by the bridegroom. Her people give her nothing whatever to set up a new home. Household utensils she does not need, for she cooks in the hut and uses the pots and furniture of her mother-in-law until, with the coming of a younger daughter-in-law, she becomes independent and has her own cooking hut.

585 782 In a really orthodox marriage among the Lovedu there is a religious ceremony. It is preceded by the slaughter of the 'goat of killing' brought by the bridegroom; a leg is given to him and from the skin the bride's *thenyane* (skirt) is made... Thereafter a prayer is offered to the gods on behalf of the girl: 'Here is the woman. We let you know that she is leaving us. She is going to the place where she is married. Let her be happy there; let all she does there be right; let her be smeared with fat [have children]. We have no complaint against her [*i.e.* we shall not cause illness through being angry and so also you should not]; we have given her beads to help her so that she may make a good home where she

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is going.' It is, of course, an extempore prayer, not bound to any set words. After this rite there is no need to elope; it is *ha ngga*, to marry with proper rites, not *ha pala*, to run away surreptitiously. Yet the secret elopement by night is so interesting that it frequently follows, and in any case the slow journey of the troop of girls, who must be persuaded at every step, is always part of the ceremony.

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The final stage of the marriage ceremonial consists of several successive steps lasting a month or longer. Again a whole series of new gifts (*mmusu*) passes and new rites are enacted. From early morning until late at night the bride's companions are busy—cooking, stamping mealies, bringing water for the inmates of the village to wash in, and in other ways. At night there are contests of riddles between the visiting girls and the boys and girls of the village; they are ordinary riddles (*dithai*), not those curious *dinyobo* that end the initiation, but the pattern of the institution is the same. There is, for instance, the *ha nsse* of the girls at every turn and their exaggerated politeness. Then, after a week, having fetched wood and distributed among themselves the gifts received, the bride's companions go home, crawling out of the village and accompanied some way by the boys. The bride is now alone and, still in her finery, she begins to do the household work. When she menstruates for the first time, she secretly 'flees the moon' (*ha shawa nwedi*), running to an old woman, who takes her back with beer of 'shunning the moon' and a goat is killed for her. This shunning of the moon is a minor detail in marriage ceremonial, with rules and observances, however, in which the virginity of the bride, the part played by the go-between, the division of the beer and meat, the reciprocal duties of the *nwashhale* and the *nghohale*, the one giving beer, the other returning a goat, are once more emphasized.

[99]

But all the rites and ceremonies are equally full of meaning, not only for the purpose in hand, but for the whole social structure. About three or four weeks after the marriage the bride goes to her home with the goat or ram of 'pouring out her bridehood' (*ha shalla wanyali*), and thereafter, according to ideal standards, the bridegroom may exercise full marital rights. This 'pouring out', with its associated observances, is still universally carried out, though the couple may already have received permission to cohabit. If the bridegroom migrates to town, as sometimes happens, before the home-bringing of the bride, the breach of orthodox rules, implied by the premature permission, is avoided. After a while the bride returns and brings the beer to 'open the way' for her mother. In the old days the boy's people then sent the *ha hakela* goat, the goat 'of asking permission' for the consummation of the marriage. At the stage when permission to cohabit is given, the couple are ritually mixed, the ceremony varying from mutual inoculation to common steaming under a blanket: it is a rite pregnant with meaning and with the associations it acquires as being a part of many other ritual occasions. The bride becomes an appendage to her mother-in-law, there are avoidances and gifts (*mmusu*) to remove them and so, at every stage, the marriage ceremonial is cut to the configuration of the social structure, fitted into its foundations and walls, and made to merge into the smallest details of its superstructure.

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583 be handed over to the lender to become, in most cases, the wife of
[F24] his son. To-day this custom is not as common as it used to be, owing to the fact that girls now often resist such a marriage, knowing that the European authorities will support them. No cattle or presents from the girl's people are ever handed over in marriage, and there is therefore nothing corresponding to the Zulu-Xhosa *ukulobola*. But there is all over the Lowveld a special name and function associated with each beast and goat that is handed over, which, together with the fact that there is generally no fixed number, no organized bargaining, such as that which characterizes Pedi procedure, and that very few people complete payment of bride-price before marriage, illustrate the non-commercial character of this arrangement.

•585 The most characteristic feature of marriage ceremonial in the Lowveld is the slow and tedious procession from the girl's to the boy's home, the bridal party having to be persuaded to move at each step by means of gifts, till finally on reaching their destination they have to be carried in on the backs of women from the boy's home, weeping loudly in their distress. There is no central marriage feast, though a goat is killed for the girls who accompany the bride, and no one from the girl's home, except for the bridesmaids, is present. The brilliant competitive dancing displays, mutual vituperations between the two families and general feasting which form part of Nguni marriage ceremonial, all are conspicuously absent in this area where the arrival of a bride hardly disturbs the even tenor of everyday life. It is of common occurrence for a bride, before arrival at her husband's kraal, to be taken to the village of the sister whose cattle the husband has used in the marriage. The sister must see the woman who will bear a wife for her son and will kill a goat in her honour. Blood-mixing ceremonies between bride and bridegroom to eliminate all dangers of sex intercourse are common over the whole area.

586 Barrenness and adultery are not grounds for divorce, though when a woman is barren her parents generally offer her sister, for whom, however, cattle must again be handed over. A peculiar feature of divorce in the Lowveld to-day is that the husband almost always keeps both the children and the cattle, except in rare cases where it can be proved that he has wrongfully driven away his wife, when he receives neither children nor cattle.

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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that 583
Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be 588
averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maseriba because she is *thadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho roka lolako*)'. This desire to keep alive 582
the links between brother and sister and to maintain and 581
renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dusa molako*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter 582
marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations con- 583
nected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 9a), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there 686
were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1930's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's 582
daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the 58
mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price 602
are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a differ ~t mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*mosila mobe o boya le noto ea hwe*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

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administration came the introduction of the Pedi idea that a man has a claim to both the cattle and the children in the case of malicious desertion. Old men in the 1930's called this a white man's law; today people are claiming it as a Lobedu custom. Only two of the oldest men at court were able to tell me in 1962 what had been common knowledge in 1936. The present custom is for the husband on receiving back the bride-price to return some of it (one beast for each child or sometimes two for a girl) for the rearing of the younger children that remain temporarily with their mother. A father's hold over such children is in practice tenuous though the court will always uphold his claims.

The issues in divorce are rarely simple. The simplest case I came across was one in which a man became insane. His wife left with her children to live with her brother who returned the bride-price. Usually, however, there are endless complications and cases continue for months, even years. If, for example, a man chases his wife and children away and the wife wants to return, he may in the end lose both the children and the bride-price despite the proverb quoted above.

The Domestic Group and the Importance of the 'House'

We have discussed the role of property in establishing and maintaining marriage relationships and links between families. Control over material resources also plays an important part in the structure of the polygynous domestic group with its economically independent 'houses' so characteristic of the Lobedu.

As head of the family the husband has full control over all family resources. Yet each wife forms with her children a unit of production and consumption, the independence of which as against other 'houses' has to be respected even by the husband, whose control thus becomes limited the moment he marries a second wife. This is why a Christian woman among the Lobedu never has the economic independence that a woman in a polygynous household has. There are safeguards against the infringement of the principle of the independence of the 'house', as we shall see.

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu

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also an economic unit, the Lobedu wife enjoys considerable economic freedom in the disposal of her property. Though she should act in consultation with her husband in the disposal of livestock or large amounts of surplus crops she will often, especially if on bad terms with her husband, act on her own. All these activities, it should however be remembered, are for the advancement of her 'house', which belongs to the husband's lineage. These goods can neither accrue to nor be used by the wife's own relatives. If, for example, she leaves her husband or is divorced she cannot take any of the produce of her fields with her. On the other hand the husband could use such crops or livestock only for the advancement or to feed the children of that 'house,' not for other 'houses'. The only goods a woman may take with her on divorce are cattle or other livestock earned by practising as a doctor because in this case, it is said, she has spirits guiding her which are of her own, not her husband's family.

The Lobedu husband does not in the manner of the Nguni allocate cattle to the 'house' of each wife (milk plays little or no part in the diet). It is said, however, that even if a cow were to be allocated to a house for milking purposes it would not belong to that 'house'. Cattle that come in from the marriage of a daughter are the property of her mother's 'house' and should be used for acquiring a wife for a son of that house. If the son is young and the husband wishes to use his daughter's cattle for a wife for himself, such wife would have to cook for the woman of that house from which the cattle came in the manner of a daughter-in-law. In theory a husband has the right to decide how the cattle of any 'house' are to be used. But he rarely in practice acts against the wishes of the wife. Her right over any woman acquired by the cattle of her daughter gives her great power and makes it difficult for her husband to marry a wife with them himself against her wishes. The bride might run away or her people refuse to let her marry if they hear that the woman the bride will have to 'stamp for' opposes the marriage. That is why so often cattle are handed to the wife's brother in the manner described above.

It is said, '*moshe ha o la yo mengwe*—houses do not eat one another', i.e., the property of one house cannot be used for the advancement of another. Hence bride-price of the girl of one

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *lelupe*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.

The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died, the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting

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home a second wife until his first has had a child or, more usually to-day, until she is pregnant; and he has to avoid his wife to some extent until the baby is weaned, a period of three years or even more. 537

If a wife is barren, a substitute may, as we have seen, be sent. The whole subject of substitution is too large for adequate treatment here, but some aspects of it may be mentioned. Among the Lovedu a man may marry two sisters in the ordinary course of events, quite irrespective of whether the first married has prematurely died or is barren, but the wife's sister is not specially reserved for the husband as if he had a prior right to her. The marriage is desirable, not enjoined by the society, when it is known that the sisters will co-operate and care for each other's children. In the case of barrenness, there is substitution, but the substitute wife is not a subservient wife. It is not a case of true substitution, but a strengthening of a weak link in the chain of bride and cattle exchanges. A barren wife cannot be discarded; on the contrary, the insistence upon treating her well, though it recognises, also represses the tendency to regard her position with misgivings. Men make a great effort, by treating a barren wife well, to elicit the praise of others, especially the queen, whose continuous interest is a guarantee that the virtue will be idealized. There are other considerations that reinforce the great concern of a female ruler for peacefulness and good relations. A man who ill-treats his barren wife need expect no reciprocity from her parents, and he has no weapons against them. He cannot demand back his cattle, for failure to have children does not vitiate the cattle exchanges. He cannot even initiate the procedure whereby his parents-in-law will send him a substitute. On the contrary, he must await their pleasure and if they do decide to send a substitute, he must *nyusulo* (give cattle), and he may be asked more *nuryusulo* than for her sister. But if he has been a good husband and is poor, less may be asked. A man realizes that the virtue of treating a barren wife well is richly rewarded. 542 595

Similarly, a husband whose wife has died prematurely without issue is in the same position: he has no right to demand a substitute or, in default, the return of the *nuryusulo*. When he is offered his wife's sister or other suitable substitute, he must hand over cattle for her. It is true that the substitute sets up the house that 'has fallen', but the really important point is that the relationship created by the cattle exchanges should be maintained. A husband must report the death of his wife with an ox; he must call her people to the ceremony ending the mourning period; he must continue his visits as son-in-law; he must always be prepared to help his parents-in-law. All this will not necessarily induce them to give him a substitute; and if he neglects these things, the potential right to such substitute is not effaced. On the other hand, his parents-in-law must continue to honour him when he visits, they must still send him beer, they must acknowledge relationship with him. If they do not do these things, if they spread tales that he has been the cause of the death of their daughter, the relationship may be broken; and consequently the claim to a substitute, non-existent before, now is given recognition. If they value the link broken by their conduct they must reforge it by sending a substitute; if they do not, their action has already caused it to snap 587 768

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587 768 and the *mumyuale* must be returned. But it is only at the stage where interrelations have become intolerably strained that the widower can demand back his cattle. The law thus is that a man who has lost his wife has no right to demand a substitute; but if it appears that his parents-in-law maliciously refuse to give him one, in circumstances that break the bonds established by the *mumyuale*, he may do so.

Substitutions have to be distinguished from inheritances of spouses, for the latter is not spoken of as marriage at all; it is '*ku khwa*', to hand over or allocate, and implies looking after. Among some of the neighbouring tribes, a man may, on the death of the brother, inherit the wife of his brother, both of his elder or his younger brother. Among the Lovedu the theoretical rule is that only a younger brother may inherit an elder brother's wife; but sometimes, if the parties agree, it is the elder brother who inherits. Among some tribes a man cannot inherit his father's wives, unless they are wives that have not yet actually been married. Among them the supreme vice, the sin that disqualifies even the heir to the throne, is to 'spoil' the wives of their father. Among the Lovedu the two things are not interconnected, and a man may inherit any of his deceased father's wives, if he calls them *mmai* (little mother), which implies that they are wives junior to his mother. A woman may inherit [588] wives just as she may marry them, especially the widow of her cattle-linked brother, but also the widow of her elder or of her younger brother. There are no rigid rules as regards inheritance of wives; if a man's younger brothers are preferred to his sons and the latter are preferred to the sons of the younger brothers, the actual arrangements are in essence determined by the deceased's cattle-linked sister, who officiates but acts upon the advice of her father's brother or her own brothers and sisters. It is all a matter of agreement. There is no institutionalized method whereby the inherited wives may signify their approval or disapproval, but in practice they are exceedingly independent, almost invariably remain in their own village wherever the man who inherits them may be, and not infrequently become everybody's prey. They sometimes marry wives of their own, which releases them from undue dependence upon their inheritors, who are, however, obliged to assist them in the things that men do. Sometimes their gardens and houses, just as their beer drinks and entertainments, are markedly superior to those of married women; for they are able to accept favours from numerous admirers. And on the whole the lot of a widow is not an unenviable one.

A man cannot inherit his mother's sister, nor can he inherit the wife of a son of his mother's sister. Such arrangements would be incongruous with the *mumyuale* complex, for 'two sisters cannot eat one another's property'. Nor may a father inherit his son's wife; it would upset the hierarchical arrangement of the society. Again, a man cannot inherit his mother's brother's wife, even if she is not the mother of his own wife. It is also curious that the Lovedu do not attach great importance to seed-raising. They speak of 'raising seed to the family' (*ku dzose malogo*) when a girl marries at her cattle-linked aunt's, and that is the primary meaning of the phrase. A younger brother who takes his elder brother's widow

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *mayumalo* scheme.

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagambi, a man of thirty-five, scoured to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*magandi*) has in practice a high status.

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *magandi*, and when he died the *magandi* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *magandi* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *magandi* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *magandi* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, even jealousies, between a man and his *magandi* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Mubale complained, not that his son was living with a *magandi*, but that the *magandi*'s laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *magandi* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. A man who illicitly lives upon a woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*mudilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father of the porridge bowls' (*rumudilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *mayumalo* and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *mayumalo* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *mayumalo* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

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ships between the families involved but upon it rests the whole character of the domestic group. Payment of bride-price transfers the reproductive powers of the woman to the husband's agnatic group. The husband has genetricial as well as uxorial rights. Genetricial rights apply not only to any children born after the marriage whoever their biological father might be, but also in retrospect, so that any child born before marriage automatically becomes the child of whoever pays the bride-price, with full rights of succession and inheritance from its sociological father. There is thus, in contrast to other tribes such as the Zulu, no way in which a Lobedu man can obtain the right to his biological child other than by marrying its mother. Emphasis on sociological as opposed to biological fatherhood among the Lobedu is very strong and this is an important factor in Lobedu social structure. The rights of a father to a child involve control over it; the right to the bride-price of a daughter (subject to the right of her brother to marry with his sister's cattle and of her mother to the services of the woman married with her daughter's bride-price); and corresponding to his right to his daughter's bride-price the duty to help his son to marry. A father may and often does marry an additional wife with his daughter's bride-price. A father also has the right to be cared for in his old age by his sons.

The levirate is practised, the junior levirate being more common than the senior levirate. The brother raises seed to the deceased and takes over the responsibility of a father and husband though the children he begets are counted as belonging to his deceased brother. Frequently the heir, eldest son of the chief 'house' inherits a young wife of his father. In this case, similarly, the children born of the union are looked upon as the deceased's, i.e., as brothers and sisters of the heir, not his children. The sororate also is practised in all its forms, sororal polygyny being very common. Where a sister is sent to 'awaken the house (*ho dusa ndo*)' of a barren or deceased wife full bride-price is due for her although, since bride-price is never an absolutely fixed amount, less may be asked for than in the first marriage.

The marriage of a woman transfers to her husband's group the right to her labour. Initially it is the husband's mother even more than the husband himself that benefits, as we shall

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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a different mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*masila mobe e beya le sete ea hwe*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

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given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *lehuge*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.

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581 sister, between husband and wife and between cattle-linked cross-cousins,
582 and these links, as well as the whole network of subsidiary links, arise from the implications of marriage and cattle-linking. The brothers who receive the cattle from the sisters return daughters to them and again receive cattle; the brothers become the nucleus of a group providing brides, and hence, from the point of view of the sisters and their children, they are the brides or parents-in-law (*vamakhale*), while the sister's husbands are, from the point of view of the brothers and their children, the group supplying bridegrooms (*vatsai*) or sons-in-law (*vaphehale*). The *vamakhale* give brides and receive cattle; the *vaphehale* give cattle and receive brides.

582 That is the complex network in which cross-cousin marriage is embedded. Cattle-linked cross-cousins are said to be 'born for' one another; a man is said to marry where his father has married, a woman is said to go to her father's sister (thus marrying where the latter has married). Actually over 80 per cent. of the men marry the cattle-linked cross-cousin 'born for them'; and she, whether married first or last, becomes the chief wife. This means that she bears the chief son. It may happen that she is not married at all during the lifetime of the man she was 'born for'; she may be too young or he may die prematurely; yet she will be the wife who must, for any important purpose, bear the chief son. If the husband
599 'born for her' has died or never comes into existence, and a successor to him is required in any position of importance, such as headship of a district, she will nevertheless be married to him; the cattle will pass and he who 'succeeds' will be some one else, chosen not by her, but by the group of the bridegrooms or, more precisely, the house of the non-existent bridegroom (which in practice more often than not means the mistress of that house). Of course, the system is not infallible. When nothing of importance as regards status or position is at stake or, if the girl is headstrong and refuses to allow the chosen one to enter, she may 'pick up children in the bush'. But she has no right to marry any one else, though sometimes she is inherited by the brother of her supposititious spouse as if she were a widow; sometimes she merely goes to cook for her cattle-linked aunt and there bears children as if she were the chief wife of that aunt's son.

It is only a step from this situation to the further elaboration that allows a woman to marry a wife, not for her son, but for herself. If the system logically implies that a woman may have in her service a husbandless daughter-in-law doing all the work of a wife, by a slight extension of this conception she may actually marry a wife. There is ample precedent for this elaboration in the fact that the queen has wives; she is their 'husband' and to the children of her wives she is 'father' (*pubale*). This model is followed by other women, especially women of importance and women who, as doctors and potters, have cattle of their own with which to obtain wives. In general, however, such women call their wife 'daughter-in-law', as though they had been married, not for themselves, but on behalf of a son.

582 It is not only these peculiar elaborations that result from the pivotal institutions of cattle-linked brother and sister and 'being born' for one

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queen's mother—that is, either the queen's predecessor on the throne or, if she has borne no children, the queen's physiological mother. The unofficial husbands of the queens are brothers chosen from the line of Malegudu (elder brother of Mujaji I), but relationship is not reckoned through them as fathers. Closeness of relationship is important, but personality and opportunity count as much. The most influential councillor is often said to be the queen's mother's brother—in other words, the brother of the deceased queen or, if she has no issue, the brother of the wife of the queen who bore the queen. In fact, however, other relatives rise to equally influential positions. To take a concrete instance, the councillors of Mujaji III have been relatives either through Leakhali, chief wife and 'sister' of Mujaji II and physiological mother of Mujaji III, or through Mujaji II, her mother, Mujaji I, and the latter's brothers, such as Malegudu. Muneri, the chief councillor to-day, is Leakhali's uterine brother's son, and before him there were Mulogwane, uterine brother of the queen, and also Leakhali's uterine brother. Earlier still, but in the present queen's time, the greatest councillors were others tracing descent from Malegudu. There is no precise rule either as to the number or identity of the councillors. The *duna* of the queen should not be a relative; he is merely a messenger, and, unlike the *induna* elsewhere, is of no account, having no special legal or other status or function.

The *khiejo* is neither the more or less determinate body of private advisers (*kwalo*), nor even the tribal gathering (*pitsho*), of the Sotho. It is mainly constituted by district heads, or their representatives, and the men of the capital, but any one attends; and it is never conceived of as a general assembly of all the initiated men of the tribe. It has little power and less initiative; it is summoned mostly to discuss European matters, and there is now a tendency to place some decisions of the men of the capital before it for confirmation; but it is hardly a means of gauging popular feeling or of expressing the royal will. The co-operation of the tribe is secured and its desires made known, not through the *khiejo*, but through other social arrangements, which we shall describe at greater length.

These arrangements run parallel with a distinctive system of wives of the queen, called *vafarosi*, a term also applied to the wives of all nobles and women other than the queen may have *vafanosi*. The majority of the queen's wives are given to her by her district heads. In a sense, these wives are tribute (*va ha lova*), but the queen always gives some *munyualo*. She also receives wives from foreign chiefs who supplicate for rain or for peace, and from headmen who settle in her country and send their daughters or sisters; in these cases no *munyualo* is given. Finally, she is sent wives by the nobles, by those to whom she has given wives or cattle with which to secure wives, and by those who promise their little 'mud-stampers' as repayment for the assistance they ask. Sometimes also the queen takes a liking to a girl and asks her in marriage and sometimes commoners send their daughters. It will be impracticable to deal with all these cases; and, from the point of view of the political organization, we are mainly concerned with the wives sent by district heads. They send their daughters for purposes of *ha lova*, a word used in a wide

[marriage cattle, See cat. 583 per detail.—Analyst]

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643 connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
588 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
634 District heads *lova* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
789 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
648 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Uulovedu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*hu lova*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Tonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
588 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of
[831] marriage and *munywalo*; the *munywalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
588 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
837 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own hut (and in the old days a cow into the bargain) and be allowed to co-habit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private councils of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Vaṭanoni* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *vaṭanoni*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads. 643 588 837 554

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *muṭanoni* to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. Only some of the *vaṭanoni* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *vaṭanoni* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves Mujaji and they are described as 'the heads of Muhale', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing. 643 588 578

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noblemen she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *munywalo* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *munywalo* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *munywalo* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.' 643 588 634

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

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ease of presentation. Mavetha, district head of Mareroni, some thirty-eight years ago gave his daughter, Muthatso, to the queen. Muthatso after a time was allotted to Khidima, the queen's maternal uncle. Later Khidima sent a daughter to be one of the wives of the queen and this girl in turn was given by the queen to Nagambi, district head of Maulwi. Meanwhile Mavetha's son, Muhale, succeeded at Mareroni and sent the only issue of his wife, the daughter Makwajo, to the queen (1936). The next ruler at Mareroni will be either Makwajo or an heir raised by the wife acquired with the cattle given by the queen as *munywalo* for Mukwajo. Already these arrangements link the district heads of Mareroni and of Maulwi with the queen and one of her nobles, and also with one another. The network is indefinitely continued in all directions, and though its ends appear to diverge, they centre in the queen and become interlinked at many points. For instance, to Rasodi, a younger brother of Nagambi, the queen gave Makwada, her wife, who came from Malematsha, an important district head, and as a result Rasodi's son must marry at Malematsha's. Once these interrelations are established, they set into motion the whole social system and the reciprocities which double the links and perpetuate the interrelations. In the district of the capital the ramifications of exchanges and re-exchanges are so complex as to defy analysis.

Broadly speaking, districts may be divided into those given to one of the old *kwevo* or royal groups (of Muhale, of Mudiga and of Mahasha), those originating from *vafanoni*, and those held by heads of foreign groups. The so-called *vafanoni* districts constitute a composite group, because women do not normally succeed to one another. We have already mentioned elsewhere how the district Matsui was given by Mujaji I to her wife, who, marrying a Crocodile, was succeeded by her son Matsui and his line of Crocodiles. In 34 per cent. of the 100 districts we know well enough to trace their origin, the position has not been very different. To-day sixty of these 100 districts are held by the royal groups and forty by foreign groups, and of those held by foreigners sixteen were acquired, as Matsui was, through *vafanoni*. Thus 40 per cent. of the foreign and 30 per cent. of the *kwevo* districts, as far as we know, were originally handed to wives of the chiefs. Districts may originate in many other ways. It was customary for the kings to place their districts under sisters and brothers and temporarily also under their wives. Their wives could not as easily as among the queens consolidate their position, as they were unable to send their daughters as wives to the king, whereas now they can and do send such wives to the queens. Districts were also given to the great messengers (*diduna*) of the chiefs; to foreigners, who, though they came with no large following, were renowned doctors of the national 'schools', some of which they introduced; to men who gave the queen cattle and a wife, and occasionally to those who had rendered services of value.

It does not much matter how a district originates from the point of view of the links that are gradually established with the queen and with one another. If foreigners come with a large, compact body of followers, they are often given an area and in return send their daughters as wives

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men,
588 and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to
644 be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth
[565] ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the
[171] Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage,

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

mother's brother's daughter, and in contrast to all surrounding Sotho 582
tribes, Pedi to the south and Highveld tribes to the west where it is common, marriage with the father's brother's daughter is not considered possible. Cross-cousin marriage with the father's sister's daughter is known only among the Lobedu, where it is common [184]
within the royal clan, Khaha, where it is rare, and Moila's Venda. The prevalence of marriage with the mother's brother's daughter by which a girl is said to be 'born for' a son of a certain house and knows all her life she will marry there, has been a stabilizing influence leading to very much less illegitimacy resulting from the absence in towns of young men than is found in other areas where this type of marriage has broken down. A girl knows she will have to 'cook for' her father's sister, her future mother-in-law (indeed there is a definite moral value attached to this), and even in the absence of her husband-to-be will be married by the family. If, as a young married woman she has a child in the absence of her husband, it is an irregularity without serious social consequences. On the death of a spouse, sororate and levirate are common; marriage with the wife's brother's daughter is found where the wife is barren or dead, and full inheritance of a young wife of one's own father is quite common.

The custom of a woman being 'married' by a woman, so common 588
in the Lowveld, is one often misunderstood by Europeans. Since a girl is 'born for' the son of her father's sister whose cattle made her father's marriage and her own birth possible, her father's sister may, even if she has no son, nevertheless 'marry' the girl, who will come and cook for her and have children by some appointed relative or by private lovers of her own choice. It is possible, though much rarer, for a woman rich in cattle to 'marry' a non-relative.

Though in the Lowveld as elsewhere the person responsible for 583
payment of bride-price in a man's first marriage is his father or guardian and brothers and sisters are usually coupled, the cattle for the girl being used by the boy, it is not customary in the Lowveld, as is the case elsewhere, for any other relative to contribute. Here, 583
when a man has no cattle, instead of begging from various relatives, 426
he will proceed to 'show the knee' to a man rich in cattle, i.e., he will borrow cattle on the understanding that his first daughter will

231 creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and re-alignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

433 The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough
556 for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an
436 economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a
431 doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the
476 general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

612 The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

582 One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and
583 sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-link-
604 ing of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister
[568] of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion. 593 562 [588]

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vamalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vamukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsezi*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaḓuhulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin. 613 601 612 613

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's 753 769

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A	B	C	D	E	F

Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.
[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-195. See category 116. --Analyst]
[Facing kinship diagram.]

642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
557 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[834] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1945 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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421 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship
571 and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable
[476] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily
[273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintain-
[177] ing social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes
571 the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new
431 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small
571 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the
602 same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even
421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and
571 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples.
431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went
931 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour
643 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies.
571 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a
[588] *thari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge loda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga masadi a de a nthsidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *novi* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mosha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

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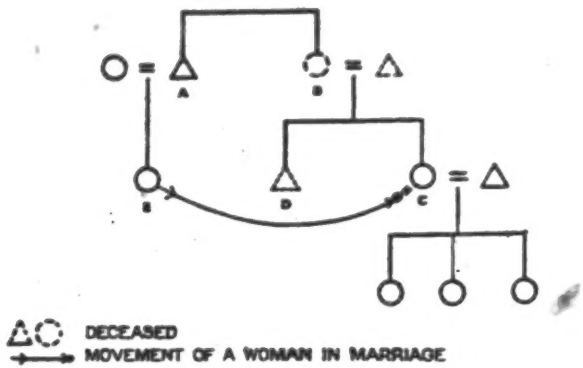

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepize's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepize (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepize's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepize and "stay" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepize (*o mo bekile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepize (E) not '*noeji*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mohadibo*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

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562 588 601 (*monna wa ka*) by their 'wives' *batanoni* when they marry on behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

582 583 Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maseriba's 583 bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years 588 later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batamedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that 583
Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be 588
averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maseriba because she is *khadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho ruka leloko*)'. This desire to keep alive 582
the links between brother and sister and to maintain and 581
renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dsosa moloko*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter 582
marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations con- 583
nected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 2a), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there 586
were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1930's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's 582
daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the 58
mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price 602
are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

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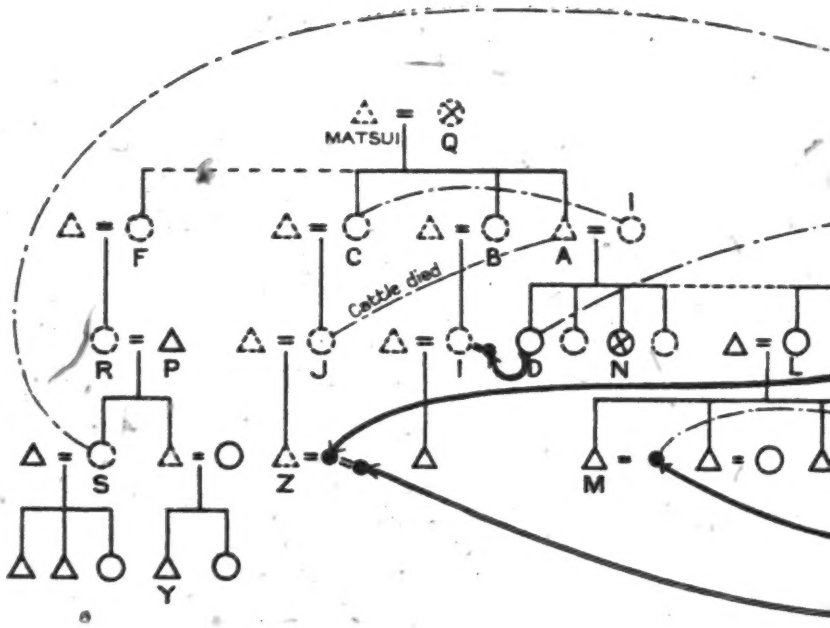

Indicates deceased.
Indicates half-siblings.
Indicates full siblings.
Indicates preferred wife.

[p. 192-A]

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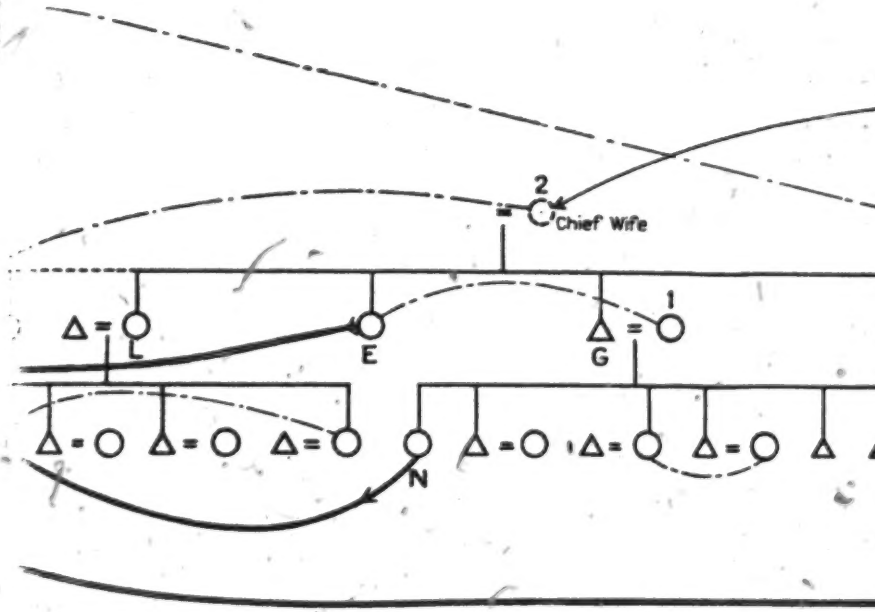

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a woman in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wive
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her de

Indicates woman marriage of a girl with a married female relation.

Indicates a woman who is or has been a motanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[p. 22-B]

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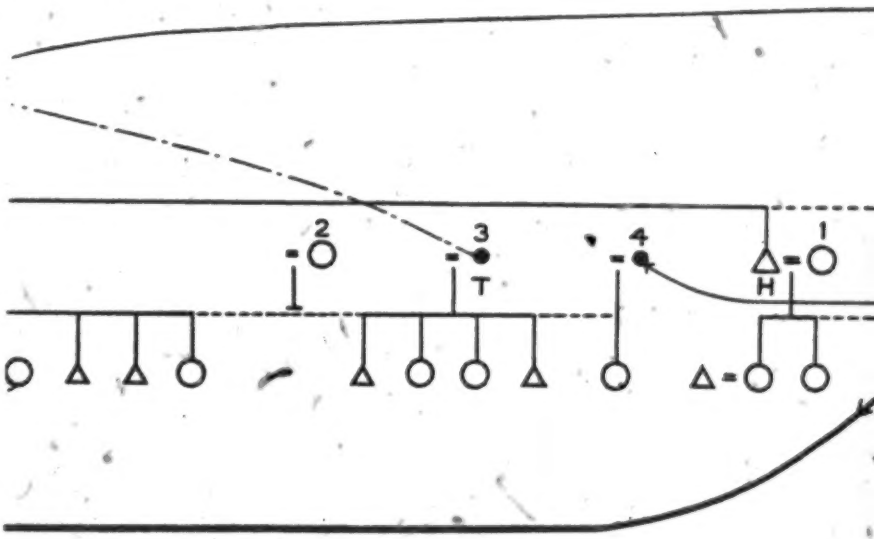

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
ncoming wives from the same lineage.
ter or her descendent.
lation.
the queen.

FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a linea

[p.192-C]

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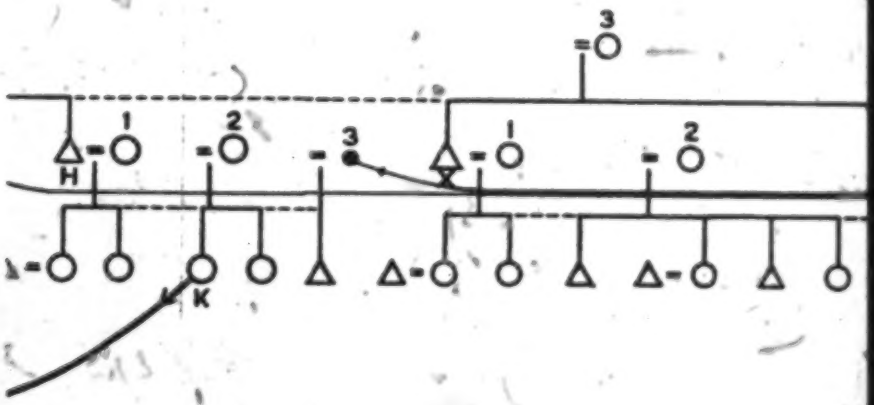

e links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-D]

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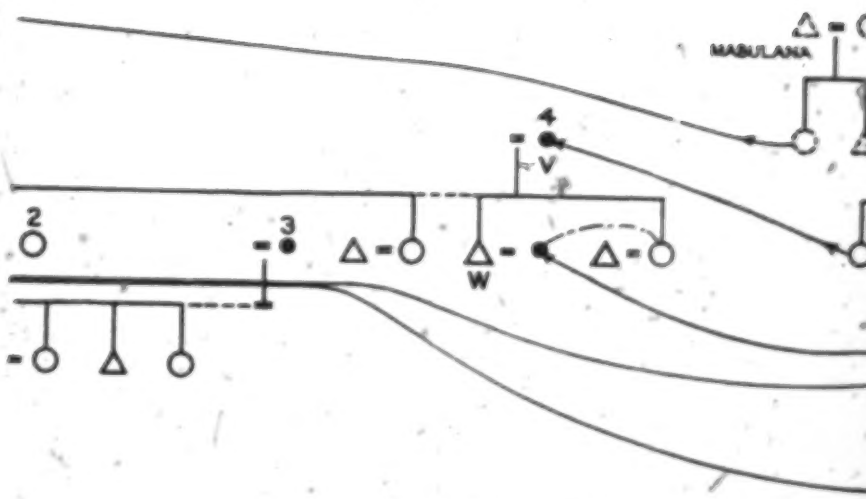

[g.192-E]

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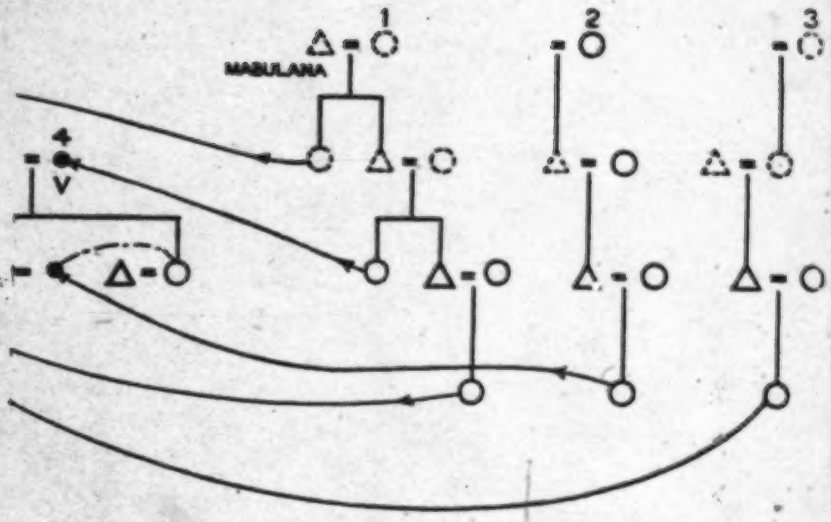

[p.192-F]

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realizing he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

● 582 591 (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I; that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. [634] In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *matanasi* of the queen.

613 582 591 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.

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A	B	C	D	E	F

Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.
[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-195. See category 116.--Analyst]
[Facing kinship diagram.]

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

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often, if at all, only after the death of both the father and his heir, the eldest brother who succeeded him as head of the homestead. Full independence is not an ideal that is striven for.

In its early stages the new unit or incipient 'house' is still dependent on the bridegroom's natal house (house of orientation). The new bride works for her mother-in-law. She has no fields of her own to begin with, no utensils, nor a hearth and very often not even a sleeping hut of her own, the young couple using the mother-in-law's sleeping hut while she sleeps in her kitchen hut. The bride cooks on her husband's mother's hearth, works with her husband in a field allocated to them and helps her mother-in-law in hers. The husband will, if he has not done so before bringing his bride home, build her a new hut after the marriage at any time convenient to him. Simeon made sun-dried bricks himself, paid one pound to have the walls built, had a work-party for the framework of the roof and did the thatching himself. A man's father may help him but usually a young man uses his own money earned by previous migrant labour.

A woman cooks for her mother-in-law until a new bride, either of her husband's brother or of her husband arrives when she may be given her own pots. When Simeon's second wife arrived both wives cooked together for the mother-in-law for a while. Then when they began to disagree one (the younger one in this case because she was unrelated) was given her own pots to cook separately. Being given her own hearth is an important thing in a woman's married life marked by a little ceremony and a visit home to announce her new status. Even when she has her own hearth, however, she must continue to provide food for her parents-in-law. Children are thus an insurance against old age and it is the duty and responsibility of a son, more particularly the youngest son, to care for his mother in her old age. The father may have young wives to care for him when his elder sons are married.

Even after his marriage a man remains under the jural control of, and subordinate to, his father. Only after his father's death is he free to choose whether to remain in the village under the heir or to hive off. Sometimes, though rarely, a married son does, however, quarrel with his father and move away. Mostly

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him.

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking.

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *mosha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*mudukulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people.

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact

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wife also died, he sent the children to her sister to be reared and 768
gave her his deceased's wife's fields to cultivate to provide food
for the children. When they are big they will be brought back 591
with a gift of beer and their father will give a thanking gift of 431
an ox or money for the rearing of the children.

The utensils of a deceased wife remain in her hut to be used 428
by her children or son's wives; and her eldest son has the right 768
to inherit her fields. Until twenty years ago when it was still 583
the custom for a mother to receive a cow and calf on the marriage of her daughter (if a virgin) in recognition of having reared her, this portion of the bride-price was the special inheritance of the youngest son with whom she generally lived until her death.

When the father of a polygynous family or the head of a homestead dies there is, owing to the property arrangements characteristic of the Lobedu and their attitude to its possession, never a great deal of heritable property. The property of each house is inherited by the eldest son of that house. The heir to 592
the position of head of the homestead is the eldest son of the chief wife. Only he or the uterine brothers of his father are responsible for his father's debts—not the sons of other houses. It is generally stated in discussions that any cattle or goods acquired by the father as his personal possessions should be inherited by the chief son and heir. In practice it is more common to divide out such property among all the sons and daughters.

When Ramalepe, a rain doctor, died about three years ago all his cattle and goods were divided equally among his sons. His rain medicines and his field went to his chief wife's son; his mealies (from his own field) were equally divided between his wives and his uterine sisters. When Philip's father died there was no sister of his father still living so Philip went to the queen and asked her what to do. She told him to call his sisters and to divide out the property in consultation with them. He then called his sisters (eldest and other daughters of his father) and showed them the property—thirty-six goats. They agreed on dividing the goats as follows: the deceased's two elder daughters by his first wife were given ten goats each; Philip, a son by the second wife, received eight; Mutzere, sister's son to deceased, was given one goat to kill and eat at his home; one goat was

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home- 634
stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, 562
a married woman who does not live in the area was made [729]
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from [804]
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting [692]
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable 604
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's 634
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to 643
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's
child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The 634
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some- 602
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thoga monye bo dula muduhulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging 592
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance 592
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portion 591
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become 591
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels [578]
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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592 591 woman, K, has, during her husband's prolonged absence in a 571 labour centre, moved away from her fellow wives into another [564] district in order to be near her married daughter. She lives in a small homestead with her married son, who is absent doing [595] migrant labour, and her other children. In contrast to this is the homestead of a neighbour of hers who has five wives and

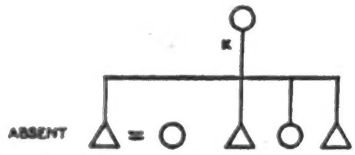

FIG. 5. Composition of a very small homestead.

whose ten brothers together with their wives and children still live with him in the homestead—a total of sixty-eight inmates (twenty-nine adults, thirty-nine children). Of these three married and two unmarried men are away doing migrant labour.

The domestic group indicated in Figure 6 originally lived in one homestead.

On A's death his chief son, B, inherited his youngest wife (No. 3) who as yet had no children. They all moved out of the old homestead, the sons (B and D) of A's two elder wives

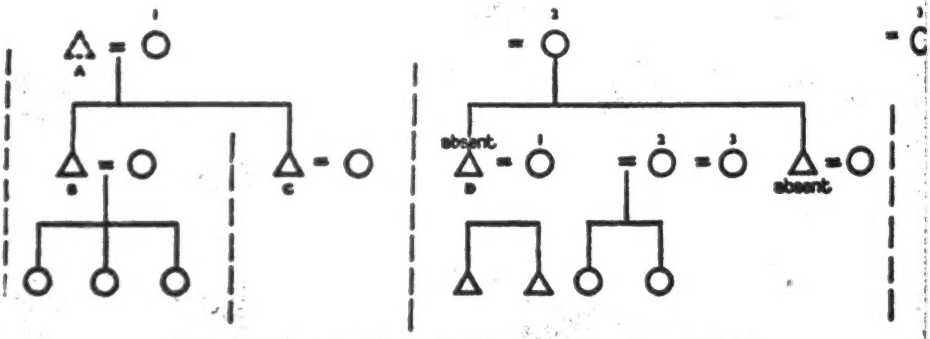

FIG. 6. Segmentation of a homestead on 'house' lines.

building separate homesteads next to one another, where I found them in 1938. The women in the homestead of D considered themselves part of the homestead of A and in the

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

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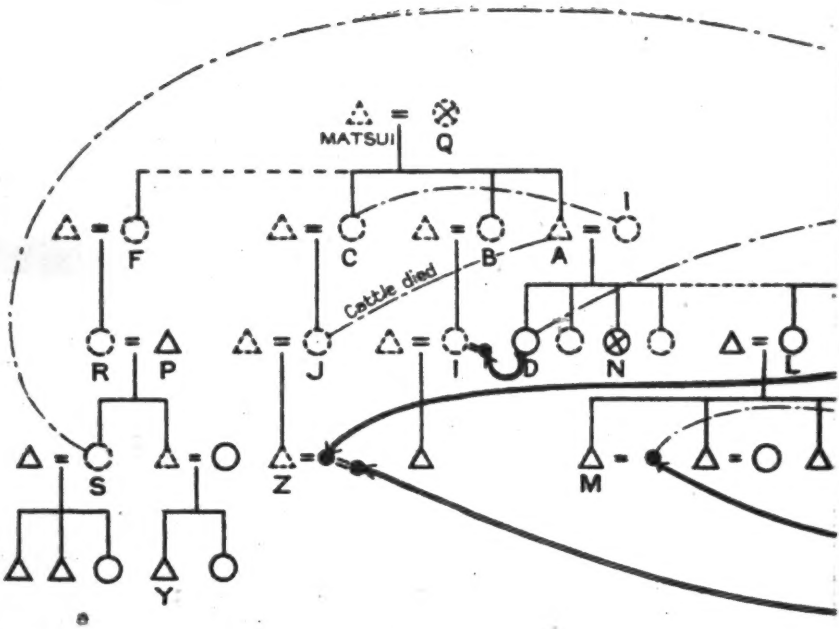

Indicates deceased.
Indicates half-siblings.
Indicates full siblings.
Indicates preferred wife.

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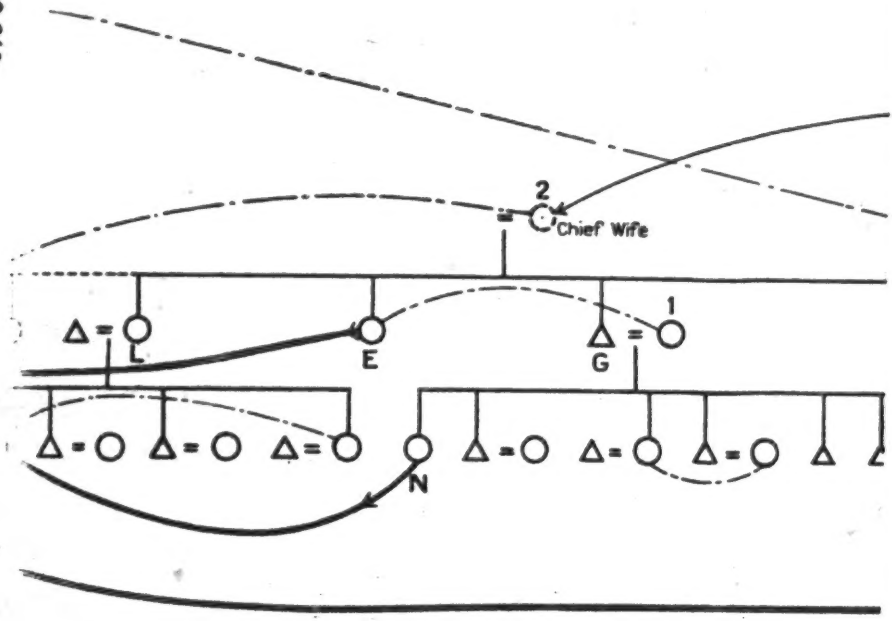

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a woman in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wives
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her de

Indicates women marriage of a girl with a married female relation.

Indicates a woman who is or has been a motanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[p. 192-B]

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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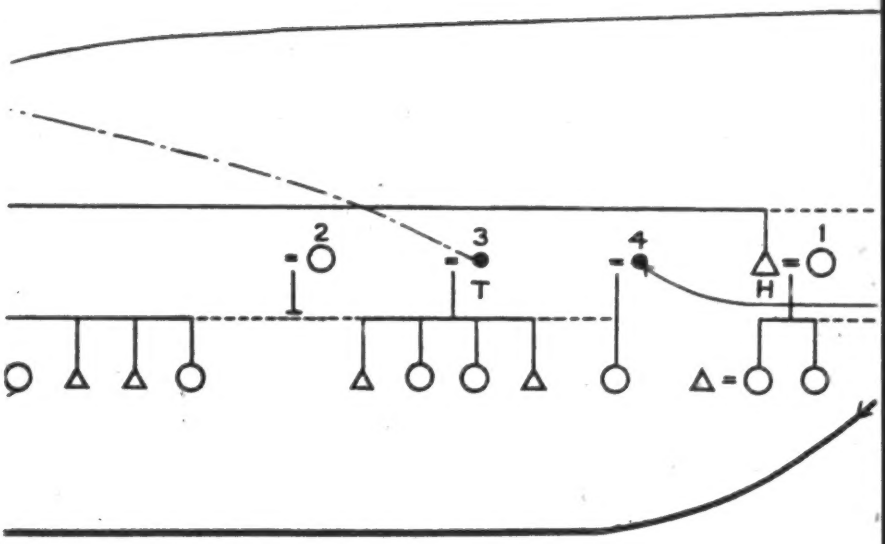

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
nooming wives from the same lineage.
ter or her descendant.
lation.
the queen.

FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a line

[p.192-C]

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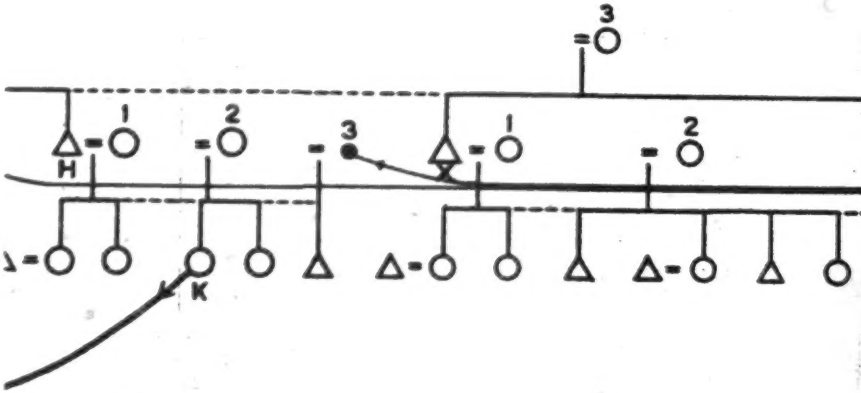

e links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-D]

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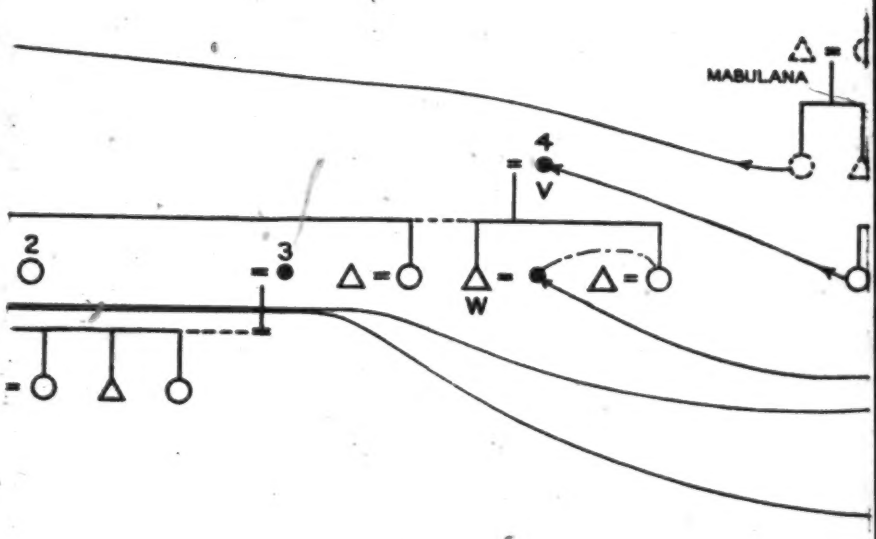

[g.192-E]

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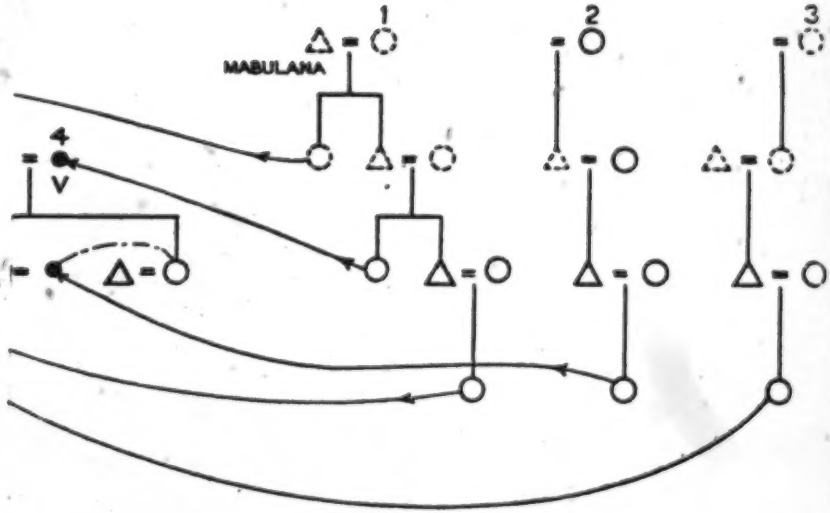

[p.192-F]

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

APPENDIX I

THE manner in which many of the characteristics of Lobedu marriage arrangements operate in practice is illustrated in the case of the lineage segment of A and his descendants set out in Figure 9. The arrows in the diagram all represent the passage of women in preferential marriage from their parental home to that of their husband: single arrows indicate women of the mother's brother's family (i.e., the Mabulanas) who have married into A's lineage (Matsui); double arrows indicate the departure of women of A's lineage to marry at their father's sister's. The following are points to be noted:

(a) The tendency for Lobedu polygynists to marry more than one wife from the same family is seen in Figure 9 in A's marriage to his fourth wife who was his second wife's brother's daughter.

(b) The manner in which cross-cousin marriage perpetuates links with the wife's kin down the generations is illustrated by the marriages of A's sons G, H, W and X. G's fourth wife, H's third wife and W's first wife all come from the same lineage, that of their mothers (A's second and fourth wives). A's son X's third wife is also his uterine cross-cousin but it was not practicable to indicate her family of origin also in the diagram.

(c) Besides reinforcing links with the maternal kin, mother's brother's daughter marriage serves also to knit together descendants of a man and his sisters. The bonds between A and his sisters B and C have been kept alive over a span of two generations of their descendants by the marriage of A's daughter D to I (daughter of his sister B) as indicated by the double arrow in Figure 9, and the marriage of A's daughter E to Z (son of J, and grandson of A's sister, C). Similarly G's daughter N by his first wife is married to the son (M) of his sister L (see double arrows), and H's daughter K is married to her father's sister E, widow of Z, a marriage which took place in 1961.

(d) The part played by cattle links in ensuring preferential marriage is also illustrated in the diagram; but it is clear too that children of brother and sister who are *not* cattle-linked often also marry one another. Z married E because of cattle-links two generations above him as is explained below. But when E grew old and needed a 'wife' G had no suitable daughter; so H's daughter K 'married' her. Cattle-links also did not account for the marriage of A's daughter, D, to his sister I, nor of G's daughter N to his sister L's son M. These indicate the tremendous value attached to maintaining links with married sisters. The reasons for the marriage of

582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realizing he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

582 591 (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I; that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. [634] In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *molomosi* of the queen.

613 582 581 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapidated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 825
It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to 515
urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance; on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives; further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut. To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Leṭavula, with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart [595]
from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342
and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khoro* and have a wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round. The former have their backs to the *khoro*, a framework of reeds as a door, and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleeping hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised [352]
platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [363]
mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg. The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted basket (*khirudzuma*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart [373]
suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth, plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals, between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Leṭavula, newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too cold in winter.

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 361
quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 171
larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [592]
two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the cob and beer-making activities.

Tribal Economy. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 241
agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 231
adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [362]
are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 241
a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop, men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pumpkins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
trees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *mohlolo* or
613 *lelaka* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[789] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhoko* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours
[476] and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

[562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[580] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhoko*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

592 often, if at all, only after the death of both the father and his
571 heir, the eldest brother who succeeded him as head of the homestead. Full independence is not an ideal that is striven for.

592 In its early stages the new unit or incipient 'house' is still
571 dependent on the bridegroom's natal house (house of orienta-
593 tion). The new bride works for her mother-in-law. She has no
606 fields of her own to begin with, no utensils, nor a hearth and very often not even a sleeping hut of her own, the young couple using the mother-in-law's sleeping hut while she sleeps in her kitchen hut. The bride cooks on her husband's mother's hearth, works with her husband in a field allocated to them and helps her mother-in-law in hers. The husband will, if he has not done so before bringing his bride home, build her a new hut after the marriage at any time convenient to him. Simeon made sun-dried bricks himself, paid one pound to have the walls built, had a work-party for the framework of the roof and did the thatching himself. A man's father may help him but usually a young man uses his own money earned by previous migrant labour.

A woman cooks for her mother-in-law until a new bride, either of her husband's brother or of her husband arrives when she may be given her own pots. When Simeon's second wife arrived both wives cooked together for the mother-in-law for a while. Then when they began to disagree one (the younger one in this case because she was unrelated) was given her own pots to cook separately. Being given her own hearth is an important thing in a woman's married life marked by a little ceremony and a visit home to announce her new status. Even when she has her own hearth, however, she must continue to provide food for her parents-in-law. Children are thus an insurance against old age and it is the duty and responsibility of a son, more particularly the youngest son, to care for his mother in her old age. The father may have young wives to care for him when his elder sons are married.

593 Even after his marriage a man remains under the jural control
571 of, and subordinate to, his father. Only after his father's death
571 is he free to choose whether to remain in the village under the heir or to hive off. Sometimes, though rarely, a married son does, however, quarrel with his father and move away. Mostly

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him. 593 591 571

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking. 592 571 [603] [462]

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *mosha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*mudukulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people. 592 571 602 604

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact 592 571 606

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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592 571 606 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for [602] he also is a *muduhulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 571 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 562 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu, identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

768 593 [604] On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family. [583] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

768 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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wife also died, he sent the children to her sister to be reared and gave her his deceased's wife's fields to cultivate to provide food for the children. When they are big they will be brought back with a gift of beer and their father will give a thanking gift of an ox or money for the rearing of the children.

The utensils of a deceased wife remain in her hut to be used by her children or son's wives; and her eldest son has the right to inherit her fields. Until twenty years ago when it was still the custom for a mother to receive a cow and calf on the marriage of her daughter (if a virgin) in recognition of having reared her, this portion of the bride-price was the special inheritance of the youngest son with whom she generally lived until her death.

When the father of a polygynous family or the head of a homestead dies there is, owing to the property arrangements characteristic of the Lobedu and their attitude to its possession, never a great deal of heritable property. The property of each house is inherited by the eldest son of that house. The heir to the position of head of the homestead is the eldest son of the chief wife. Only he or the uterine brothers of his father are responsible for his father's debts—not the sons of other houses. It is generally stated in discussions that any cattle or goods acquired by the father as his personal possessions should be inherited by the chief son and heir. In practice it is more common to divide out such property among all the sons and daughters.

When Ramalepe, a rain doctor, died about three years ago all his cattle and goods were divided equally among his sons. His rain medicines and his field went to his chief wife's son; his mealies (from his own field) were equally divided between his wives and his uterine sisters. When Philip's father died there was no sister of his father still living so Philip went to the queen and asked her what to do. She told him to call his sisters and to divide out the property in consultation with them. He then called his sisters (eldest and other daughters of his father) and showed them the property—thirty-six goats. They agreed on dividing the goats as follows: the deceased's two elder daughters by his first wife were given ten goats each; Philip, a son by the second wife, received eight; Mutzere, sister's son to deceased, was given one goat to kill and eat at his home; one goat was

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938, 1961-1962) 1964
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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home- 634
stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, 562
a married woman who does not live in the area was made [729]
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from [604]
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting [692]
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable 604
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's 634
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to 643
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's
child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The 634
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some- 602
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thoga monye bo dula mudubulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging 592
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance 592
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portion 591
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become 571
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels [578]
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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woman, K, has, during her husband's prolonged absence in a labour centre, moved away from her fellow wives into another district in order to be near her married daughter. She lives in a small homestead with her married son, who is absent doing migrant labour, and her other children. In contrast to this is the homestead of a neighbour of hers who has five wives and

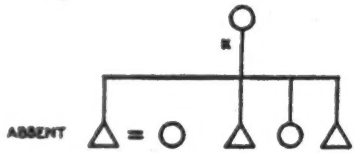

FIG. 5. Composition of a very small homestead.

whose ten brothers together with their wives and children still live with him in the homestead—a total of sixty-eight inmates (twenty-nine adults, thirty-nine children). Of these three married and two unmarried men are away doing migrant labour.

The domestic group indicated in Figure 6 originally lived in one homestead.

On A's death his chief son, B, inherited his youngest wife (No. 3) who as yet had no children. They all moved out of the old homestead, the sons (B and D) of A's two elder wives

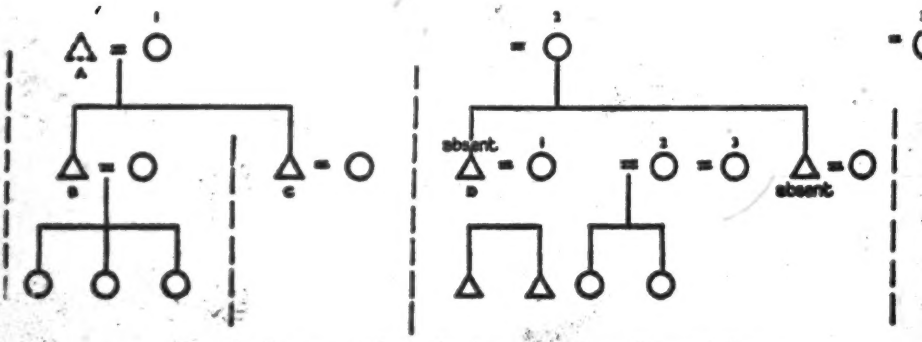

FIG. 6. Segmentation of a homestead on 'house' lines.

building separate homesteads next to one another, where I found them in 1938. The women in the homestead of D considered themselves part of the homestead of A and in the

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

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its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old. M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

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is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbourhood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,

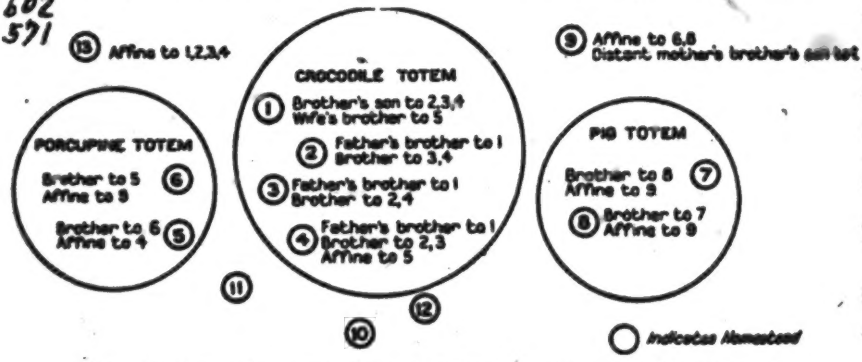

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*baduhulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

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between husband and wives, between children of different wives, and 595
between fellow wives. Polygyny, reinforced by the segregation of the sexes in everyday life and interests, renders the personal bond between husband and wife much less intimate than is the European ideal. Men are unwilling to spend much time in the company of women, and women prefer the company of their own sex. The polygynist must be most circumspect in his relations with his wives. He must treat them all with strict impartiality. Should he wish to give one a present, all must receive similar gifts. If he spends more time with one than another, this may be the cause of serious domestic discord. He must always be weighing and balancing lest preference shown to one should lead to trouble and unpleasantness. With such considerations uppermost, there is little chance of the development of companionship and communion between husband and wife, although there may be a high degree of co-operation and sympathy. It is generally only in his old age, when his wives have their own daughters-in-law and are already grandmothers, that a man allows himself the privilege of attaching himself openly to one of his wives, the one who has always treated him well. At this stage there is but little jealousy between the fellow wives, and a polygynous husband and one of his wives may sometimes in old age become a regular Darby and Joan. Where a man has one wife only and stays in his own small 593
village without male companionship at home, their relationship becomes noticeably closer. This gain in intimacy is counterbalanced by a loss of independence on the part of the wife. Since there is now no need carefully to distinguish what belongs to the wife, the husband tends to take over most of the control, and the monogamous marriage of Christians, with its greater community of property between husband and wife, has thus its disadvantages as well as its merits.

A wife is expected to obey her husband, who may beat her if she does not; yet he may not interfere in her domestic arrangements. When a woman is busy (and she alone is the judge in this matter), her husband may have to wait till well after midday before receiving his first meal. She uses her own discretion in exchanging the produce of her fields, although she will generally not sell at a store without consulting her husband. Wife-beating is not uncommon, but it takes place usually when a man is drunk or suspects his wife of unfaithfulness. For an angry woman to attack her husband is not unusual and once considerable amusement was caused at a district head's court we attended when a man complained of being beaten by his wife.

It is the duty of a husband to make or buy clothes for his wife, build and repair her huts, provide her every year with storage receptacles and an enclosure for her harvest, and nowadays also to plough for her. Most men have one field of their own which they cultivate and, though they may ask their wives to help them with weeding and reaping, the produce is their own, used for beer-making or, in bad years, distributed among their wives. If his wife or any of his children is ill, a man must be unfailing in his efforts to find medicines or doctors that will provide a cure.

The position of a wife in her husband's home changes with the changing 596

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596 years. For the first few years of her married life she is strictly controlled by her mother-in-law, has a great deal of work to do, and finds little time to attend dances and beer-drinks. Nowhere was the position of a bride more forcefully brought to our notice than in the case of Anna. We met Anna first as an unmarried girl in her own home, a noisy, untidy, empty-headed girl never stirring a finger to help her brother's wife, who, though hampered by a peevish child of two, did all the housework. A year later when we met her again, this time as a bride of six months' standing, we could hardly believe the transformation that had taken place. Here was Anna, quietly doing all the work, waiting on us as guests, smearing the courtyard in the intervals between her other duties, and generally comporting herself in a manner which a year previously we should have thought impossible. Strictly speaking, there is no limit to the length of time a wife should cook for her mother-in-law. If she has married an only or the youngest son, she will continue doing so all her life; otherwise she is generally given her own hearth when the next brother marries and a new bride enters the household. If a bride does not get on well with her mother-in-law, she may, even if there is no other bride, be given her own hearth after a year or so, but in a family where all work harmoniously together, two daughters-in-law may be seen cooking in common for their husband's mother. Every woman can, however, look forward to an old age when she, too, will have her daughter-in-law to relieve her of the hard work she is unable to do.

593 595 A married woman moves about freely and goes to beer-drinks when she likes, but she would not go on a visit to her own people without consulting her husband or her mother-in-law. She may, if she is a doctor, own considerable property of her own in goats and cattle and, when her daughter gets married, she has a great deal to say in the disposal of the bride-price. Normally, the cattle coming in for a girl are used to obtain a wife for her uterine brother. If, however, there are more girls than boys, it is seldom that the mother will consent to its being used by the son of a fellow wife. In such a case it is usually given to the mother's brother, who, by using it, establishes a 'house' where the son of his niece will find a wife. Should the husband himself wish to obtain another wife with the cattle he will first have to come to an agreement with his wife, otherwise there may be a lot of trouble. Since a wife so obtained will have to cook for the wife whose daughter's cattle were used to obtain her, ill-feeling would lead to considerable disharmony and might end in breaking up the new marriage by causing the bride to run away.

595 The term for fellow wives, *vahadigani*, which the Lovedu translate as 'people who roast one another', is said to denote the state of tension and sometimes conflict that one finds between them. So bad does this become occasionally that one may find different wives of the same man living in different villages. Fellow wives may be jealous, yet they help one another in beer-making, lend each other utensils, work at each other's work-parties; and it is seldom that a woman gives her own child a tit-bit without also giving to other children that may be present. The chief wife, always the mother's brother's daughter, has no control over other wives. Where the chief wife is married only late in life, she is in

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practice often of less importance than the wife married first, and there is 595
sometimes quite a conflict between the principles of age and legality.

Various factors, such as the household arrangements of the 595
polygynous system, tend to make the tie between a mother and her 593
own children, and more especially between mother and son, very strong and lasting. It is often possible to distinguish between the brothers in a polygynous household by the degree of resemblance in general nature and character to their mother. Children share any stigma that may be attached to their mother, and according as a man likes a wife so he likes her children. There is thus a high degree of solidarity between uterine brothers and sisters, who always like each other more than siblings by other wives. The attachment between Lovedu mother and child [853
rests upon the firm foundations of a suckling period of several years, 854]
during which the child spends much of its time snugly strapped to her back. It is in many ways also an easier relationship than that among Europeans, with fewer prohibitions, fewer punishments and fewer of the petty grounds of conflict associated with such refinements as keeping hands or clothes clean.

The Lovedu girl is much with her mother, but she leaves home to get 593
married soon after puberty and it is the boy in whose later life the mother plays the greatest role. During his boyhood the mother is the champion of her son. If he has been bullied by another, it is she who will take up the cudgels for him, and many of the worst quarrels between women arise in defence of their children. A boy of fifteen was pulling about and beating a boy of ten because he had not gone out to herd. Two men, in passing, called on him to desist, but to no avail till one of them said to a child standing near, 'Run and tell his mother Dwagu is killing her child.' The mother arrived and harangued Dwagu, who left off, but stoutly defended himself against her scolding tongue, and there the matter ended. When a young man marries, his mother is the dominating figure in his household. She controls his relations with his wife, telling him how to conduct himself while she is pregnant or during the suckling period, giving permission (indirectly through other old women) for their [833]
first sexual intercourse. When Masilu, a young man from town, came home ill, it was his mother who took him to a doctor. Ramano, after eight years absence in town, came home because his mother called him back; and Madume, a married man with two children, succeeded in avoiding a dangerous ritual office largely because his mother did not want him to undertake it. Even though he may be head of the village with authority over all its inmates, a man will still be constantly appealing to his mother's greater age and experience for guidance in matters that fall outside his own experience, more especially if his father is dead. Yet the mother, who so greatly controls her son, will never dare to have dealings with a stranger in the absence of the men nor presume to show him over the village. The son is the natural guardian of his mother. Should it be decided that she should move away from her husband's village, even if the cause be witchcraft, her sons will accompany her. Upon the youngest son, more particularly, falls the duty of caring for his parents in their old age.

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593 Within this general pattern, however, there can be infinite variations. Mulata beats his mother whenever he loses his temper and on one occasion severely wounded her with an axe. He is admittedly a bad lot and the talk of the neighbourhood, but such things do occur. Batamedi, who moved away from his brother's village and, as the youngest son, took his mother with him, did not provide her with blankets for the winter nor interfere when his wife shamefully neglected the old woman by visiting for months at her own home. So his mother betook herself back to her elder son, where she was accustomed to receiving better treatment.

603 The husband's mother, the grandmother of his children, is then an
854 important person, an essential member of the individual household. She has much to do with the children; she it is who, for the first few months, feeds and baths the new baby. Having little to do, she tends the child while its mother is busy, and very often the young baby spends as much time strapped to its grandmother's back as to its mother's. Being old, the grandmother is mild in her treatment of the children, her policy being to pacify and placate rather than to force.

593 It is not easy to define the relationship between father and children. Because he spends most of his time with the men, there is little personal contact between father and young children, who in their turn are mostly in the company of those of their own age. A Lovedu child who lives in a large kraal may not see his father for days or speak to him for weeks. A girl has little to do with her father, but the boy finds that his father admonishes him or shows displeasure when he cries and on occasion inculcates manly values. The father keeps his distance, yet he becomes the personification of manly ideals, and a boy tries to be like his father. The father has authority, but his authority is never oppressive like that of European fathers, whose children live in much closer contact with them. If a boy has done wrong or let the cattle stray, he will avoid his father by not making an appearance at home till after dark. Dumedi spent two nights curled up in a sledge, afraid to appear at home lest his father should beat him for letting the goats stray. Fathers who wish to punish their sons are very often forced to resort to the plan of appearing at the entrance of the boys' sleeping hut long before dawn, there to round them up and beat them soundly before they have a chance of disappearing for
595 the day! The father represents the polygynous family. Through him brothers by different mothers are linked and, not more than a few years back, fathers used sometimes to call their sons to sit with them at night. Then they would exhort the sons not to quarrel among themselves, to live together in peace, to be mutually helpful, and to behave as men. To-day, however, with the long absence of men in towns, this active education on the part of the father is rapidly disappearing.

Brothers by the same father, though not as closely linked as uterine brothers, nevertheless have certain responsibilities towards one another. They stand by each other in disputes and act in unison against outsiders. In claiming back bride-price for a deserting wife, a man will never act alone; he and his brothers will go together, showing a united front. If a man has to pay a fine and has no goat, his brothers will be expected to help him. When he dies, it is his brothers who will care for his widow

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and children. Sometimes, in the absence of his brother in town, a man may be consulted by his brother's wife, but he has no real right over her. For a man to beat his brother's wife or order her about, as is said to be the case among Pondo, is quite unheard of. There is nothing special in the relationship between sisters, except that they may marry the same husband, for, quite apart from considerations of the sororate, it is thought at all times good to marry sisters, who will be less liable to make quarrelsome fellow-wives than unrelated girls. Obligations towards classificatory sisters and brothers, children of the mother's sister or father's brother, are not the same as those to brothers by the same father, and the tie is not nearly so close. 595

Lovedu society is characterized by a very special relationship between brother and sister, a relationship that is given shape to and maintained by the Lovedu pattern of bride-price involving marriage with the mother's brother's daughter and supplemented by the role of women in the religious system. With this are also bound up the close links between two groups of people, the *nemakhulu* and *naghulule*—a man's own people and those of his mother or wife. The linking of uterine brothers and sisters in pairs, in order that the brother may obtain a wife with the cattle received for the sister, creates this special relationship between them and obliges the man to send his daughter to marry at his sister's place. No man will accept a suitor for his daughter until he has ascertained whether his linked sister wants the girl or not, for though in general it is the sister's son who marries the girl, it is the sister who receives a bride to stamp for her and lessen the labours of her old age. The sister has, in fact, a legal right to the girl. If the girl were to run away or be married to some one else, the court would support the father's sister's claim to the girl or the return of the cattle her brother used. Legally, it is even possible for the sister to dissolve the marriage of her brother by demanding back these cattle, but in practice this is rarely found. It is a common custom for a bridal party to call in at the village of the sister, by means of whose cattle the bride has been obtained, 'to show her the girl who is to bear a bride for her son'. A goat will then be slaughtered by her husband for the bridal party to show their pleasure in the marriage. A value that is constantly being expressed in Lovedu society is that it is fitting and desirable for a girl to 'cook for' her father's sister. 593 604 582

The house of the brother is thought to have been created by the sister whose cattle made the marriage possible. That is why, when he builds a new village, it is the sister who has to draw the magic circle of protection which renders it safe from witches. When the sister visits her old home, it is in the house of this wife that she will 'put her things' and make herself at home and, when she is called to beer, she will be given a special pot in the house of this wife. The sister even wields a certain amount of authority in the house of her brother, as was well illustrated at a gathering we attended where the man of the house was quarrelling with his wife about an uninvited guest. In the midst of the uproar a voice was heard: 'This is my village which I have built. I will have no unseemly behaviour here.' It was the sister rebuking her brother, who subsided immediately and went on with the ceremonial as if nothing had happened. So strong 593 [789]

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● 593 is the interest of a sister in the house established by her cattle that she may on occasion even exercise some control in her brother's choice of a wife. Dwagu wanted to marry Mabula, who was already married. His sister's husband then said, 'We shall not allow you to use my cattle to marry that woman. She will bring nothing but trouble.' If the wife obtained by means of the sister's cattle is badly treated by her husband, she may run to his sister, who will intervene on her behalf, or even in extreme cases arrange for her to live permanently away from her husband, who could then never claim a return of the bride-price from his wife's parents. Muhale, whom we knew well, had, under the influence of his second wife, chased away his chief wife, who ran to his sister. She advised the wife to make some pardon beer and take it as a peace-offering, but when he refused this his sister arranged for the woman to live with a widow in the village next door to her. Now, when Muhale's second wife quarrels and refuses to cook for him, he takes refuge with the wife he chased away till the storm is over!

The influence of a sister is reinforced by her religious position. At [782] the annual harvest offering to the gods, it is always the eldest sister in the family who has to officiate. She is the one best able to intercede with the spirits. Any displeasure or secret grievance against her brother on [753] her part may have the effect of stirring up the spirits to cause illness in his household, especially among his children (certain other relatives also have this power, but one hears most often of the sister). Hence it is said, 'The sister should roast pips; if she roasts the village [is angry] it will go up in flames' (*khadi e hadiga dithaga; ya hadiga mutse u ya swa*). Sometimes a sister may threaten her brother, saying, 'If I complain, nothing [1429] will be good in your village.' On the death of the father, it is the eldest sister who, together with the father's brother, divides out the inheritance, and, at the only installation of a district head that we were able to witness, the emblems of office were handed over to the young heir's sister for him, though he was already in his twenties. In view of all these facts, a man's sister has great influence over him and may be called to remonstrate with him, more especially in matters affecting his own household when even his parents have been unsuccessful. But she has no right to interfere without just cause and, if she were to make needless trouble, her brother would very soon ask her to leave his village in peace.

Not all sisters play the role that has been ascribed in general terms to a man's sister. Though every sister is potentially priestess and guardian of her brother's household, in practice all these offices are seldom combined in one person. In religious ceremonies affecting the family as a whole, the eldest daughter of the chief wife would officiate; in case of illness, a man's uterine sister might be asked to officiate. If the sister whose cattle has been used is younger than her brother, she may have little influence as compared with her elder sister; furthermore, where the sister is a woman of no personality, her influence may be negligible. It is a man's uterine sisters that play the biggest part in his life, for in this, 605 as in everything, the individual family is always asserting itself as against 595 the larger, polygynous family group. A classificatory sister, one by the mother's sister or father's brother, or one by a wife of the father other

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than the chief wife, plays little part in a man's life; she is merely a female 605
relative to whom a certain amount of respect and attachment is due. 595
Often a woman's son marries daughters of several of her brothers. It is, however, only to the daughter of that brother who used her cattle that she has a right—has, as the Lovedu put it, an 'entrance' to his village.

In view of the position of sisters and brothers later in life, one would 593
not expect great familiarity or freedom between them during their childhood. Brother and sister may talk freely to each other, but if they rollick together their parents will stop them. Hence the riddle, 'What is E24
it that is at hand and yet beyond reach?' (*Kha ntnita khi e mal*) The answer, 'The breast of my sister,' refers to the playful catching hold of the breasts of girls by young boys, which is taboo in case of a sister. In strong contrast to the free, yet proper, relationship between brother and sister stands the joking relationship between cross-cousins. Derived from the brother-sister relationship is that of the father's sister, who is accorded honour and respect by the children of the house she has established. The term *khadi* is used loosely to denote either father's sister or eldest sister, for it is the eldest sister who will take over the religious functions of the father's sister after her death.

A well-marked characteristic of Lovedu society, one that clearly 602
distinguishes it from the strictly patrilineal Zulu, Xhosa, and Pondo, is 604
the importance of the mother's side of the family. Nothing of interest or importance takes place without their presence; even at the annual harvest beer offerings given to the gods on the father's side, relatives on the mother's side, who are not concerned in the religious aspect of the ceremony, will be present for the beer and social amenities. Important in maintaining close links between a man and his mother's relatives are the bonds of interdependence between the families of a brother, and the sister whose cattle he used. The sister's son is a potential son-in-law, who will be accorded great honour in the household of his mother's brother. A man's mother may also be the *khadi* who has to go and make offerings in the mother's brother's household, and in her absence her son might officiate for her. Later, when a man is engaged to his mother's brother's daughter, there will be gifts of beer from the girl's family. They are thus bound together by a variety of links.

But the greatest of all bonds between a man and his mother's side of 602
the family is conceived by the Lovedu to be one of love. There is a saying, usually quoted by women, '*Wa nana u sese; sse rare gi mabakataka*,' which, freely translated, means, 'Love lies on the mother's side of the family; ownership on the father's'. One's relationship with the mother's side of the family is modelled on that towards a mother and is much influenced by the petting and spoiling received at the hands of the maternal grandmother, with whom most children spend a few years of their life, generally soon after the birth of a younger brother or sister. Every child recalls with delight the good time he had when at his mother's brother's village with his mother's mother; how she treated him to tit-bits, how she scolded or beat only her son's children if her grandchildren quarrelled and fought. For, it is said, a woman loves her daughter's children (who only come on visits) far more than those of her

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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense 581
marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the 837
vadavu institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of completely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the purposes of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suckling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried people who have their lovers (*vadavu*). Nevertheless, a European finds it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grandmothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our preferences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should as often as not be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient 831
of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their 848
spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the 684
other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the *syali*) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Tonga. The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men, but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy and was proudly worn by her younger sister; if not, the girl's people had to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity 831
be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. 848
Girls are still examined, especially at the *khoba*, but the matter is private; 847
and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sins 753
of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*dzvt* or *vulwadz ayw nanali*). A man gets *dzvt* from intercourse with a woman who has had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death from *dzvt* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter. 543

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●593 If a wife refuses cohabitation, there is usually a good reason, but a reason that has nothing to do with sexual incompatibility. The husband concerned will perhaps solicit the aid of the old women; but never will he dare say that he can go elsewhere for his pleasure, for she has equal power to retaliate in that manner. The Lovedu know 833 of the belief of other tribes that continued sexual intercourse after 843 pregnancy builds up the child forming in the womb. They also continue intercourse, but they do not stress, and even deny, that semen builds up the foetus. It is worth noting that sexual intercourse at a late stage of pregnancy (after the seventh month) is considered not quite correct, and this ideal is reflected in the anger of the midwives, who may reprimand the husband if they find signs, as they think, of his semen on the new-born infant. Nor is the sexual act brought into relation with so many special occasions as elsewhere; it has not to any extent been institutionalized in connexion with dangerous or new enterprises, as is the case among the Shangana-Tonga in their midst. Full coitus is taboo while a mother suckles her child; the milk of the new pregnancy will poison the child, but a child is not sent away when sexual relations are 842 resumed. Even the theme of fertility is handled with moderation or submerged under a mass of ritual. A wife is not ochred on her first pregnancy and, in those ceremonies that are directed to fertility, this motive is kept far in the background. Likewise, barrenness in a woman is not regarded as entitling a man to nullify his marriage and, when a substitute is sent, the children are presumed to be, not the children of the barren wife, but of the substitute. The conception of 'buying a womb' is negatived by the fact that full *munywalo* is given for the substitute, who is not subservient to, but independent of, the barren wife. These arrangements also imply that barrenness is not a great humiliation. 837 A married woman is theoretically denied the right of having children if her husband is impotent or absents himself for years. In practice, 'picking up children in the veld' is realistically tolerated, but it must be done surreptitiously, for the custom in other tribes, whereby the husband appoints a 'bull', is not approved. A wife can never be lent to another, for, as the proverb runs, 'About clothes you may say, "Lend them to me," but never about a woman' (*ng'adimeni gi a guvo, musadia a na ng'adime*).

Marital fidelity is not a matter of great importance; a father will reprimand his adulterous son, but only because in his pursuit of other women, he fails in his duty to look after his wife—that is the main thing in marriage. Similarly a wife's adultery can never be the cause of divorce; but it must be judicious; it must not offend the proprieties. No doubt a man has greater opportunities than a woman and before marriage one may speak of a double standard of morality, but after marriage the differences are small. Both a husband and a wife can administer medicines to the other partner, making extra-marital irregularities very dangerous to health. A wife during pregnancy by a lover is also a grave danger to her husband. On the whole, the remarkable thing is, not that there is marital infidelity, but that there is so little of it. After all, a man may not 'mix' his wives; he cannot go from the one to the other; he cannot bring

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *munywalo* scheme. 587 768

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. 593 581 There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagambi, a man of thirty-five, scorned to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*mugaula*) has in practice a high status. 595

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *mugaula*, and when he died the *mugaula* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *mugaula* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *mugaula* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *mugaula* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, 595 even jealousies, between a man and his *mugaula* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Muhale 578 complained, not that his son was living with a *mugaula*, but that the *mugaula's* laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *mugaula* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. A man who illicitly lives upon a 588 woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*madilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father of the porridge bowls' (*ramadilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *munywalo* 578 and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *munywalo* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *munywalo* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (*a*) House or co-wife against house or co-wife—*cont.*	Co-wife and her mother	Co-wife's child	2	Favouritism of husband and other mixed motives	
	Inherited wife	Co-wife and her children	2	Use of cattle of one house by another and questions of prestige	
	Widow	Fellow widow's child	1	Property arrangements	
	Wife of brother	Wife of another brother	1	Complex jealousies	
	Son of co-wife	Chief son and his wife	1	Status and position	24
(*b*) Wife against husband	Wife	Husband	2	Friction, favouritism of other wives, position	
	Wife and/or wife's mother	Husband's adulterine child or lover	4	Sexual jealousy and neglect of wife	
	Wife	Husband's sister's child	1	Disagreement about marriage of children and *munywalo*	
	Wife	Husband's brother, his wife, or his child	2	Position, jealousy	
	Wife's mother	Husband's child	1	Disagreements	20

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
(c) Husband against wife	Husband	Wife	1	Pre-marital seduction and *munywalo* trouble	
	Husband	Wife's adulterine child	2	Husband impotent; sexual jealousy	
	Husband	Wife's sister	1	Husband jilted	
	Husband	Brother's son's wife and her mother	1	Revenge for misfortune (illness)	
	Husband	Wife's brother's daughter's husband	1	Wife's brother refused his daughter as wife to witch's son	
	Husband's mother	Wife		Unfaithfulness of wife	
	Husband's mother	Wife's sister	1	Wife's sister jilted witch	16
(d) Parent and own child	Son	Father	1	Son wished to oust father from position as district head	
	Father	Son	1	Son cohabited with young wife of father	6
	Father	Son's wife	1	Son cohabited with inherited wife of father	
(e) Uterine brothers and sisters	Elder sister	Younger sister	1	Younger sister jilted elder sister's husband	
	Sister (and mother)	Brother's child	1	Brother resents power of sister, and *munywalo* trouble	4
Total relatives					70

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

855 mother's mother, especially in cases where the next baby has arrived before three or four years have elapsed; and a young motherless child is often sent by his father to his mother's brother's people (where his mother's mother will be) in preference to being handed over to a fellow wife of the mother, for it is generally considered that the mother's people are best able to rear (*hodisa*) a child.

•593 A very special relationship exists between a man and his sister, especially his eldest sister, who is or will become the priestess of the family. She is the person who has greatest influence over him, who will be called to reason with him when even his parents are unable to persuade him. The sister whose cattle he used to obtain a wife also has a special interest in his household affairs. This house is the place where she will 'put her things' and make herself at home when visiting her old home; his daughter will one day marry her son; his wife may run to her or her elder sister if he ill-treats her, whereupon she will remonstrate with her brother or even in extreme cases arrange for permanent protection of such a woman away from her husband. [753] The sister's rights are supported by a powerful sanction, for if she 'feels dissatisfied in her heart' owing to bad treatment at the hands of her brother, the ancestors are liable to make his children ill. When this happens, the brother will have to approach his sister humbly to come and end matters, after openly airing her grievances, by interceding with the ancestors on behalf of his children. Not all sisters are, however, in practice able to control and influence their brothers: here, as in all human relationships, much depends on the character and good sense of the parties concerned; and I have seen a 'bad lot' just back from town slap the face of a sister who had been called to remonstrate with him about a loose woman he had brought to his wife's house from town.

613 The clan, if it can be said to exist at all, does so only in a vague way, and there are no functions or usages associated with it. Relatives belong to no clearly marked group but can be traced in ever-widening circles from the individual family just as we trace relationships in our own society. There is no term for clan: *moloko* refers to relatives on both father's and mother's side, while *khoro*, a word most commonly used to denote that portion of any village where the men sit, but also meaning court, clan, or tribe, is too vague in its connota-

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion.

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vamalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vamukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsezi*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaḓuhulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin.

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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577 arms' to cause drought in 1938, it was because he had for personal
769 reasons been buried, at his own express request made before death, in the Christian cemetery instead of in the damp shade of the forest, like his forebears.

577 It would appear that this lack of interest on the part of the ancestral gods in the morality of their descendants is in conformity with the pattern of the
●593 relationship between living parents and their children. Parental protection and care are given not by virtue of the morality or conduct of their children; it is one of the imperatives of the kinship bond. A parent loves his wayward, bad son as much as, if not more than, his well-behaved, virtuous children. It is only a bad personal relationship between parent and child or neglect of filial duty that could cause a parent to withhold his protection.

626 Sanctions for right behaviour are, first and most important, the pressure of public opinion and of the reciprocal arrangements of the political and social structure. A man conforms to the code because of his self-esteem and the high regard he has for his reputation for fairness and moderation, wisdom and ability to get on with others, generosity and helpfulness, not merely among his kin but in the wider circle of his friends and neighbours. The next important group of sanctions are the pain and misfortune that may follow if those he has injured use vengeance magic or resort to witchcraft and sorcery against him. Certain types of conduct carry their own automatic ritual sanctions which form a third group of deterrents, even though there is little pressure of public opinion against the conduct and no necessary or immediate consequence to the person himself, unless indeed he is re-
626 peatedly guilty. Finally, duties towards the ancestors, such as tendance and
769 recognition, have the religious sanctions of ancestral anger in the form of illness, or misfortune. Ancestral displeasure can also be inferred as a sanction acting indefinitely and over a vague area of conduct to reinforce men's obligations to kin, generally those kin who stand to them in a relation of some authority. This inference may be made, not because ancestors ever directly cause misfortune to a descendant for breaches of correct behaviour to kin as they do in the case of neglect of themselves, but because bad luck may be attributed to failure in one's duties to kin.

[769] Ancestor worship of the Lovedu plays hardly any part, then, in upholding tribal morality. Nor are people so delicately conditioned to the values of
577 the society that they spontaneously react to conscience. Their moral code is not markedly internalized and Lovedu have no sense of 'sin'. Since there are few repressed fears the pressure of which on the mind can be removed by confession and atonement, a sense of guilt seldom moves men, and offenders very rarely repent merely at the dictates of conscience. Their sense of shame is more delicately internalized, but it drives men to make restitution only when the misdeed has been exposed or brought into relation with the system of reciprocities. Lovedu are sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system, and the moral code is upheld mainly

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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ships between the families involved but upon it rests the whole 581
character of the domestic group. Payment of bride-price trans- 581
fers the reproductive powers of the woman to the husband's 583
agnatic group. The husband has genetricial as well as uxorial 593
rights. Genetricial rights apply not only to any children born 851
after the marriage whoever their biological father might be, but also in retrospect, so that any child born before marriage automatically becomes the child of whoever pays the bride-price, with full rights of succession and inheritance from its sociological father. There is thus, in contrast to other tribes such as the Zulu, no way in which a Lobedu man can obtain the right to his biological child other than by marrying its mother. Emphasis on sociological as opposed to biological fatherhood among the Lobedu is very strong and this is an important factor in Lobedu social structure. The rights of a father to a child involve control over it; the right to the bride-price of a daughter (subject to the right of her brother to marry with his sister's cattle and of her mother to the services of the woman married with her daughter's bride-price); and corresponding to his right to his daughter's bride-price the duty to help his son to marry. A father may and often does marry an [595] additional wife with his daughter's bride-price. A father also has the right to be cared for in his old age by his sons.

The levirate is practised, the junior levirate being more 587
common than the senior levirate. The brother raises seed to 851
the deceased and takes over the responsibility of a father and husband though the children he begets are counted as belonging to his deceased brother. Frequently the heir, eldest son of the chief 'house' inherits a young wife of his father. In this case, similarly, the children born of the union are looked upon as the deceased's, i.e., as brothers and sisters of the heir, not his children. The sororate also is practised in all its forms, sororal [595] polygyny being very common. Where a sister is sent to 'awaken the house (*ho dsosa ndo*)' of a barren or deceased wife full bride-price is due for her although, since bride-price is never an absolutely fixed amount, less may be asked for than in the first marriage.

The marriage of a woman transfers to her husband's group 581
the right to her labour. Initially it is the husband's mother 582
even more than the husband himself that benefits, as we shall

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu husband is expected to play his part in producing food for his 595 241 family. Every married man, therefore, has a field of his own [262] which he cultivates with the help of his wives. The produce of this field is used for any beer- or work-parties that the man may wish to give and is a kind of bank upon which his wives may draw when they run short. If, however, a man helps one wife from his personal stores he must give all his wives an equal amount irrespective of their needs. When he first marries, the husband works with his wife in their common field. On marrying a second wife he acquires a field of his own (in addition to the one for his new wife) which his wives take it in turn to weed. It is said that if he had no field of his own but were merely to help each wife in turn to cultivate her field there would be endless trouble in maintaining equality between them. One of them for instance might say, 'How is it that when you come and work in my field you just sit but when you go to the field of the mother of So and So even the shade doesn't tempt you!'

A father is responsible for helping his sons to marry. But 593 since a man seldom possesses cattle other than those already 583 involved in bride-price exchange and a son uses the cattle of his sister, boys in a 'house' in which there are no girls often have to go out and work or with the help and advice of their father acquire bride-price in other ways. In the old days an [442] orphan usually hired out his services to carry salt or iron ore from far countries in order in this way to acquire marriage hoes or cattle. Expenses in goats and money over and above the cattle given in marriage are met by the boy himself with the help of his father. A father should see to it that his son is provided with a field when he marries but in practice it is very often the mother who concerns herself with this problem. The father has jural control over his sons and is responsible for their debts.

The wives in a polygynous household differ in status. The 595 chief wife is the daughter of the mother's brother—the cattle-linked or any uterine mother's brother or mother's half-brother. She will bear the heir and future head of the village. Where there has been no marriage with the mother's brother's daughter it is the first wife, the one married with his father's cattle that is chief wife. A chief wife exercises no control over

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house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families) and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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592 often, if at all, only after the death of both the father and his
571 heir, the eldest brother who succeeded him as head of the homestead. Full independence is not an ideal that is striven for.

592 In its early stages the new unit or incipient 'house' is still
571 dependent on the bridegroom's natal house (house of orienta-
593 tion). The new bride works for her mother-in-law. She has no
606 fields of her own to begin with, no utensils, nor a hearth and very often not even a sleeping hut of her own, the young couple using the mother-in-law's sleeping hut while she sleeps in her kitchen hut. The bride cooks on her husband's mother's hearth, works with her husband in a field allocated to them and helps her mother-in-law in hers. The husband will, if he has not done so before bringing his bride home, build her a new hut after the marriage at any time convenient to him. Simeon made sun-dried bricks himself, paid one pound to have the walls built, had a work-party for the framework of the roof and did the thatching himself. A man's father may help him but usually a young man uses his own money earned by previous migrant labour.

A woman cooks for her mother-in-law until a new bride, either of her husband's brother or of her husband arrives when she may be given her own pots. When Simeon's second wife arrived both wives cooked together for the mother-in-law for a while. Then when they began to disagree one (the younger one in this case because she was unrelated) was given her own pots to cook separately. Being given her own hearth is an important thing in a woman's married life marked by a little ceremony and a visit home to announce her new status. Even when she has her own hearth, however, she must continue to provide food for her parents-in-law. Children are thus an insurance against old age and it is the duty and responsibility of a son, more particularly the youngest son, to care for his mother in her old age. The father may have young wives to care for him when his elder sons are married.

593 Even after his marriage a man remains under the jural control
591 of, and subordinate to, his father. Only after his father's death
571 is he free to choose whether to remain in the village under the heir or to hive off. Sometimes, though rarely, a married son does, however, quarrel with his father and move away. Mostly

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him. 593 591 571

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working *in the fields, fetching firewood* if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking. 592 571 603 602

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *mosha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*muduhulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people. 592 571 602 604

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact 592 571 606

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592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[602] he also is a *muduhulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

768 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[604] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[583] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

768 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old. M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

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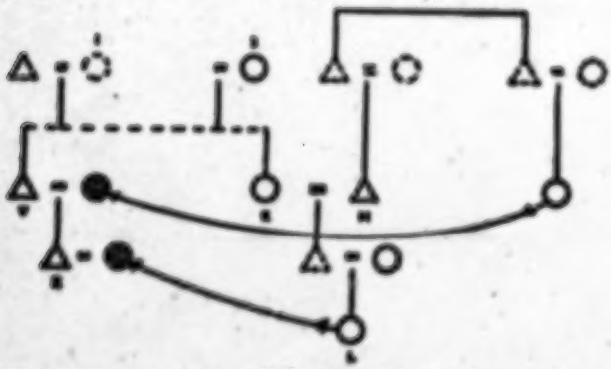

FIG. 7. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*ruka lelale*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's sides so that they become *malale e mabe*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage (which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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one hand a means of binding the women of the lineage, even 582
after their marriage, by strong links to their father's family 602
and on the other of maintaining from generation to generation the bonds with the maternal kin created by the marriage of the parents.

A woman has a dual role in the social structure. On the one 582
hand by establishing a 'house' in her husband's lineage, she is 613
the means whereby his lineage is perpetuated and its numbers increased; for even after the death of her husband his brothers will raise seed to his name and in the absence of sons she can herself ensure the continuation of her husband's lineage by marrying a woman on behalf of a fictitious son. On the other hand a woman remains important to her own lineage: if she is the eldest child of her 'house' she will officiate at all important religious offerings (if her brother is older he may officiate but she will always be called to collaborate with him); when she dies her name and those of her sisters will be included among the names of ancestors called upon in prayer; she divides out the inheritance on the death of her uterine brother; she guards the interests of the children of her cattle-linked brother's 'house' whence she will obtain a daughter-in-law; upon her falls the responsibility in the absence of her parents of providing an heir in her mother's 'house' (of her father's lineage) should there be no son; and she may even act in the place of her deceased father as ruler over a district until the heir is of age or until one can be raised.

The maintenance of links with married sisters and its com- 593
plement marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter, 582
by means of which one's links with one's wife's (or mother's) 602
family are perpetuated, are supreme values in Lobedu society. 601
That is why a wife who has no son has little difficulty in persuading her husband to hand over her daughter's bride-price to her brother rather than create links with a strange family. It is possible thereby to 'build a house' (or 'make a gate') at her brother's home from which her daughter's son will obtain a wife. This may at first sight appear to be very like the transfer of rights from mother to daughter but this is not the case. It is made possible by the transfer of cattle belonging to the daughter's husband and is bound up with the great desire to maintain links between the descendants of brother and sister. The right

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583 of a woman to 'someone to stamp for her' from the 'house'
582 created by her bride-price also enables the father of a woman
602 who has no uterine brother to control to some extent, by the placement of his daughter's cattle, the marriage of her sons. Her husband 'follows the tracks of his cattle' to find a wife for his son but it is her father who determines where these 'tracks' will lead to.

602 There are thus to be found in Lobedu social structure a neat
571 balance between the various kinds of kin; a combination of patrilineal principles with strong matrilineal bonds; a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family; and an equality in the importance of paternal and maternal kin which is seen on all social and ritual occasions and is reflected also in the composition of local groups.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the
remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of
neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapi-
dated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and
only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 825
It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also
differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to 515
urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths
and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and
granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance;
on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives;
further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the
village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose
wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut.
To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Letavula,
with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of
the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the
second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart [595]
from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no
division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342
and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khoro* and have a
wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round.
The former have their backs to the *khoro*, a framework of reeds as a door,
and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so
that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleep-
ing hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater
portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the
entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised [352]
platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-
plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome
has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold
together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [353]
mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg.
The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted
basket (*khirudzuwa*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart [373]
suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some
clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a
coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect
to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth,
plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against
the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination
to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals,
between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors
to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Letavula,
newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and
supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too
cold in winter.

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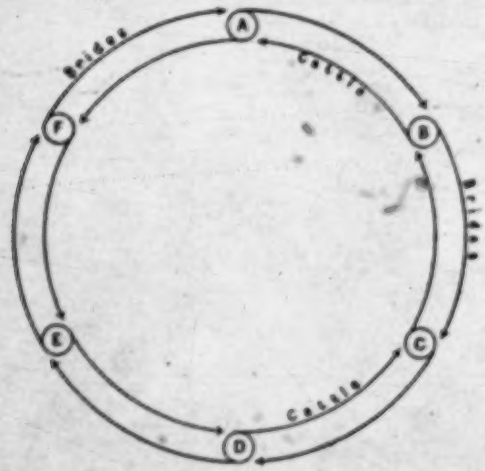
431 583 from a commercial transaction as is an engagement ring among us from buying a bride. It constitutes almost 54 per cent. of the total gift-barter economy, but also over 34 per cent. of the total exchanges in the tribe. In order to understand the Lovedu *munywalo* ring—we might almost borrow the name *kula* ring from Melanesia—we have to imagine a number of groups of people arranged in a circle. We have described the institution elsewhere[1] and merely repeat here what is necessary to understand its working. Each group consists of patrilineal relatives and, in the very simplest configuration, each is doubly linked to two other groups. Thus A is linked to both B and F: to B it owes brides and from



B it receives cattle; from F it receives brides and to F it owes cattle. B is cattle-obligated to A; A is bride-obligated to B. In the figure, brides pass clockwise round an outer circle and cattle move anti-clockwise along an inner concentric circle; the two circles cut through the groups A, B, C, D, E, and F, which are all both cattle-linked and bride-linked. In real life there are no concentric circles and so simple an arrangement is never found; even the general configuration of the groups is obscured by a hundred complications. A polygynist—and about one-third of the men have more than one wife—does not take all his wives from the same group. A man who uses his sister's marriage cattle must return a daughter to be the daughter-in-law of the sister or, in other words, the wife of the man's son; if he had used the cattle of two sisters whose husbands belong to different groups, his sons marry into these different groups. Endless new linkages and complications arise in this and in other ways. Essentially, however, the exchange pattern remains: one kind of valuable (cattle)

[595]

[1] Chap. ix. See also J. D. Krige, 'The Significance of Cattle Exchange in Lovedu Social Structure' *Africa*, vol. xii, no. 4.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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CHAPTER V

FAMILY TIES

Personal relations within the polygynous household—the sister as the centre of the social system—behaviour patterns and avoidances between potential and actual relatives-in-law and their modification by personality and adjustment—the position of orphans.

621 At every turn we seem to be stumbling upon the kin. It cannot be otherwise, because they are very important in the everyday life and contacts of the Lovedu man or woman. The village is a group of relatives, chiefly on the father's side, but sometimes including one or two people from the side of the mother or wife, and even the district consists largely of kin. The modern tendency towards smaller and smaller villages has, in contrast to what one might have expected, hardly acted as a counteracting force, for so often a cluster of small villages, each with no more than two or three huts, turns out on closer inspection to represent what once was a single village. They have moved apart in space, but the ties are still recognized, sometimes even to the extent of acknowledging one man as their 'village' head. In our discussion of the district as a political unit, we refer to the manner in which kin and locality coincide. Suffice it here to say that in one district, with a large element of foreigners, 56 per cent. of the people are relatives of the district head. Of these, 36 per cent. are close relatives—that is, brothers, sisters, uncles—who would be recognized in modern European society, and 20 per cent. classificatory relations.[1] In many areas the percentage of relatives to the headman is much higher.

602 The Lovedu thus grows up in a circle of kin. As a child, his playmates are relatives; his boyish fights, loves, and hatreds involve his kin; and he grows old along with them. But blood-relationship does not act alone in binding people together. It does not determine the nature and strength of the contacts, the degrees of reciprocity that are to prevail. Here it is that other elements in the social structure step in, strengthening one type of link, perhaps at the expense of another just as close in degree, binding ever more closely certain of the kin and allowing others to drift apart. By means of complicated rights and duties between the individuals, these other elements tend, in different societies, to mould social relationships into different patterns, so that a father in one society has functions very different from those of a father in another, and a maternal uncle, in one society a man with authority over you, in another is perhaps a kind elderly playmate.

595 An important moulding force in Lovedu family relationships is polygyny. Each wife has her own household, her own fields and grain stores, but polygyny cannot stop at making plural wives independent in these ways; it must create special interrelations within its structure,

[1] The classificatory system of relationship, in which the terms 'brother' and 'sister' are extended to children of father's brothers and mother's sisters as well as other more distant relatives, and in which one has many 'fathers' and 'mothers', is too well known to require attention here.

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between husband and wives, between children of different wives, and 595
between fellow wives. Polygyny, reinforced by the segregation of the sexes in everyday life and interests, renders the personal bond between husband and wife much less intimate than is the European ideal. Men are unwilling to spend much time in the company of women, and women prefer the company of their own sex. The polygynist must be most circumspect in his relations with his wives. He must treat them all with strict impartiality. Should he wish to give one a present, all must receive similar gifts. If he spends more time with one than another, this may be the cause of serious domestic discord. He must always be weighing and balancing lest preference shown to one should lead to trouble and unpleasantness. With such considerations uppermost, there is little chance of the development of companionship and communion between husband and wife, although there may be a high degree of co-operation and sympathy. It is generally only in his old age, when his wives have their own daughters-in-law and are already grandmothers, that a man allows himself the privilege of attaching himself openly to one of his wives, the one who has always treated him well. At this stage there is but little jealousy between the fellow wives, and a polygynous husband and one of his wives may sometimes in old age become a regular Darby and Joan. Where a man has one wife only and stays in his own small 593
village without male companionship at home, their relationship becomes noticeably closer. This gain in intimacy is counterbalanced by a loss of independence on the part of the wife. Since there is now no need carefully to distinguish what belongs to the wife, the husband tends to take over most of the control, and the monogamous marriage of Christians, with its greater community of property between husband and wife, has thus its disadvantages as well as its merits.

A wife is expected to obey her husband, who may beat her if she does not; yet he may not interfere in her domestic arrangements. When a woman is busy (and she alone is the judge in this matter), her husband may have to wait till well after midday before receiving his first meal. She uses her own discretion in exchanging the produce of her fields, although she will generally not sell at a store without consulting her husband. Wife-beating is not uncommon, but it takes place usually when a man is drunk or suspects his wife of unfaithfulness. For an angry woman to attack her husband is not unusual and once considerable amusement was caused at a district head's court we attended when a man complained of being beaten by his wife.

It is the duty of a husband to make or buy clothes for his wife, build and repair her huts, provide her every year with storage receptacles and an enclosure for her harvest, and nowadays also to plough for her. Most men have one field of their own which they cultivate and, though they may ask their wives to help them with weeding and reaping, the produce is their own, used for beer-making or, in bad years, distributed among their wives. If his wife or any of his children is ill, a man must be unfailing in his efforts to find medicines or doctors that will provide a cure.

The position of a wife in her husband's home changes with the changing 596

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596 years. For the first few years of her married life she is strictly controlled by her mother-in-law, has a great deal of work to do, and finds little time to attend dances and beer-drinks. Nowhere was the position of a bride more forcefully brought to our notice than in the case of Anna. We met Anna first as an unmarried girl in her own home, a noisy, untidy, empty-headed girl never stirring a finger to help her brother's wife, who, though hampered by a peevish child of two, did all the housework. A year later when we met her again, this time as a bride of six months' standing, we could hardly believe the transformation that had taken place. Here was Anna, quietly doing all the work, waiting on us as guests, smearing the courtyard in the intervals between her other duties, and generally comporting herself in a manner which a year previously we should have thought impossible. Strictly speaking, there is no limit to the length of time a wife should cook for her mother-in-law. If she has married an only or the youngest son, she will continue doing so all her life; otherwise she is generally given her own hearth when the next brother marries and a new bride enters the household. If a bride does not get on well with her mother-in-law, she may, even if there is no other bride, be given her own hearth after a year or so, but in a family where all work harmoniously together, two daughters-in-law may be seen cooking in common for their husband's mother. Every woman can, however, look forward to an old age when she, too, will have her daughter-in-law to relieve her of the hard work she is unable to do.

593 A married woman moves about freely and goes to beer-drinks when she
595 likes, but she would not go on a visit to her own people without consulting her husband or her mother-in-law. She may, if she is a doctor, own considerable property of her own in goats and cattle and, when her daughter gets married, she has a great deal to say in the disposal of the bride-price. Normally, the cattle coming in for a girl are used to obtain a wife for her uterine brother. If, however, there are more girls than boys, it is seldom that the mother will consent to its being used by the son of a fellow wife. In such a case it is usually given to the mother's brother, who, by using it, establishes a 'house' where the son of his niece will find a wife. Should the husband himself wish to obtain another wife with the cattle he will first have to come to an agreement with his wife, otherwise there may be a lot of trouble. Since a wife so obtained will have to cook for the wife whose daughter's cattle were used to obtain her, ill-feeling would lead to considerable disharmony and might end in breaking up the new marriage by causing the bride to run away.

595 The term for fellow wives, *vahadigani*, which the Lovedu translate as 'people who roast one another', is said to denote the state of tension and sometimes conflict that one finds between them. So bad does this become occasionally that one may find different wives of the same man living in different villages. Fellow wives may be jealous, yet they help one another in beer-making, lend each other utensils, work at each other's work-parties; and it is seldom that a woman gives her own child a tit-bit without also giving to other children that may be present. The chief wife, always the mother's brother's daughter, has no control over other wives. Where the chief wife is married only late in life, she is in

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practice often of less importance than the wife married first, and there is 595
sometimes quite a conflict between the principles of age and legality.

Various factors, such as the household arrangements of the 595
polygynous system, tend to make the tie between a mother and her 593
own children, and more especially between mother and son, very strong and lasting. It is often possible to distinguish between the brothers in a polygynous household by the degree of resemblance in general nature and character to their mother. Children share any stigma that may be attached to their mother, and according as a man likes a wife so he likes her children. There is thus a high degree of solidarity between uterine brothers and sisters, who always like each other more than siblings by other wives. The attachment between Lovedu mother and child [853
rests upon the firm foundations of a suckling period of several years, 854]
during which the child spends much of its time snugly strapped to her back. It is in many ways also an easier relationship than that among Europeans, with fewer prohibitions, fewer punishments and fewer of the petty grounds of conflict associated with such refinements as keeping hands or clothes clean.

The Lovedu girl is much with her mother, but she leaves home to get 593
married soon after puberty and it is the boy in whose later life the mother plays the greatest role. During his boyhood the mother is the champion of her son. If he has been bullied by another, it is she who will take up the cudgels for him, and many of the worst quarrels between women arise in defence of their children. A boy of fifteen was pulling about and beating a boy of ten because he had not gone out to herd. Two men, in passing, called on him to desist, but to no avail till one of them said to a child standing near, 'Run and tell his mother Dwagu is killing her child.' The mother arrived and harangued Dwagu, who left off, but stoutly defended himself against her scolding tongue, and there the matter ended. When a young man marries, his mother is the dominating figure in his household. She controls his relations with his wife, telling him how to conduct himself while she is pregnant or during the suckling period, giving permission (indirectly through other old women) for their [833]
first sexual intercourse. When Masilu, a young man from town, came home ill, it was his mother who took him to a doctor. Ramano, after eight years absence in town, came home because his mother called him back; and Madume, a married man with two children, succeeded in avoiding a dangerous ritual office largely because his mother did not want him to undertake it. Even though he may be head of the village with authority over all its inmates, a man will still be constantly appealing to his mother's greater age and experience for guidance in matters that fall outside his own experience, more especially if his father is dead. Yet the mother, who so greatly controls her son, will never dare to have dealings with a stranger in the absence of the men nor presume to show him over the village. The son is the natural guardian of his mother. Should it be decided that she should move away from her husband's village, even if the cause be witchcraft, her sons will accompany her. Upon the youngest son, more particularly, falls the duty of caring for his parents in their old age.

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593 Within this general pattern, however, there can be infinite variations. Mulata beats his mother whenever he loses his temper and on one occasion severely wounded her with an axe. He is admittedly a bad lot and the talk of the neighbourhood, but such things do occur. Batamedi, who moved away from his brother's village and, as the youngest son, took his mother with him, did not provide her with blankets for the winter nor interfere when his wife shamefully neglected the old woman by visiting for months at her own home. So his mother betook herself back to her elder son, where she was accustomed to receiving better treatment.

603 The husband's mother, the grandmother of his children, is then an
854 important person, an essential member of the individual household. She has much to do with the children; she it is who, for the first few months, feeds and baths the new baby. Having little to do, she tends the child while its mother is busy, and very often the young baby spends as much time strapped to its grandmother's back as to its mother's. Being old, the grandmother is mild in her treatment of the children, her policy being to pacify and placate rather than to force.

593 It is not easy to define the relationship between father and children. Because he spends most of his time with the men, there is little personal contact between father and young children, who in their turn are mostly in the company of those of their own age. A Lovedu child who lives in a large kraal may not see his father for days or speak to him for weeks. A girl has little to do with her father, but the boy finds that his father admonishes him or shows displeasure when he cries and on occasion inculcates manly values. The father keeps his distance, yet he becomes the personification of manly ideals, and a boy tries to be like his father. The father has authority, but his authority is never oppressive like that of European fathers, whose children live in much closer contact with them. If a boy has done wrong or let the cattle stray, he will avoid his father by not making an appearance at home till after dark. Dumedi spent two nights curled up in a sledge, afraid to appear at home lest his father should beat him for letting the goats stray. Fathers who wish to punish their sons are very often forced to resort to the plan of appearing at the entrance of the boys' sleeping hut long before dawn, there to round them up and beat them soundly before they have a chance of disappearing for
595 the day! The father represents the polygynous family. Through him brothers by different mothers are linked and, not more than a few years back, fathers used sometimes to call their sons to sit with them at night. Then they would exhort the sons not to quarrel among themselves, to live together in peace, to be mutually helpful, and to behave as men. To-day, however, with the long absence of men in towns, this active education on the part of the father is rapidly disappearing.

Brothers by the same father, though not as closely linked as uterine brothers, nevertheless have certain responsibilities towards one another. They stand by each other in disputes and act in unison against outsiders. In claiming back bride-price for a deserting wife, a man will never act alone; he and his brothers will go together, showing a united front. If a man has to pay a fine and has no goat, his brothers will be expected to help him. When he dies, it is his brothers who will care for his widow

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children. Sometimes, in the absence of his brother in town, a man 595
be consulted by his brother's wife, but he has no real right over her.
a man to beat his brother's wife or order her about, as is said to be
case among Pondo, is quite unheard of. There is nothing special in
relationship between sisters, except that they may marry the same
and, for, quite apart from considerations of the sororate,
thought at all times good to marry sisters, who will be less liable
make quarrelsome fellow-wives than unrelated girls. Obligations
rds classificatory sisters and brothers, children of the mother's
r or father's brother, are not the same as those to brothers by the
father, and the tie is not nearly so close.

ovedu society is characterized by a very special relationship between 593
her and sister, a relationship that is given shape to and maintained 604
the Lovedu pattern of bride-price involving marriage with the 582
her's brother's daughter and supplemented by the role of women in
religious system. With this are also bound up the close links between
groups of people, the *vamakhulu* and *vaduhulu*—a man's own people
those of his mother or wife. The linking of uterine brothers and
rs in pairs, in order that the brother may obtain a wife with the cattle
ived for the sister, creates this special relationship between them and
ges the man to send his daughter to marry at his sister's place. No
will accept a suitor for his daughter until he has ascertained whether
inked sister wants the girl or not, for though in general it is the sister's
who marries the girl, it is the sister who receives a bride to stamp for
and lessen the labours of her old age. The sister has, in fact, a legal
t to the girl. If the girl were to run away or be married to some one
the court would support the father's sister's claim to the girl or the
rn of the cattle her brother used. Legally, it is even possible for the
r to dissolve the marriage of her brother by demanding back these
e, but in practice this is rarely found. It is a common custom for a
al party to call in at the village of the sister, by means of whose cattle
bride has been obtained, 'to show her the girl who is to bear a bride
her son'. A goat will then be slaughtered by her husband for the
al party to show their pleasure in the marriage. A value that is
tantly being expressed in Lovedu society is that it is fitting and
rable for a girl to 'cook for' her father's sister.

he house of the brother is thought to have been created by the sister 593
se cattle made the marriage possible. That is why, when he builds
w village, it is the sister who has to draw the magic circle of protection [789]
ch renders it safe from witches. When the sister visits her old home,
in the house of this wife that she will 'put her things' and make
elf at home and, when she is called to beer, she will be given a special
in the house of this wife. The sister even wields a certain amount of
ority in the house of her brother, as was well illustrated at a gathering
ttended where the man of the house was quarrelling with his wife
t an uninvited guest. In the midst of the uproar a voice was heard:
is is my village which I have built. I will have no unseemly behaviour
.' It was the sister rebuking her brother, who subsided immediately
went on with the ceremonial as if nothing had happened. So strong

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593 is the interest of a sister in the house established by her cattle that she may on occasion even exercise some control in her brother's choice of a wife. Dwagu wanted to marry Mabula, who was already married. His sister's husband then said, 'We shall not allow you to use my cattle to marry that woman. She will bring nothing but trouble.' If the wife obtained by means of the sister's cattle is badly treated by her husband, she may run to his sister, who will intervene on her behalf, or even in extreme cases arrange for her to live permanently away from her husband, who could then never claim a return of the bride-price from his wife's parents. Muhale, whom we knew well, had, under the influence of his second wife, chased away his chief wife, who ran to his sister. She advised the wife to make some pardon beer and take it as a peace-offering, but when he refused this his sister arranged for the woman to live with a widow in the village next door to her. Now, when Muhale's second wife quarrels and refuses to cook for him, he takes refuge with the wife he chased away till the storm is over!

The influence of a sister is reinforced by her religious position. At [782] the annual harvest offering to the gods, it is always the eldest sister in the family who has to officiate. She is the one best able to intercede with the spirits. Any displeasure or secret grievance against her brother on [753] her part may have the effect of stirring up the spirits to cause illness in his household, especially among his children (certain other relatives also have this power, but one hears most often of the sister). Hence it is said, 'The sister should roast pips; if she roasts the village [is angry] it will go up in flames' (*khadi e hadiga dithaga; ya hadiga mutse u ya swa*). Sometimes a sister may threaten her brother, saying, 'If I complain, nothing [1428] will be good in your village.' On the death of the father, it is the eldest sister who, together with the father's brother, divides out the inheritance, and, at the only installation of a district head that we were able to witness, the emblems of office were handed over to the young heir's sister for him, though he was already in his twenties. In view of all these facts, a man's sister has great influence over him and may be called to remonstrate with him, more especially in matters affecting his own household when even his parents have been unsuccessful. But she has no right to interfere without just cause and, if she were to make needless trouble, her brother would very soon ask her to leave his village in peace.

Not all sisters play the role that has been ascribed in general terms to a man's sister. Though every sister is potentially priestess and guardian of her brother's household, in practice all these offices are seldom combined in one person. In religious ceremonies affecting the family as a whole, the eldest daughter of the chief wife would officiate; in case of illness, a man's uterine sister might be asked to officiate. If the sister whose cattle has been used is younger than her brother, she may have little influence as compared with her elder sister; furthermore, where the sister is a woman of no personality, her influence may be negligible. It is a man's uterine sisters that play the biggest part in his life, for in this, 605 as in everything, the individual family is always asserting itself as against 595 the larger, polygynous family group. A classificatory sister, one by the mother's sister or father's brother, or one by a wife of the father other

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than the chief wife, plays little part in a man's life; she is merely a female 605
relative to whom a certain amount of respect and attachment is due. 595
Often a woman's son marries daughters of several of her brothers. It is, however, only to the daughter of that brother who used her cattle that she has a right—has, as the Lovedu put it, an 'entrance' to his village.

In view of the position of sisters and brothers later in life, one would 593
not expect great familiarity or freedom between them during their childhood. Brother and sister may talk freely to each other, but if they rollick together their parents will stop them. Hence the riddle, 'What is 524
it that is at hand and yet beyond reach?' (*Kha ntsita khi e maŕ*) The answer, 'The breast of my sister,' refers to the playful catching hold of the breasts of girls by young boys, which is taboo in case of a sister. In strong contrast to the free, yet proper, relationship between brother and sister stands the joking relationship between cross-cousins. Derived from the brother-sister relationship is that of the father's sister, who is accorded honour and respect by the children of the house she has established. The term *khadi* is used loosely to denote either father's sister or eldest sister, for it is the eldest sister who will take over the religious functions of the father's sister after her death.

A well-marked characteristic of Lovedu society, one that clearly 602
distinguishes it from the strictly patrilineal Zulu, Xhosa, and Pondo, is 604
the importance of the mother's side of the family. Nothing of interest or importance takes place without their presence; even at the annual harvest beer offerings given to the gods on the father's side, relatives on the mother's side, who are not concerned in the religious aspect of the ceremony, will be present for the beer and social amenities. Important in maintaining close links between a man and his mother's relatives are the bonds of interdependence between the families of a brother, and the sister whose cattle he used. The sister's son is a potential son-in-law, who will be accorded great honour in the household of his mother's brother. A man's mother may also be the *khadi* who has to go and make offerings in the mother's brother's household, and in her absence her son might officiate for her. Later, when a man is engaged to his mother's brother's daughter, there will be gifts of beer from the girl's family. They are thus bound together by a variety of links.

But the greatest of all bonds between a man and his mother's side of 602
the family is conceived by the Lovedu to be one of love. There is a saying, usually quoted by women, '*Wa mma u sme; wa rare gi mabakataka*,' which, freely translated, means, 'Love lies on the mother's side of the family; ownership on the father's'. One's relationship with the mother's side of the family is modelled on that towards a mother and is much influenced by the petting and spoiling received at the hands of the maternal grandmother, with whom most children spend a few years of their life, generally soon after the birth of a younger brother or sister. Every child recalls with delight the good time he had when at his mother's brother's village with his mother's mother; how she treated him to tit-bits, how she scolded or beat only her son's children if her grandchildren quarrelled and fought. For, it is said, a woman loves her daughter's children (who only come on visits) far more than those of her

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kinship terminology and behaviour patterns, because they effectively 571
operate only within narrow limits and are unsupported by tangible 602
reciprocities beyond these limits—though distant relationship is spoken of as a 'flavour that is familiar' (*ledugɛla*, literally, a salty taste)—cannot hold together widely spread groups without assistance from other social arrangements. And this is precisely where the complex of kin segregated out by the cattle plays its decisive part. In generation after generation the links are renewed as grandfathers, fathers, sons, and grandsons all take their chief wives from and send their cattle to the same group. The bridegrooms not only give the cattle, they are perpetually giving all their lives, assisting the group of the brides in paying their debts and helping its male members with *munywalo* and in a hundred other ways; on the other hand, the brides or parents-in-law must always honour the bridegrooms and must maintain relationship with them by periodically bringing beer. These reciprocal obligations are at the very basis of the social system, of the interrelations between villages, of the bonds between the districts, and, finally, of the vast and intricate system that binds the nuclear group to the other groups and to the districts. If the lineages are the bricks out of which the society is constructed, the *mulɔgɔ* and particularly the cattle-relatives (*mulɔgɔ wa dikhomu*) constitute the straw and the mortar, even the steel framework. It is also within the grouping brought about by these cattle that the fiercest conflicts occur. The price that is paid for a system, without which the fundamental structure and interrelations of the society might crumble to the ground, is certainly great; but in view of the functions of this system, it is perhaps not too great.

The *munywalo* system is also closely associated with the hierarchy of 571
rank within the household. For the chief house of a polygynist is the 595
house established by the cattle he received from the marriage of his sister; and at the same time the mistress of this house is his cattle-linked cross-cousin. The rewards of rank thus support the *munywalo* system. But rank reckoned in this way is not completely co-ordinated with seniority and other arrangements in the society. Some of the conflicts that arise are mentioned elsewhere. Here we shall refer briefly to social 561
groupings based upon age. Firstly, there are age-mates (*thaga*). Girls, on the one hand, and boys, on the other, from an early age club together in their games and their activities. The group is a very loose one, wholly unorganized from without; it is not unlike our play gangs. Techniques of co-operation and group cohesion are well developed, especially among herdboys. They have their games, their heroes, and their bullies; their loyalties are, in a sense, in conflict with adults, but they are not anti-social. They may not tell tales out of school; if they do, adults will dismiss the matter as nonsense. Girls bathe together, get firewood together, play and stamp mealies together. They know one another's love affairs, they share one another's troubles. This group of age-mates is purely localized; it does not extend beyond the district and is often confined to a few neighbouring villages. In later life these age-mates continue to be on friendly, even intimate and joking terms—that is, as far as such is possible when they are also relatives. Among girls especially,

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home a second wife until his first has had a child or, more usually to-day, until she is pregnant; and he has to avoid his wife to some extent until the baby is weaned, a period of three years or even more. 837

If a wife is barren, a substitute may, as we have seen, be sent. The whole subject of substitution is too large for adequate treatment here, but some aspects of it may be mentioned. Among the Lovedu a man may marry two sisters in the ordinary course of events, quite irrespective of whether the first married has prematurely died or is barren, but the wife's sister is not specially reserved for the husband as if he had a prior right to her. The marriage is desirable, not enjoined by the society, when it is known that the sisters will co-operate and care for each other's children. In the case of barrenness, there is substitution, but the substitute wife is not a subservient wife. It is not a case of true substitution, but a strengthening of a weak link in the chain of bride and cattle exchanges. A barren wife cannot be discarded; on the contrary, the insistence upon treating her well, though it recognizes, also represses the tendency to regard her position with misgivings. Men make a great effort, by treating a barren wife well, to elicit the praise of others, especially the queen, whose continuous interest is a guarantee that the virtue will be idealized. There are other considerations that reinforce the great concern of a female ruler for peacefulness and good relations. A man who ill-treats his barren wife need expect no reciprocity from her parents, and he has no weapons against them. He cannot demand back his cattle, for failure to have children does not vitiate the cattle exchanges. He cannot even initiate the procedure whereby his parents-in-law will send him a substitute. On the contrary, he must await their pleasure and if they do decide to send a substitute, he must *nywala* (give cattle), and he may be asked more *munywalo* than for her sister. But if he has been a good husband and is poor, less may be asked. A man realizes that the virtue of treating a barren wife well is richly rewarded. 842 595

Similarly, a husband whose wife has died prematurely without issue is in the same position: he has no right to demand a substitute or, in default, the return of the *munywalo*. When he is offered his wife's sister or other suitable substitute, he must hand over cattle for her. It is true that the substitute sets up the house that 'has fallen', but the really important point is that the relationship created by the cattle exchanges should be maintained. A husband must report the death of his wife with an ox; he must call her people to the ceremony ending the mourning period; he must continue his visits as son-in-law; he must always be prepared to help his parents-in-law. All this will not necessarily induce them to give him a substitute; and if he neglects these things, the potential right to such substitute is not effaced. On the other hand, his parents-in-law must continue to honour him when he visits, they must still send him beer, they must acknowledge relationship with him. If they do not do these things, if they spread tales that he has been the cause of the death of their daughter, the relationship may be broken; and consequently the claim to a substitute, non-existent before, now is given recognition. If they value the link broken by their conduct they must reforge it by sending a substitute; if they do not, their action has already caused it to snap 587 768

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *munywalo* scheme.

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagambi, a man of thirty-five, scorned to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*mugaula*) has in practice a high status.

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *mugaula*, and when he died the *mugaula* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *mugaula* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *mugaula* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *mugaula* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, even jealousies, between a man and his *mugaula* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Muhale complained, not that his son was living with a *mugaula*, but that the *mugaula's* laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *mugaula* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. A man who illicitly lives upon a woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*madilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father of the porridge bowls' (*ramadilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *munywalo* and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *munywalo* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *munywalo* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

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578 unmanageable complication arises, unless there is agreement between all the persons interested: the son to whom the cattle should have been allotted, the daughter from whose marriage they came, the house established by these cattle, and the father himself. Tensions arise in many other ways: neglect of one wife and favouritism of another in respect of economic services, interference with the independence of the houses, and so on. Unwillingness to co-operate in the home and in fulfilling the wider group obligations is a more potent cause of trouble than adultery; and witchcraft, except as a symptom of tensions otherwise created, takes a minor place; and neither adultery nor witchcraft as such can snap the *munywalo* bonds.

426 The character of these tensions may be briefly illustrated by the case
● 595 of Muvirwa and Mara. Faced with starvation, Mara obtained cattle
684 from Muvirwa (who was a friend, not a relative), promising, in accordance with the 'mud-stamper' institution, a daughter in exchange. In fact, this daughter, the little 'mud-stamper', as she is called, because she is too young to stamp mealies, was not yet in existence. That is not unusual in these transactions, which require that the 'mud-stamper' shall in due course be given gratuitously to the benefactor; and thereby the two lineages become cattle-linked, so that, for instance, Mara and his descendants would have to offer brides and receive cattle and Muvirwa and his descendants would offer cattle and receive brides. If Mara had no brides to offer, Muvirwa would still have to give cattle; otherwise the link might be broken. The 'mud-stamper', after reaching years of discretion, may dislike the benefactor, who is usually already old and decrepit, and that may lead to conflicts. In this instance, when Mara's daughter entered her *khoba* initiation, Muvirwa, as is customary, paid the *levala* goat, for a bridegroom for whom a bride is 'born' must, so to speak, nurse her and 'grow' her. Not long afterwards the 'mud-stamper' died. Mara offered another daughter and, as the girl had died before actual marriage, no further *munywalo* was required from Muvirwa. But the substitute, having grown up, married and then deserted Muvirwa, who was already very old; she ran away to a lover, Mara himself conniving at the desertion. Mara returned some cattle to Muvirwa, thereby severing the relationship, and promised the balance when the lover had paid *munywalo*.

684 Years passed and nothing happened. Muvirwa eventually brought an action, which Magsebia, Mara's wife, contested. She said that on the death of the 'mud-stamper' she had offered to return the cattle, but this was refused, that the substitute was forced to marry Muvirwa against her will, and that the religious ceremony was omitted. Muvirwa replied that he had already received seventeen of the twenty-four cattle (the number to which the original eight had increased), that it was thus not he who had broken the relationship, and that the religious ceremony, which for various reasons could not be held in Mara's village, had taken place at the village of Magsebia's brother. The court could not but side with Mara, but it tried hard to reduce his claim, for twenty-four cattle, it said, were an enormous number. Then recriminations broke out between Mara and his wife, which revealed a many-sided conflict in the

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illustrated in a proverb the sense of which is that you may be the unsuspecting victim of the witchcraft of your closest friend, or, more literally, Belegwane, the enemy, does not care; [so intimate with him are you that] you eat with him, [yet] he is the foe that eats you (*Belegwane mulala a khi vome; u la nayɔ, gi mulala was hu la wena*). And people chased away as witches from one area or tribe never have any difficulty in being accepted into another. 754

Considerations such as the return of cattle are often strong enough to deter a man from chasing away a wife who has bewitched some one in the village (he would never chase away a wife merely for bewitching outsiders). When once we asked a man why he kept a wife who had been found guilty of bewitching her fellow wife, he replied, 'She is my witch' (*gi mulɔi wa ga*). Being fond of her, he merely built her a separate village. Some people who have never been publicly accused of witchcraft are nevertheless known to be bad witches. In such cases, people may fear them and try to keep on good terms with them in order to avoid evil consequences.

One of the most fruitful studies in regard to witchcraft is the investigation of the relationship of the people who bewitch one another. Two main categories must be distinguished, viz. cases in which relatives bewitch one another and cases in which the evil is sent by non-relatives. The Lovedu maintain, and the opinion is borne out both by one's general impressions and by the facts, that witches injure mainly those with whom they are in close contact—that is, relatives and neighbours—and that it is difficult to bewitch a stranger. And it is remarkable that of fifty cases of witchcraft observed by us as they came before the *khɔrɔ* and given in the table below, 70 per cent. involve close relatives. Not all relatives are apt to bewitch one, but both men and women are equally liable to harm either men or women. A mother never, it is believed, bewitches her own children, and there is even a saying to the effect that a *mugɔme* who points out one's mother is not able to divine (*mugɔme u a tia vummahu a u khɔni hu laula*); and, although brother and cattle-linked sister sometimes hate one another, openly as well as secretly, they cannot harm one another, it is said, because they would use 'the medicine bag of the [same] mother'. Similarly neither a son nor a daughter can bewitch the mother. 754 578

The most prolific single source of witchcraft is the conflict of co-wives (24 per cent. of all cases). Their relationship in the polygynous family is a difficult one; the houses are independent, not subservient to one another, yet they are in close contact, and the insistence upon compromises occasions many mental conflicts. Spouses also bewitch one another, but wives kill or injure their husbands more frequently than husbands kill their wives; it is said that a husband who has only one wife will never bewitch her, except perhaps among Christians, who can have only one wife. The conflict of spouses is an aspect of a wider institutional conflict, that between relatives-in-law. If they have irksome obligations towards one another, the society insists that their relationship shall be characterised by mutual respect and helpfulness and that their difficulties, especially *masymalo* difficulties, are to be resolved as far as possible by the methods and procedure of the *khɔrɔ*. These factors explain why, [595]

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754 578 despite the many sources of tension between them, the cases are not, as one might expect, overwhelmingly predominant: only 20 per cent. of the total given in our table are cases of wives or their relatives bewitching husbands or their relatives, and only 16 per cent. husbands or their relatives bewitching wives or their relatives.

What is even more arresting is the fact that easily aggrieved relatives who, as it is phrased, are 'very sensitive' and readily nurse grievances, never or rarely bewitch: such are cattle-linked brothers or sisters, father's sisters, fathers, father's brothers and grandparents. It is even clear from what we have already said that they are believed to have repressed complaints, but they cannot project as witchcraft the displeasures or misfortunes or failures upon those who must, but do not, respect and humour them. They can and do cause illness, but it is not by way of witchcraft, and the resolution of the conflict is by pardon and *ku phasa*, through the gods, not through *vubi*. In other words, witchcraft is a reflection, not of tensions as such, whether open or repressed, but of tensions within the framework of cultural mechanisms for avoiding their being projected as witchcraft. They must be studied in the whole configuration of institutions and social values: the permissible or approved remedies, the interposition of the hierarchy of age and rank between competing individuals, the compromises and reconciliations that are insisted upon, and the extent to which mental drives are conditioned to the cultural pattern or allowed outlets or are blocked by culturally stressed values.

The incidence of witchcraft between strangers is much more intelligible to us, because it arises in situations of conflict that are not very different from our own. But the percentage of these cases (30 per cent.), even when we include the 10 per cent. of cases between distant kin who are neighbours rather than relatives, shows how largely the social structure is built upon the kin.

754 578 595 The following table represents a very broad analysis of fifty cases of witchcraft that we observed as they came before the *khoro* and that may be simplified for statistical presentation:

Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (*a*) House or co-wife against house or co-wife	Co-wife	Co-wife	1	Jealousy about lovers; neglect by husband	
	Co-wife	Co-wife and child of co-wife	2	Jealousy about children and husband's attention	
	Co-wife	Child of co-wife	2	Disagreements about *maryuale*	

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (*a*) House or co-wife against house or co-wife—*cont.*	Co-wife and her mother	Co-wife's child	2	Favouritism of husband and other mixed motives	
	Inherited wife	Co-wife and her children	2	Use of cattle of one house by another and questions of prestige	
	Widow	Fellow widow's child	1	Property arrangements	
	Wife of brother	Wife of another brother	1	Complex jealousies	
	Son of co-wife	Chief son and his wife	1	Status and position	24
(*b*) Wife against husband	Wife	Husband	2	Friction, favouritism of other wives, position	
	Wife and/or wife's mother	Husband's adulterine child or lover	4	Sexual jealousy and neglect of wife	
	Wife	Husband's sister's child	1	Disagreement about marriage of children and *mayumale*	
	Wife	Husband's brother, his wife, or his child	2	Position, jealousy	
	Wife's mother	Husband's child	1	Disagreements	20

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A	B	C	D	E	F

Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.
[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-196. See category 116.--Analyst]
[Facing kinship diagram.]

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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ships between the families involved but upon it rests the whole 581
character of the domestic group. Payment of bride-price trans- 581
fers the reproductive powers of the woman to the husband's 583
agnatic group. The husband has genetricial as well as uxorial 583
rights. Genetricial rights apply not only to any children born 581
after the marriage whoever their biological father might be, but also in retrospect, so that any child born before marriage automatically becomes the child of whoever pays the bride-price, with full rights of succession and inheritance from its sociological father. There is thus, in contrast to other tribes such as the Zulu, no way in which a Lobedu man can obtain the right to his biological child other than by marrying its mother. Emphasis on sociological as opposed to biological fatherhood among the Lobedu is very strong and this is an important factor in Lobedu social structure. The rights of a father to a child involve control over it; the right to the bride-price of a daughter (subject to the right of her brother to marry with his sister's cattle and of her mother to the services of the woman married with her daughter's bride-price); and corresponding to his right to his daughter's bride-price the duty to help his son to marry. A father may and often does marry an [595] additional wife with his daughter's bride-price. A father also has the right to be cared for in his old age by his sons.

The levirate is practised, the junior levirate being more 587
common than the senior levirate. The brother raises seed to 581
the deceased and takes over the responsibility of a father and husband though the children he begets are counted as belonging to his deceased brother. Frequently the heir, eldest son of the chief 'house' inherits a young wife of his father. In this case, similarly, the children born of the union are looked upon as the deceased's, i.e., as brothers and sisters of the heir, not his children. The sororate also is practised in all its forms, sororal [595] polygyny being very common. Where a sister is sent to 'awaken the house (*ke dzuse ndu*)' of a barren or deceased wife full bride-price is due for her although, since bride-price is never an absolutely fixed amount, less may be asked for than in the first marriage.

The marriage of a woman transfers to her husband's group 581
the right to her labour. Initially it is the husband's mother 582
even more than the husband himself that benefits, as we shall

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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and married Nakampe (G), Mogodo's son by another wife. Makeakati's (C's) 'house' had first claim on the daughter of the man (her father's brother) who had used her cattle, but as her son was a Christian the girl was given to the son of a different 'house'.

Once a link has been created by a marriage a bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship follows, which tends to be reinforced not only by one but by numerous subsequent marriages. Thus, A married a girl from lineage B. Both his sons and his grandson followed in his footsteps (see Figure 4).

The same tendency is present in Lobedu polygyny where the sororate is very popular. Most Lobedu who are not Christians have more than one wife. But it will almost always be found

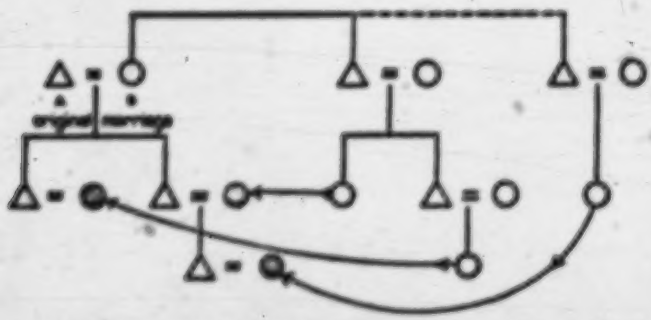

FIG. 4. *Reinforcement down the generations of a marriage link between two lineages.*

that at least one is a sister or younger relative of one of the other wives. Thus M, a chief councillor, married seven wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's daughter; (2) his mother's half-brother's daughter; (3) his mother's half-brother's daughter's son's daughter; (4) a non-relative; (5) a non-relative; (6) his mother's brother's son's daughter (brother's daughter to No. 2 and therefore a wife's brother's daughter); (7) a sister to (1) by the same father but a different mother.

S, a man in his thirties, has three wives: (1) his mother's mother's brother's daughter; (2) a non-relative and (3) the uterine sister of his first wife.

Old K had five wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a different mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*mesile mabe o beya le mete ga hwe*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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With European

administration came the introduction of the Pedi idea that a man has a claim to both the cattle and the children in the case of malicious desertion. Old men in the 1930's called this a white man's law; today people are claiming it as a Lobedu custom. Only two of the oldest men at court were able to tell me in 1962 what had been common knowledge in 1936. The present custom is for the husband on receiving back the bride-price to return some of it (one beast for each child or sometimes two for a girl) for the rearing of the younger children that remain temporarily with their mother. A father's hold over such children is in practice tenuous though the court will always uphold his claims.

The issues in divorce are rarely simple. The simplest case I came across was one in which a man became insane. His wife left with her children to live with her brother who returned the bride-price. Usually, however, there are endless complications and cases continue for months, even years. If, for example, a man chases his wife and children away and the wife wants to return, he may in the end lose both the children and the bride-price despite the proverb quoted above.

The Domestic Group and the Importance of the 'House'

We have discussed the role of property in establishing and maintaining marriage relationshipsand links between families. Control over material resources also plays an important part in the structure of the polygynous domestic group with its economically independent 'houses' so characteristic of the Lobedu.

As head of the family the husband has full control over all family resources. Yet each wife forms with her children a unit of production and consumption, the independence of which as against other 'houses' has to be respected even by the husband, whose control thus becomes limited the moment he marries a second wife. This is why a Christian woman among the Lobedu never has the economic independence that a woman in a polygynous household has. There are safeguards against the infringement of the principle of the independence of the 'house', as we shall see.

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Though women do most of the cultivation, the Lobedu husband is expected to play his part in producing food for his family. Every married man, therefore, has a field of his own which he cultivates with the help of his wives. The produce of this field is used for any beer- or work-parties that the man may wish to give and is a kind of bank upon which his wives may draw when they run short. If, however, a man helps one wife from his personal stores he must give all his wives an equal amount irrespective of their needs. When he first marries, the husband works with his wife in their common field. On marrying a second wife he acquires a field of his own (in addition to the one for his new wife) which his wives take it in turn to weed. It is said that if he had no field of his own but were merely to help each wife in turn to cultivate her field there would be endless trouble in maintaining equality between them. One of them for instance might say, 'How is it that when you come and work in my field you just sit but when you go to the field of the mother of So and So even the shade doesn't tempt you!'

A father is responsible for helping his sons to marry. But since a man seldom possesses cattle other than those already involved in bride-price exchange and a son uses the cattle of his sister, boys in a 'house' in which there are no girls often have to go out and work or with the help and advice of their father acquire bride-price in other ways. In the old days an orphan usually hired out his services to carry salt or iron ore from far countries in order in this way to acquire marriage hoes or cattle. Expenses in goats and money over and above the cattle given in marriage are met by the boy himself with the help of his father. A father should see to it that his son is provided with a field when he marries but in practice it is very often the mother who concerns herself with this problem. The father has jural control over his sons and is responsible for their debts.

The wives in a polygynous household differ in status. The chief wife is the daughter of the mother's brother—the cattle-linked or any uterine mother's brother or mother's half-brother. She will bear the heir and future head of the village. Where there has been no marriage with the mother's brother's daughter it is the first wife, the one married with his father's cattle that is chief wife. A chief wife exercises no control over

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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other wives. When the mother's brother's daughter is one of the younger wives in a polygynous household she may be completely overshadowed by the first wife. The eldest son of the first wife occupies a position of importance in the family. He is said to stand in the shoes (literally 'footprints') of his father and after the latter's death has a right to be *suma'd*, i.e., given a portion of any animal killed by any of his brothers long after they have dispersed and live in separate homesteads. There are instances, especially in the case of district heads and where the chief house has no male heir, in which the eldest son of the first wife married tries to usurp the position. But though he may appear for a time to be succeeding as seemed to be the case in more than one instance in the 1930's when first we went into the field, I have not come across any cases in which he has succeeded in the long run.

Each wife has her own fields which it is her duty to cultivate for the needs of her 'house'. On her death her sons have first right to inherit her fields unless their father wants to use them himself or arrange for their cultivation to provide food for the younger children; but they may not be used for the benefit of any other 'house'. A daughter may be given her deceased mother's field to cultivate while she is still in her parental home, but she cannot inherit it. A wife is expected to feed herself, her children, her husband and her mother-in-law from her fields. Each time she cooks she sends food to her husband and to his mother. What is left must be returned to her 'house' unless the husband himself gives it to the herd-boys or other children as a group. In the case of special dishes eaten in-between meals, such as cakes of sesamum or ground peanuts, a little will be sent to each of the other women of the homestead with whom the wife is on good terms. In a large homestead this may be confined to the wives of one man. Beer brought to any one 'house' is usually drunk by all in the village and neighbourhood.

In addition to having her own granaries and cooking utensils every wife has a right to raise livestock. She may keep chickens; she may acquire goats by the exchange of her produce; she may get pigs by feeding other people's pigs in return for a pigling. She may even acquire cattle if she is a doctor. In contrast to the Zulu, where the 'house' like that of the Lobedu is

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also an economic unit, the Lobedu wife enjoys considerable economic freedom in the disposal of her property. Though she should act in consultation with her husband in the disposal of livestock or large amounts of surplus crops she will often, especially if on bad terms with her husband, act on her own. All these activities, it should however be remembered, are for the advancement of her 'house', which belongs to the husband's lineage. These goods can neither accrue to nor be used by the wife's own relatives. If, for example, she leaves her husband or is divorced she cannot take any of the produce of her fields with her. On the other hand the husband could use such crops or livestock only for the advancement or to feed the children of that 'house,' not for other 'houses'. The only goods a woman may take with her on divorce are cattle or other livestock earned by practising as a doctor because in this case, it is said, she has spirits guiding her which are of her own, not her husband's family.

The Lobedu husband does not in the manner of the Nguni allocate cattle to the 'house' of each wife (milk plays little or no part in the diet). It is said, however, that even if a cow were to be allocated to a house for milking purposes it would not belong to that 'house'. Cattle that come in from the marriage of a daughter are the property of her mother's 'house' and should be used for acquiring a wife for a son of that house. If the son is young and the husband wishes to use his daughter's cattle for a wife for himself, such wife would have to cook for the woman of that house from which the cattle came in the manner of a daughter-in-law. In theory a husband has the right to decide how the cattle of any 'house' are to be used. But he rarely in practice acts against the wishes of the wife. Her right over any woman acquired by the cattle of her daughter gives her great power and makes it difficult for her husband to marry a wife with them himself against her wishes. The bride might run away or her people refuse to let her marry if they hear that the woman the bride will have to 'stamp for' opposes the marriage. That is why so often cattle are handed to the wife's brother in the manner described above.

It is said, '*masha ha o le yo mangwe*—houses do not eat one another', i.e., the property of one house cannot be used for the advancement of another. Hence bride-price of the girl of one

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house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families) and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *leshupe*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.

The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died, the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting

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woman, K, has, during her husband's prolonged absence in a labour centre, moved away from her fellow wives into another district in order to be near her married daughter. She lives in a small homestead with her married son, who is absent doing migrant labour, and her other children. In contrast to this is the homestead of a neighbour of hers who has five wives and

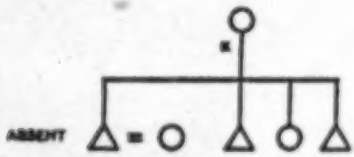

FIG. 5. Composition of a very small homestead.

whose ten brothers together with their wives and children still live with him in the homestead—a total of sixty-eight inmates (twenty-nine adults, thirty-nine children). Of these three married and two unmarried men are away doing migrant labour.

The domestic group indicated in Figure 6 originally lived in one homestead.

On A's death his chief son, B, inherited his youngest wife (No. 3) who as yet had no children. They all moved out of the old homestead, the sons (B and D) of A's two elder wives

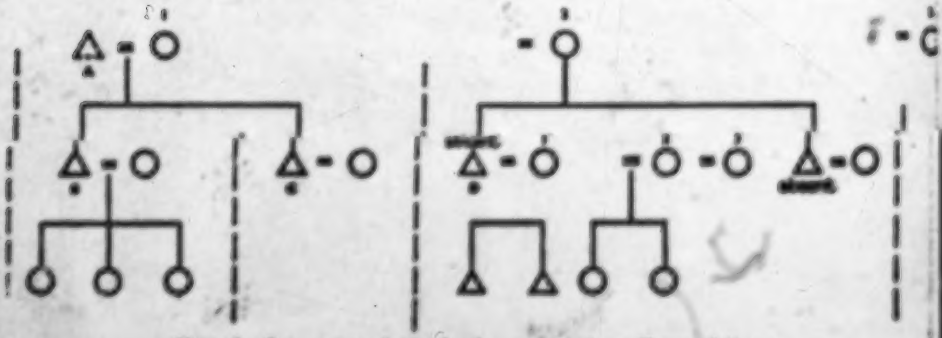

FIG. 6. Segmentation of a homestead on 'house' lines.

building separate homesteads next to one another, where I found them in 1938. The women in the homestead of D considered themselves part of the homestead of A and in the

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Conclusion

182 421 571 Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

● 585 602 The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djeelane ke ba khenane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

582 602 An important principle in the social structure is preferential marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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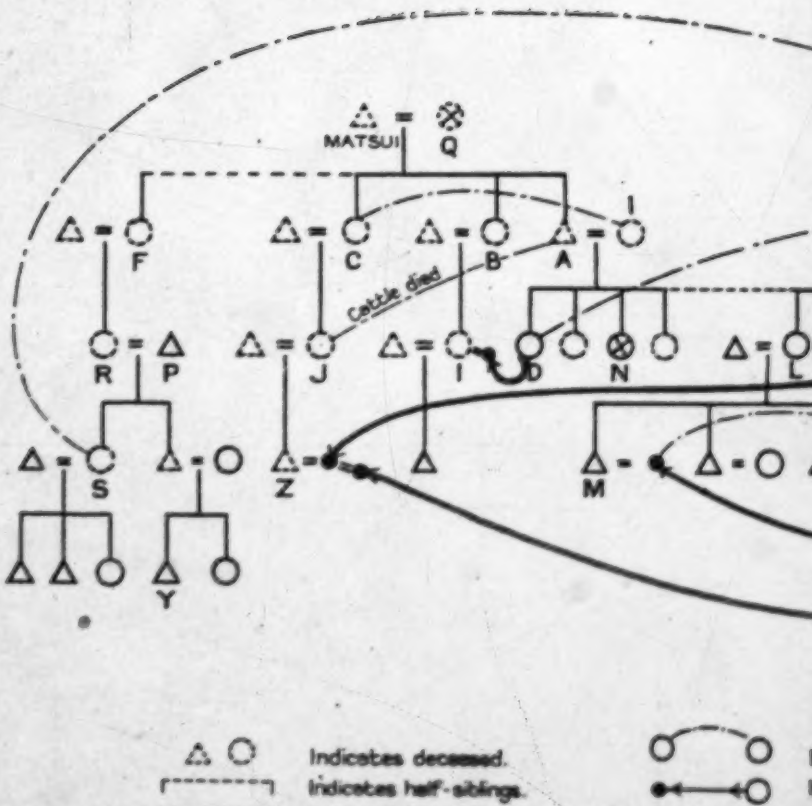

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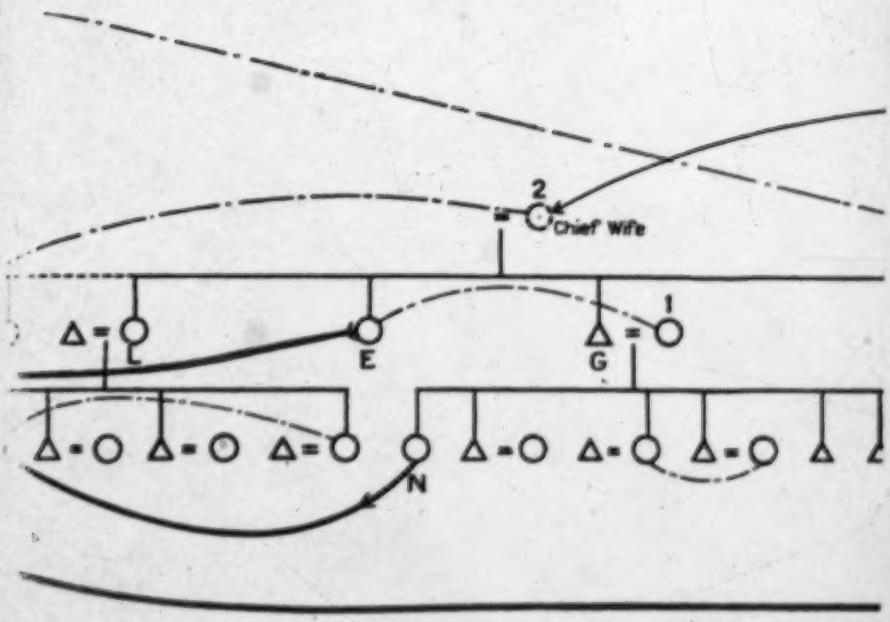

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a women in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wives
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her de

Indicates women marriage of a girl with a married female relatin.

Indicates a women who is or has been a motanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[p. 192-B]

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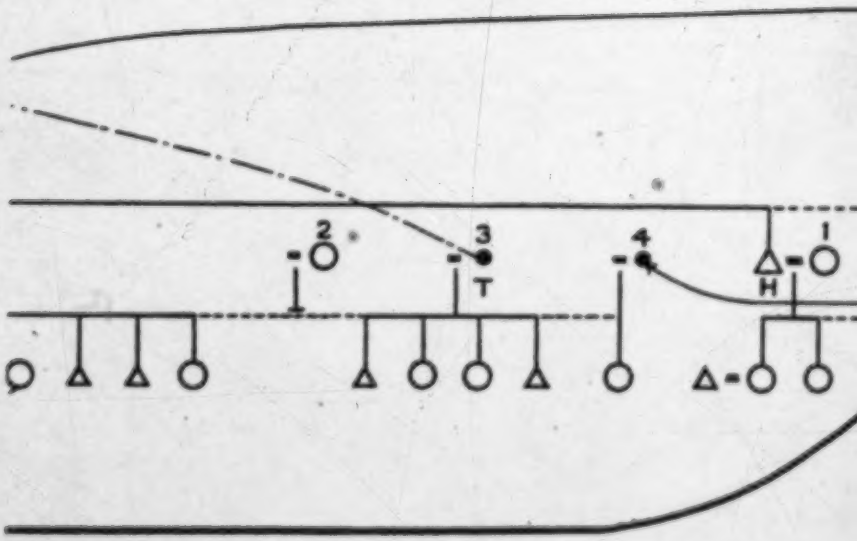

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
rooming wives from the same lineage.
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FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a lin

[p.192-C]

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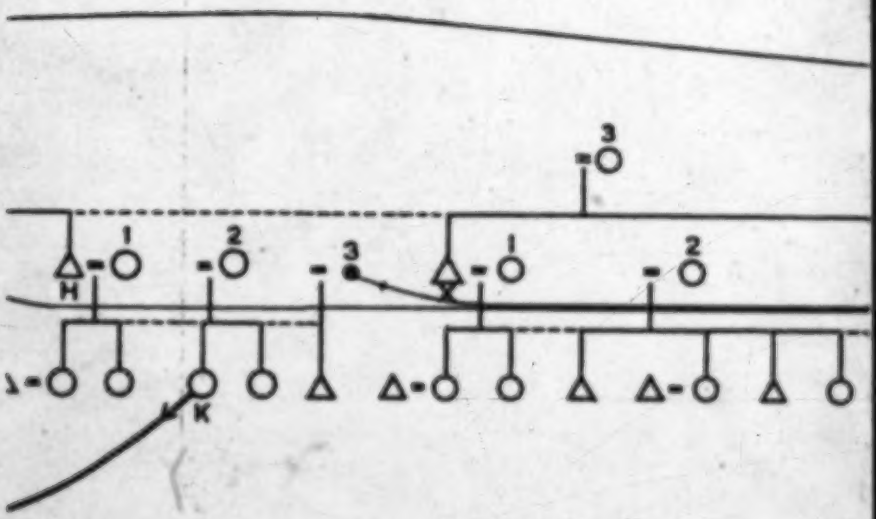

links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-3]

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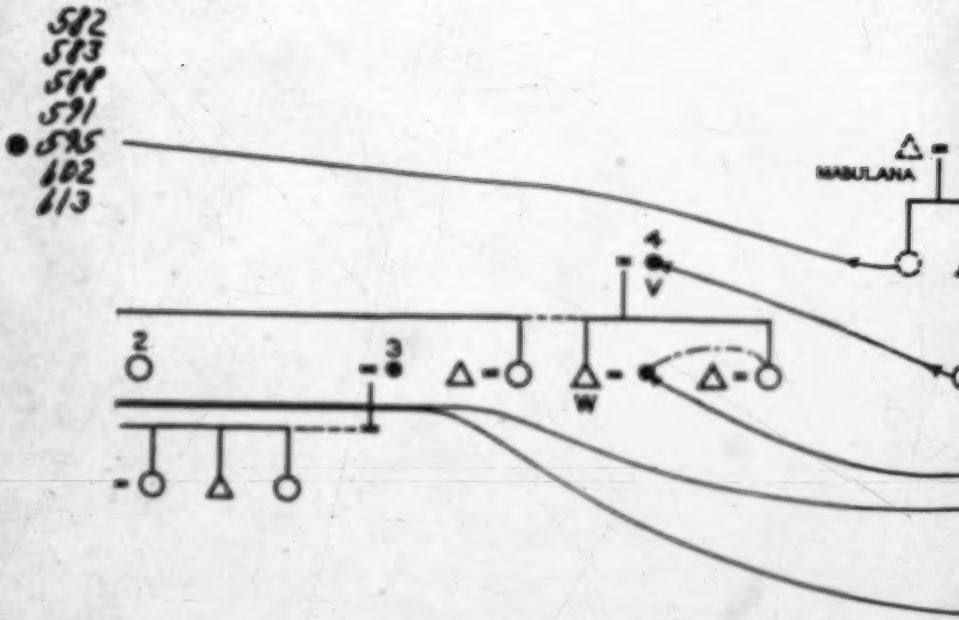

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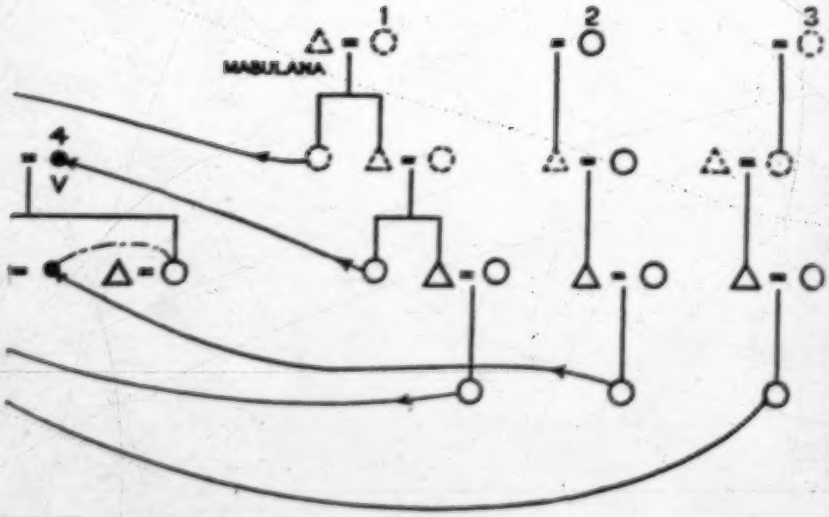

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

APPENDIX I

THE manner in which many of the characteristics of Lobedu marriage arrangements operate in practice is illustrated in the case of the lineage segment of A and his descendants set out in Figure 9. The arrows in the diagram all represent the passage of women in preferential marriage from their parental home to that of their husband: single arrows indicate women of the mother's brother's family (i.e., the Mabulanas) who have married into A's lineage (Matsui); double arrows indicate the departure of women of A's lineage to marry at their father's sister's. The following are points to be noted: 582 591 602 613

(a) The tendency for Lobedu polygynists to marry more than one wife from the same family is seen in Figure 9 in A's marriage to his fourth wife who was his second wife's brother's daughter. [595]

(b) The manner in which cross-cousin marriage perpetuates links with the wife's kin down the generations is illustrated by the marriages of A's sons G, H, W and X. G's fourth wife, H's third wife and W's first wife all come from the same lineage, that of their mothers (A's second and fourth wives). A's son X's third wife is also his uterine cross-cousin but it was not practicable to indicate her family of origin also in the diagram.

(c) Besides reinforcing links with the maternal kin, mother's brother's daughter marriage serves also to knit together descendants of a man and his sisters. The bonds between A and his sisters B and C have been kept alive over a span of two generations of their descendants by the marriage of A's daughter D to I (daughter of his sister B) as indicated by the double arrow in Figure 9, and the marriage of A's daughter E to Z (son of J, and grandson of A's sister, C). Similarly G's daughter N by his first wife is married to the son (M) of his sister L (see double arrows), and H's daughter K is married to her father's sister E, widow of Z, a marriage which took place in 1961.

(d) The part played by cattle links in ensuring preferential marriage is also illustrated in the diagram; but it is clear too that children of brother and sister who are *not* cattle-linked often also marry one another. Z married E because of cattle-links two generations above him as is explained below. But when E grew old and needed a 'wife' G had no suitable daughter; so H's daughter K 'married' her. Cattle-links also did not account for the marriage of A's daughter, D, to his sister I, nor of G's daughter N to his sister L's son M. These indicate the tremendous value attached to maintaining links with married sisters. The reasons for the marriage of 582 593 591 602 613

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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between husband and wives, between children of different wives, and 598
between fellow wives. Polygyny, reinforced by the segregation of the sexes in everyday life and interests, renders the personal bond between husband and wife much less intimate than in the European ideal. Men are unwilling to spend much time in the company of women, and women prefer the company of their own sex. The polygynist must be most circumspect in his relations with his wives. He must treat them all with strict impartiality. Should he wish to give one a present, all must receive similar gifts. If he spends more time with one than another, this may be the cause of serious domestic discord. He must always be weighing and balancing lest preference shown to one should lead to trouble and unpleasantness. With such considerations uppermost, there is little chance of the development of companionship and communion between husband and wife, although there may be a high degree of co-operation and sympathy. It is generally only in his old age, when his wives have their own daughters-in-law and are already grandmothers, that a man allows himself the privilege of attaching himself openly to one of his wives, the one who has always treated him well. At this stage there is but little jealousy between the fellow wives, and a polygynous husband and one of his wives may sometimes in old age become a regular Darby and Joan. Where a man has one wife only and stays in his own small 593
village without male companionship at home, their relationship becomes noticeably closer. This gain in intimacy is counterbalanced by a loss of independence on the part of the wife. Since there is now no need carefully to distinguish what belongs to the wife, the husband tends to take over most of the control, and the monogamous marriage of Christians, with its greater community of property between husband and wife, has thus its disadvantages as well as its merits.

A wife is expected to obey her husband, who may beat her if she does not; yet he may not interfere in her domestic arrangements. When a woman is busy (and she alone is the judge in this matter), her husband may have to wait till well after midday before receiving his first meal. She uses her own discretion in exchanging the produce of her fields, although she will generally not sell at a store without consulting her husband. Wife-beating is not uncommon, but it takes place usually when a man is drunk or suspects his wife of unfaithfulness. For an angry woman to attack her husband is not unusual and once considerable amusement was caused at a district head's court we attended when a man complained of being beaten by his wife.

It is the duty of a husband to make or buy clothes for his wife, build and repair her huts, provide her every year with storage receptacles and an enclosure for her harvest, and nowadays also to plough for her. Most men have one field of their own which they cultivate and, though they may ask their wives to help them with weeding and reaping, the produce is their own, used for beer-making or, in bad years, distributed among their wives. If his wife or any of his children is ill, a man must be unfailing in his efforts to find medicines or doctors that will provide a cure.

The position of a wife in her husband's home changes with the changing 596

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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● 576 years. For the first few years of her married life she is strictly controlled by her mother-in-law, has a great deal of work to do, and finds little time to attend dances and beer-drinks. Nowhere was the position of a bride more forcefully brought to our notice than in the case of Anna. We met Anna first as an unmarried girl in her own home, a noisy, untidy, empty-headed girl never stirring a finger to help her brother's wife, who, though hampered by a peevish child of two, did all the housework. A year later when we met her again, this time as a bride of six months' standing, we could hardly believe the transformation that had taken place. Here was Anna, quietly doing all the work, waiting on us as guests, smearing the courtyard in the intervals between her other duties, and generally comporting herself in a manner which a year previously we should have thought impossible. Strictly speaking, there is no limit to the length of time a wife should cook for her mother-in-law. If she has married an only or the youngest son, she will continue doing so all her life; otherwise she is generally given her own hearth when the next brother marries and a new bride enters the household. If a bride does not get on well with her mother-in-law, she may, even if there is no other bride, be given her own hearth after a year or so, but in a family where all work harmoniously together, two daughters-in-law may be seen cooking in common for their husband's mother. Every woman can, however, look forward to an old age when she, too, will have her daughter-in-law to relieve her of the hard work she is unable to do.

573 574 A married woman moves about freely and goes to beer-drinks when she likes, but she would not go on a visit to her own people without consulting her husband or her mother-in-law. She may, if she is a doctor, own considerable property of her own in goats and cattle and, when her daughter gets married, she has a great deal to say in the disposal of the bride-price. Normally, the cattle coming in for a girl are used to obtain a wife for her uterine brother. If, however, there are more girls than boys, it is seldom that the mother will consent to its being used by the son of a fellow wife. In such a case it is usually given to the mother's brother, who, by using it, establishes a 'house' where the son of his niece will find a wife. Should the husband himself wish to obtain another wife with the cattle he will first have to come to an agreement with his wife, otherwise there may be a lot of trouble. Since a wife so obtained will have to cook for the wife whose daughter's cattle were used to obtain her, ill-feeling would lead to considerable disharmony and might end in breaking up the new marriage by causing the bride to run away.

575 The term for fellow wives, *vahadipani*, which the Lovedu translate as 'people who roast one another', is said to denote the state of tension and sometimes conflict that one finds between them. So bad does this become occasionally that one may find different wives of the same man living in different villages. Fellow wives may be jealous, yet they help one another in beer-making, lend each other utensils, work at each other's work-parties; and it is seldom that a woman gives her own child a sip-bit without also giving to other children that may be present. The chief wife, always the mother's brother's daughter, has no control over other wives. Where the chief wife is married only late in life, she is in

3: Krige E-9 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

Highveld. When, after many private consultations with diviners, a man decides to make an accusation of witchcraft, he and the accused will *betshe* or lay a wager of money or cattle on the matter, after which, accompanied by a witness, the 'ears of the chief', supplied by the Head Kraal, they set out to consult a far-away smeller-out, nearly always a Shangana-Tonga who lives too far to know anything of the people concerned. Unless the smeller-out is able to give the totems of all members of the party and successfully find an object that has been hidden beforehand, they will pass on to another until some one suitable is found. The verdict of the smeller-out is taken to court where it is always accepted and the guilty party told to pay his wager, the modern counterpart of the death penalty of old. A distinction between murder and accidental homicide is everywhere found in the Lowveld, punishment for the latter being the handing over of a girl to the injured family. She never returns home, nor does any bride-price pass. 695 [682]

Bantu etiquette, which makes it impossible for a case to be reported to the chief except through a third party, generally among other Sotho tribes one or two specially appointed men, has in the Lowveld given rise to a rather more complicated system whereby each district has its 'mother' at the Head Kraal, through whom reports are made and actions brought. Where a person in one district has a case at the Head Kraal against some one in another district, the 'mother' of the complainant's district will approach the 'mother' of defendant's district to call his 'children' to the court, and various payments are connected with the system. Most of the important men living at or near the Head Kraal are such 'mothers', many having more than one district in their charge. 576 694

Family and Clan. There is among Lowveld Sotho no term distinguishing the father's from the mother's side of the family, the word *malume* being used to denote all relatives whether on the father's side or the mother's; and in practice, whether at weddings or at working parties, both sets of relatives play an equally important, if sometimes different, part. A man inherits his totem and family name from his father, but in his education and social life his mother's people have great influence. Most children spend some years of their life with the 601 611 855

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
FX14 Lovedu FX14

A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion. 593 562 [582]

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vomalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vomakhale*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsai*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaphakale* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and several affines are merged with the paternal kin. 613 601 612 613

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's 753 NA

S:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
FX14 Lovedu FX14

provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *mogi* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*maka*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepise in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

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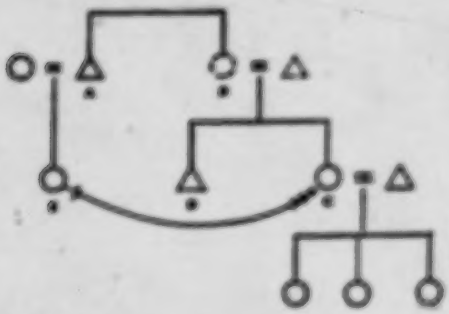

△○ SEXLAND
⟷ MOVEMENT OF A WOMAN IN MARRIAGE

FIG. 1. Case illustrating 'marriage' of a woman to a woman.

Thepiso's father (A) was the cattle-linked, uterine brother of (B) the mother of Mandike (C), a married woman with children. Mandike's brother (D), whose parents were dead, had been engaged to Thepiso (E), his mother's brother's daughter, and cattle had already passed when he, too, died. So Thepiso's father (A) took his daughter (E) to Mandike (C), and said: 'Take Thepiso and "sway" with her'. So, as it was phrased, Mandike 'married' Thepiso (*o ne bakile*), who came to live in Mandike's husband's village. Mandike (C) called Thepiso (E) not '*mafi*' (daughter-in-law) but '*mokadike*' (sister-in-law); E's children called C '*rakhadi*' (father's sister) and took her father's surname.

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(*mosesa ne ka*) by their 'wives' *katsana* when they marry on behalf of their own lineage and *papa* (father) by the children of these wives, just as though they were men. In ritual matters, however, they act as women.

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Preferential marriage with the mother's brother's daughter appears in the Lobedu context almost to follow from relationships established by the cattle that pass and the rights of the sister to a daughter-in-law from whoever has used her marriage cattle. Yet it is not always from the identical 'house' that was established by the cattle that a daughter is sent in marriage, nor necessarily by the same brother as used the cattle. Maserika's

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bride-price was used by her brother Andrew. Thirty years later (1961) when she went to ask for a girl to 'come and stamp for her' (she is a widow and has no sons) it was the daughter of Batsumedi, her other uterine brother, that was offered. When

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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437 rather than of goodwill; the goods exchanged are primary and the relations between the parties, though not unimportant, are secondary. In *money barter* it is not the objective value of the goods exchanged against one another, but their value as compared with certain common measures that is in the forefront—for instance, such measures as hoes or goats or certain denominations of money. When a man says he has bought 1*l.* worth of maize, he may mean, not that he has paid cash, but that he has bought a 4-gallon tinful (which is regarded as the equivalent of 1*l.* worth) and has paid some goods which are considered to have the value of 1*l.* What he has in mind is the common standard, which some think of as 1*l.*, while others regard it as a tinful of maize. Finally, in *money exchange*, goods are exchanged for money, not against other goods; yet for our purposes, not all money transactions are included in money exchange, but only those payments in money which are business transactions. Many money exchanges fall under gift barter. For instance, A brings beer to her son-in-law, who, not having the two goats that he should return, hands over £1 to A; he is not paying for the beer, but he is exchanging his goodwill.

437 The following table approximately reflects the volume of exchanges
438 during the course of a normal year in an average family of five (two
439 adults and three children). It would be impracticable to give the source
431 of our figures, except for the general remark that they have been worked out from mass statistics of a population of about 2,000 people, supplemented by budgets and personal observations, and are expressed in £ *s.* *d.*

	External Trade $\frac{1}{A}$			Internal Trade $\frac{1}{A}$				
Medium of payment	Money	Money barter	Total	Money	Money barter	Barter	Gift barter	Total
Cash	£ *s.* *d.* 1 2 3	*s.* *d.* —	£ *s.* *d.* 1 2 3	*s.* *d.* 5 0	*s.* *d.* —	*s.* *d.* —	£ *s.* *d.* 8 2	£ *s.* *d.* 13 2
Agricultural produce and beer	6	2 0	2 6	1 9	1 6	7 0	1 1 6	1 11 9
Livestock, &c.	6	—	6	4 0	2 0	4 6	10 19 6	3 10 0
Total	1 3 3	2 0	1 5 3	10 9	3 6	11 6	6 9 2	3 15 0

437 It will be seen that money exchange accounts for £1 14*s.*, or 24 per
602 cent. of the total exchanges, money barter for 3*s.* 6*d.*, or under 4 per cent.,
431 barter for 11*s.* 6*d.*, or just under 8 per cent., and gift barter for £4 9*s.* 3*d.*, or just under 64 per cent. By far the largest single exchange is bride-price (*mayuwale*), which falls under gift barter. The proportion of

$\frac{1}{A}$ [See p. 61, Cat. 116 for definition of external and internal trade — Analyst.]

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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goodwill or reciprocal exchanges would be considerably enlarged if we included unilateral gifts (*upho*), such as delicacies given by the mother's mother to a grandchild, goats to important visitors, money or clothes to wives or in-laws, soap and cloth to lovers or concubines, and so on. We have excluded them, but they all arise out of institutionalized situations; to lavish donations or gifts of goodwill upon anyone but relatives is very unusual. So much is needed to maintain reciprocity between relatives that this kind of generosity to strangers is mere lack of balance. The society specially insists that people should direct their energies towards building up firm friendship between those kin whose relationship to one another is subject to strains. There are endless sources of quarrel between relatives-in-law; hence sons-in-law must always help parents-in-law, while the latter must perpetually be bringing beer to their sons-in-law. The gifts that pass, by anticipation smooth out the differences or relieve the strains arising from structural arrangements; mainly they are not what we would call 'friendship gifts'. The clue to a man's behaviour is not to be found chiefly in personality choices; there are no defined occasions, such as marriages or Christmas among us, when friends can show their goodwill or when the whole world is supposed to be well-disposed. Kinship is the scheme in which reciprocity is most appropriate, at least in exchange transactions.

Among the gift-barter exchanges the most distinctive are certain institutionalized gifts, such as *Mbwale* beer, the *guba*, and *manyunde*. Essentially they do not belong to a trading context at all; they are not economically motivated and do not result from any objective diversification of needs; yet the attitudes appropriate to them are reflected back upon the trading situation. *Khwale* (*ku vala*, to lift off the head) is beer carried to a relative or occasionally a friend, the most impressive occasion being when relatives-in-law bring beer to the *tsani*, son-in-law. As many as twelve calabashes (35–40 gallons), equivalent to one head of cattle, may be carried. One calabash is usually consumed on the way, a second is given to the carriers on their arrival, and the rest is partaken of by any one, including the carriers, who attend the beer-drink. The recipient is expected to return a gift, generally two goats, one slaughtered immediately for the carriers as relish, the second taken home by them and often called 'the walking stick of the in-laws'. The situation is one of good fellowship and friendliness; there are no displays of suspicion and no mutual recriminations as in some other tribes; the givers and the receivers meet one another with joyful shouts and leave one another mutually exhilarated.

There are no special occasions to which *Mbwale* beer is appropriate, though it is usually stated to be brought for some, usually a fictitious, reason, such as 'to cause us to see the young grandchild', who, in fact, has been seen often before. An old man sometimes asks a distant relative or even a non-relative who has just returned from town for a jacket or pair of trousers perhaps. Some time later his wives brew beer and he 'gives' the beer to the young man, praising him for his generosity and announcing to all that he was indebted to the young man. This is the beginning of a never-ending series of exchanges, for the young man must

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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CHAPTER V

FAMILY TIES

Personal relations within the polygynous household—the sister as the centre of the social system—behaviour patterns and avoidances between potential and actual relatives-in-law and their modification by personality and adjustment—the position of orphans.

621 AT every turn we seem to be stumbling upon the kin. It cannot be otherwise, because they are very important in the everyday life and contacts of the Lovedu man or woman. The village is a group of relatives, chiefly on the father's side, but sometimes including one or two people from the side of the mother or wife, and even the district consists largely of kin. The modern tendency towards smaller and smaller villages has, in contrast to what one might have expected, hardly acted as a counteracting force, for so often a cluster of small villages, each with no more than two or three huts, turns out on closer inspection to represent what once was a single village. They have moved apart in space, but the ties are still recognized, sometimes even to the extent of acknowledging one man as their 'village' head. In our discussion of the district as a political unit, we refer to the manner in which kin and locality coincide. Suffice it here to say that in one district, with a large element of foreigners, 56 per cent. of the people are relatives of the district head. Of these, 36 per cent. are close relatives—that is, brothers, sisters, uncles—who would be recognized in modern European society, and 20 per cent. classificatory relations.[1] In many areas the percentage of relatives to the headman is much higher.

● 602 The Lovedu thus grows up in a circle of kin. As a child, his playmates are relatives; his boyish fights, loves, and hatreds involve his kin; and he grows old along with them. But blood-relationship does not act alone in binding people together. It does not determine the nature and strength of the contacts, the degrees of reciprocity that are to prevail. Here it is that other elements in the social structure step in, strengthening one type of link, perhaps at the expense of another just as close in degree, binding ever more closely certain of the kin and allowing others to drift apart. By means of complicated rights and duties between the individuals, these other elements tend, in different societies, to mould social relationships into different patterns, so that a father in one society has functions very different from those of a father in another, and a maternal uncle, in one society a man with authority over you, in another is perhaps a kind elderly playmate.

595 An important moulding force in Lovedu family relationships is polygyny. Each wife has her own household, her own fields and grain stores, but polygyny cannot stop at making plural wives independent in these ways; it must create special interrelations within its structure,

[1] The classificatory system of relationship, in which the terms 'brother' and 'sister' are extended to children of father's brothers and mother's sisters as well as other more distant relatives, and in which one has many 'fathers' and 'mothers', is too well known to require attention here.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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than the chief wife, plays little part in a man's life; she is merely a female 405
relative to whom a certain amount of respect and attachment is due. 575
Often a woman's son marries daughters of several of her brothers. It is, however, only to the daughter of that brother who used her cattle that she has a right—has, as the Lovedu put it, an 'entrance' to his village.

In view of the position of sisters and brothers later in life, one would 593
not expect great familiarity or freedom between them during their childhood. Brother and sister may talk freely to each other, but if they
rollick together their parents will stop them. Hence the riddle, 'What is 594
it that is at hand and yet beyond reach?' (*Kho etsina khi e mai?*) The answer, 'The breast of my sister,' refers to the playful catching hold of the breasts of girls by young boys, which is taboo in case of a sister. In strong contrast to the free, yet proper, relationship between brother and sister stands the joking relationship between cross-cousins. Derived from the brother-sister relationship is that of the father's sister, who is accorded honour and respect by the children of the house she has established. The term *khadi* is used loosely to denote either father's sister or eldest sister, for it is the eldest sister who will take over the religious functions of the father's sister after her death.

A well-marked characteristic of Lovedu society, one that clearly 602
distinguishes it from the strictly patrilineal Zulu, Xhosa, and Pondo, is 604
the importance of the mother's side of the family. Nothing of interest or importance takes place without their presence; even at the annual harvest beer offerings given to the gods on the father's side, relatives on the mother's side, who are not concerned in the religious aspect of the ceremony, will be present for the beer and social amenities. Important in maintaining close links between a man and his mother's relatives are the bonds of interdependence between the families of a brother, and the sister whose cattle he used. The sister's son is a potential son-in-law, who will be accorded great honour in the household of his mother's brother. A man's mother may also be the *khadi* who has to go and make offerings in the mother's brother's household, and in her absence her son might officiate for her. Later, when a man is engaged to his mother's brother's daughter, there will be gifts of beer from the girl's family. They are thus bound together by a variety of links.

But the greatest of all bonds between a man and his mother's side of 612
the family is considered by the Lovedu to be one of love. There is a saying, usually quoted by women, '*Wa nwa a nwa; na rara gi mokhekhetshe*,' which, freely translated, means, 'Love lies on the mother's side of the family; ownership on the father's'. One's relationship with the mother's side of the family is modelled on that towards a mother and is much influenced by the petting and spoiling received at the hands of the maternal grandmother, with whom most children spend a few years of their life, generally soon after the birth of a younger brother or sister. Every child recalls with delight the good time he had when at his mother's brother's village with his mother's mother; how she treated him to tit-bits, how she scolded or beat only her son's children if her grandchildren quarrelled and fought. For, it is said, a woman loves her daughter's children (who only come on visits) far more than those of her

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602 son (whom she has always with her). The mother's side of the family, no doubt because of this love, are thought to be peculiarly suited to the [72] rearing of a child whose mother has died. Such a child is, in Lovedu society, never left in the hands of a fellow wife of its mother, but goes to its mother's mother, if she is alive, or its mother's brother or even a mother's sister—any one, in fact, on the mother's side who is kind-hearted enough to wish to rear an orphan.

604 In contrast to Shangaan-Tonga, there is in Lovedu society no joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother. Your mother's brother may be kind to you, but you have to show him respect: if he asks you to go on a message or to help him in the fields you cannot refuse; while, if he needs you, you may be sent to herd for him or help nurse his small children. Moreover, he may one day be your father-in-
605 law and his wife your mother-in-law. The people whom one is privileged to tease to one's heart's content, and with whom one may exchange ribald jokes, are one's cross-cousins, the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister or their children, cross-cousins once-removed, a generation below. When very young, a child may be conditioned to this type of easy relationship by being given a stick and told, 'Go and beat your cross-cousin. Show him your cousinhood,' whereupon he is expected playfully to beat his cousin. If the cousin cries, they will pacify him, saying, 'Gracious! How can you cry? Don't you know it's your cousin? You too can beat him some other time.' Or they will give him a stick and say, 'Go and avenge yourself.' Whenever one finds people behaving uproariously in each other's company or calling out vulgar jokes, one can be quite sure they are cross-cousins. Cross-cousins marry each [512] other; but while cases of a man marrying his father's sister's daughter sometimes occur, especially in the royal family, they are regarded as not quite regular and mother's brother's daughter marriage is by far the most usual. When a man tries to make love to his father's sister's daughter, she may tease him, saying, 'Away with you. We marry you, not you us. We are the husbands who find wives in your family.' The joking relation-[519] ship between a man and his cousin gives place, immediately marriage negotiations are begun, to one of strict avoidance between prospective bride and groom and a certain amount of respect even between the boys in the two families. Men say they can often tell by the attitude of their cross-cousin that there is an understanding between him and their sister even before negotiations have begun.

602 Relatives-in-law are quite as important as relatives by blood. Where marriage with the mother's brother's daughter has taken place, the marriage strengthens an existing blood link, giving far greater standing and intimacy to the bond. The importance of relatives-in-law lies in the fact that there is considered to be a lasting bond between the two families for generations to come, since where a man has married there his son will find a wife. The bond is kept alive by various social usages, not least among which is the beer that is always passing (about once a year, unless the harvest is bad) from the village of the wife's family to that of their son-in-law. Moreover, a man's relatives-in-law become to his children the mother's side of the family, which plays so important a part

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in their lives and, where a man marries his mother's brother's daughter, 602
his relatives-in-law are his mother's people. The term *tsezi* (bridegroom)
has in Lovedu society a very special connotation. The *tsezi* is greatly
honoured by his wife's people. He is given the best of everything. When
he visits, he is brought a rush mat to sit upon and beer in a special small
calabash or pot as his own. Christians invite the 'bridegroom' or his
people to all meat feasts connected with confirmation, baptism, and other
ceremonies (heathens have practically no meat feasts), while a mother-
in-law never visits at her son-in-law's place without bringing some gift.
One day, when Mudiga's wife was on the point of leaving on a visit with
beer she had specially brewed to take with her, a *tsezi* (her husband's
sister's husband) unexpectedly turned up. So, much to her disgust, her
visit had to be put off, 'for one cannot take beer from a *tsezi*'. The honour
accorded a *tsezi* is given also to his brothers, own and classificatory, when
they visit his relatives-in-law.

While a bridegroom is accorded great honour by his relatives-in-law,
he has many obligations towards them. When they bring beer, he must
slaughter a goat for them and wish them godspeed with another 10s.
after the feast. If they ask him to help them plough or weed, he must
do so. Batsumedi, for instance, every year ploughs the field of his wife's
grandmother—but they will always entertain him with beer for his
trouble. If they have to pay a heavy fine, but have not the wherewithal,
they will approach the 'bridegroom', and, if they need more cattle or
goats for the marriage of their son, it is again to the daughter's husband
that they look for help. A friend of ours, a Christian, is even paying for
the schooling of his wife's brother. Hence it is that, in spite of the fact
that bride-price is more or less fixed within certain limits, it is always [576]
said 'bride-price never ends', for a bridegroom can never refuse to help
his wife's relatives. He may not even suggest that they are demanding
too much, for this would be a breach of good manners reparable only by
the handing over of a pardon goat. His only policy is to remain respectful,
promise to 'look for' what they require, then later to send a message that
he has been unsuccessful, even if he has many goats and they know it.

The Lovedu do not have that strict system of lasting avoidances 602
between certain relatives-in-law that is to be found among Nguni, where 431
it involves the use of separate paths by the married women of the village
and even prescribes the use of words with syllables contained in the names
of the husband or his relatives. Avoidances associated with marriage
are, among the Lovedu, found also on other occasions. When a girl
comes from her puberty ceremony or a boy from circumcision, he will
respectfully greet all his relatives and neither rise nor speak till they rose
him by giving him a small gift (6d. or soap or a leg or arm ring). Similarly,
when a woman has a new baby, she will cover its face from inmates of
the village till they rose her to see it. Similar avoidances, ended by means
of a gift, are associated with marriage.

As soon as a marriage has been agreed upon, prospective bride and 534
groom avoid each other. They may not be together nor speak to each 431
other and, if by chance they should meet, the bride will cover her face
with one of the cloths she wears and turn half aside. Often several

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lovers. But we have revised our opinion, for many irregularities cannot be related to disturbances caused by culture contact and appear always to have existed. We came across other examples of intercourse with the wife's brother's wife, while a friend of ours, an important *induna*, was even publicly accused at a beer-drink of having had a child by incestuous relations with the wife of his father's younger brother, a woman much older than himself. But nothing further was done in the matter. Sometimes, however, such cases do appear before the courts. One of the most dramatic cases we ever heard was one in which a man was accused by the husband of his 'daughter' (the daughter of his own elder brother) of having a liaison with her. The affair was taken to a smeller-out, who decided he was guilty, but the case dragged on and we never saw the end of it. There has been, within the knowledge of informants, a case of incest between uterine brother and sister, and we were told also of a case in which a married man was brought to court by his own mother, who accused him of incest with her. He was tied in court, an unheard-of humiliation, and public indignation made his position so intolerable that on the pretext of wishing to go and relieve himself, he asked to be untethered and then tried to cut his throat. This put an end to the case. He did not die, but since that time 'his head has not been right'. He still lives in his mother's village.

The different social duties and obligations between relatives must be thought of more as group links than purely individual ties, important in social structure rather than in the purely personal relationship between people. They are not always translated into behaviour: important as are the social obligations that mark off a father's sister from, say, a mother's brother's wife, it would be impossible to detect any differences in individual behaviour towards these two relatives. Similarly, a man respects both his father's brothers and his mother's brothers and the fact that decides him to go to his mother's brother for advice may be no reflection of any intimacy in their personal relationship. The social obligations towards a father's sister would and should be carried out just the same whether she is a stern, formidable woman or whether she is soft-hearted and motherly in her attitude towards her brother's relatives. Nevertheless, character and personality do enter into personal relationships between different relatives, so much so that the socially enjoined relationship at times breaks down altogether. Sons do not always respect and care for their fathers in their old age, and in a district head's court we once saw a young man fined one head of cattle and a goat and severely reprimanded for having beaten his father in a quarrel. Nor do all grandmothers pet and spoil their daughters' children. Mukhadi, a selfish, quarrelsome woman, made no effort to adopt her deceased daughter's children, who, in spite of accepted social standards, had to remain on in their father's village in the care of their father's mother.

All the obligations and duties associated with different relatives are, in the Native mind, subject to the qualification, 'if we agree'. Normally, one should and does agree with one's father's sister or with one's wife's relations; but if one does not, then obviously one will neither visit nor send beer, and sooner or later there will be an open quarrel. If a sister

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*602 were to go to court for a return of the cattle her brother used or if a brother were to accuse his cattle-linked sister of witchcraft, they could no longer be on friendly terms; it would then be said, '*vuhuhu wa file*', their relationship is dead. But since life in Lovedu society can hardly be lived without the social usages and mutual obligations associated with kin, a man will always find some one among his large number of sisters to take her place. The manner in which close alliances with relatives is built up is shown in the case of Elish and Thagu. Elish has moved into an area ten miles from his nearest relations. Thagu, who lives in a large kraal near him, has a sister who married a far-off father's brother of Elish. Elish, therefore, stands in the relationship of a *remyte tsai*—that is, son-in-law—to Thagu, for, since Thagu's daughters should marry sons of their father's sister (i.e. sons of Elish's father's brother and therefore his brothers), these daughters regard the whole of that family and therefore Elish and his sons too as possible husbands. Therefore, when the last child of Elish was born, Thagu sent beer 'to see the child', as Elish's wife's parents would do, even though they had never known each other before. Because they live close together and get on fairly well, steps have been taken to tighten the kinship bond between them. Mabulani is another example. Mabulani's fellow wife is the one married with her husband's sister's (Munyamani's) cattle, and her daughter should therefore marry Munyamani's son. But the fellow wife is old and all her children already married. Now Mabulani, in spite of the fact that she is disliked by Munyamani for having been instrumental in alienating her fellow wife from her husband's affections, is assiduously trying to build up good relations with Munyamani's household. She sends beer and pays visits because, as it is believed, she has two daughters, one of whom she would like to be married there.

A factor that completely nullifies traditional patterns of behaviour between relatives is that of age. Obviously the respect due to a father's sister, with all the prestige of a generation older than oneself, must fall to the ground in a case where the father's sister is younger than oneself. In this manner, polygyny plays the strangest tricks with kinship relationships. Since the youngest wife of a man may be considerably junior to his eldest children, some mother's brothers and father's sisters may be very much younger than oneself. Bikwi, aged about twenty-three, and Badanna, aged five, live in one village. When Badanna cries or fights with Bikwi's youngest brother, she pacifies and mothers them both. Yet Bikwi is Badanna's 'child', since Bikwi's father's mother and Badanna's mother are fellow wives.

603 Kinship is the greatest bond between people; beside it, taken all in all, 123 any other single tie fades into insignificance. Even a fictitious bond of kinship established between ourselves and the head of an area in which we stayed served as a basis for the removal of suspicion and the building up of a better understanding between ourselves and the people with whom we came into contact. We were never admitted to the ceremonies connected with birth and early babyhood till our 'sister's' child had a baby. Then as a grandmother with a natural interest, which all could understand, in the welfare of our grandchild, we were permitted to be

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present. Here was a legitimate human interest—not merely the idle curiosity of a European or the recording of customs that might end in police intervention.

The kin share your joys and sorrows, give support in your hour of need and advice in the affairs of life. When you are in trouble and have to pay a fine which you do not possess, it is your brothers who will come to your aid. On the marriage of your children, your brothers are called to hear the matter and to give their advice; when there is death your kin rally to your side. A widow is never faced with destitution; her husband's brother will care for her, and to-day, when, as among Christians, this sometimes entails help in training the children for a career, it is often a heavy liability. In working parties or when meal has to be stamped for beer-making, it is the relatives living near who are most relied upon for their help. A woman whose husband is in town depends on her male kin to help her in the yearly renewal of storage receptacles, hut-building and ploughing. She will, where possible, reward them with beer, but this is by no means always done. People like living near their kin. An elder and a younger brother, one living near Tzaneen, the other in Ubombo, both died. Then the grown-up son of the younger brother called the wife and family of the elder brother to come and build near them, saying that the children of his *vamahale* would not know him if they lived so far away. Kinship, as we point out elsewhere, knits together the political system. But it is worth repeating that the kin are the core of the district and the bonds between districts; that, in general, the father's relatives live largely in the same district, the mother's or the wife's in some other area and visits and gifts of beer serve as an introduction to the districts in which they live; and that all the heads of districts, by virtue of having to send a daughter to 'marry' the queen, are linked to the capital by a kinship bond.

One would expect that, in a society like that of the Lovedu, with a strong sense of kinship obligations, the position of orphans would not be very different from that of other children. Yet the Lovedu feel the position of an orphan, any one wholly dependent on relatives for food and shelter, to be a peculiarly sad one. Hence the riddle, 'Little fountain full of mouth', and its answer, 'The heart of an orphan'; hence also the proverb, 'It takes a woman with a generous heart to keep an orphan well'. The smoky side of a fire is called 'the side where orphans sit', and if you sit chin in hand, people always say, 'Why are you so sad? Are you an orphan?' Even old women, those skilled and inveterate beggars, think that a sure way of enlisting your sympathy is to plead that they are orphans with no one to give them things.

It is said that orphans have to do harder work than other children and have many a time to hear complaints that they eat too much. When the children of the house receive clothes as presents from relatives, the orphan gets little or nothing; and nowadays, while the children of the house may be sent to school, the orphan remains at home herding. None of our own personal contacts with orphans bore out these tales, and when we cited them as examples contradicting their statements, informants admitted that these cases did not bear out the general principle. Indeed, what impressed us most were the conscious efforts made,

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The patrilineal lineage, however, is a formal rather than a friendly group, at least when one goes beyond the brothers' sons of one father who, as the phrase goes, 'shave even the head of a lorate'. There is nothing, however, apart from the name of its members which divides it from sub-groups or groups. It has no generic name and no observances such as special milk or other taboos; but marriage within the patrilineal lineage is incest, at least outside the royal family. It is the group which exercises certain kinds of control; though it must be remembered that the head of a lineage is head only of his, not of his brother's or even his son's village. Within the lineage there is more often than not considerable friction. The conflict is a conflict about legal precedences, for if seniority is emphasized in the society, if the influence and status of a man or a woman depends largely upon his or her age or seniority in a certain position, it is the chief son or daughter, the issue of a man's mother's brother's daughter, however young he may be, who steps into the shoes of his father. A younger brother, whatever his legal status by this reckoning, calls his elder brothers 'great one' (*mukulu*) and later in life, when the chief brother becomes district head or councillor, there is at least the 'war of the eyes' between them. You will see struggles for influence and position everywhere within the lineage for this reason. The enormous weight of the social structure is massed behind the chief son; but seniority is given precedence in the 'schools' and in the kinship terminology.

It is not our intention to give more than a glimpse of the patrilineal lineage. But it is necessary to insist, on the one hand, that it is the *mulogo* relatives, both on the father's and on the mother's side, that the Lovedu have constantly in mind, and, on the other hand, that the groups with the most impressive reciprocal rights and obligations are the *vaghalale* and the *vamakhale*. In the most general sense and whenever these groupings are spoken of as linked groups of people, the *vaghalale* are the people where one gets bridegrooms—that is, it gives *mumpanele* cattle and receives brides. The *vamakhale* in this context are the people who supply the brides and in return receive cattle. These two terms, in other contexts, have other connotations; for instance, the *vaghalale* include all one's grandchildren, own and classificatory, but the term also refers to children of one's sister (man speaking). The pivot of the alignment of the two groupings is the cattle-linking of brother and sister and its co-ordination with cross-cousin marriage. The primary linking of brother and sister, described elsewhere, is immensely strong; and this strength is transmitted to the further linking of the two groups. The *vaghalale* and the *vamakhale* are not so much separate groups as interlinked people, and the bonds between them are partly kinship bonds, for they both are part of the *mulogo*; but the specially emphasized link is the link forged by the cattle. The linkage must, in its widest application, be regarded as binding together people who do not live together.

The patrilineal lineage is the core of co-residence units, such as the village and the districts. But the strongest links between these units are the links binding together the *vaghalale* and the *vamakhale*; they are the cattle links. The cattle forge links within the *mulogo*, a much wider group, unifying both through males and females throughout the society. But

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kinship terminology and behaviour patterns, because they effectively 571
operate only within narrow limits and are unsupported by tangible 602
reciprocities beyond those limits—though distant relationship is spoken of as a 'flavour that is familiar' (*ledagela*, literally, a salty taste)—cannot hold together widely spread groups without assistance from other social arrangements. And this is precisely where the complex of kin segregated out by the cattle plays its decisive part. In generation after generation the links are renewed as grandfathers, fathers, sons, and grandsons all take their chief wives from and send their cattle to the same group. The bridegrooms not only give the cattle, they are perpetually giving all their lives, assisting the group of the brides in paying their debts and helping its male members with *masuwale* and in a hundred other ways; on the other hand, the brides or parents-in-law must always honour the bridegrooms and must maintain relationship with them by periodically bringing beer. These reciprocal obligations are at the very basis of the social system, of the interrelations between villages, of the bonds between the districts, and, finally, of the vast and intricate system that binds the nuclear group to the other groups and to the districts. If the lineages are the bricks out of which the society is constructed, the *malugo* and particularly the cattle-relatives (*malugo na dikhosu*) constitute the straw and the mortar, even the steel framework. It is also within the grouping brought about by these cattle that the fiercest conflicts occur. The price that is paid for a system, without which the fundamental structure and interrelations of the society might crumble to the ground, is certainly great; but in view of the functions of this system, it is perhaps not too great.

The *masuwale* system is also closely associated with the hierarchy of 571
rank within the household. For the chief house of a polygynist is the 595
house established by the cattle he received from the marriage of his sister; and at the same time the mistress of this house is his cattle-linked cross-cousin. The rewards of rank thus support the *masuwale* system. But rank reckoned in this way is not completely co-ordinated with seniority and other arrangements in the society. Some of the conflicts that arise are mentioned elsewhere. Here we shall refer briefly to social 561
groupings based upon age. Firstly, there are age-mates (*dhaga*). Girls, on the one hand, and boys, on the other, form an early age club together in their games and their activities. The group is a very loose one, wholly unorganized from without; it is not unlike our play gangs. Techniques of co-operation and group cohesion are well developed, especially among herdboys. They have their games, their heroes, and their bullies; their loyalties are, in a sense, in conflict with adults, but they are not anti-social. They may not tell tales out of school; if they do, adults we'll discuss the matter as nonsense. Girls bathe together, get firewood together, play and stamp mealies together. They know one another's love affairs, they share one another's troubles. This group of age-mates is purely localized; it does not extend beyond the district and is often confined to a few neighbouring villages. In later life these age-mates continue to be on friendly, even intimate and joking terms—that is, as far as such is possible when they are also relatives. Among girls especially,

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532 his wife. The measure is a drastic means of getting back one's cattle, and negatives any conception of marrying the wife's brother's wife.

582 The *mawyale* configuration is, of course, incompatible with brother-
603 sister exchange; the cattle cannot both come from and go into the same direction. So also does it exclude marriage of ortho-cousins, though complications introduced by reckoning relationship through the queen as if she were a male and the stress upon maintaining the purity of the royal blood lead to arrangements that appear to be based on such marriages. The children of all the queen's wives are brothers and sisters, but unless their natural fathers are identical, the formal relationship recedes before the physiological, and these brothers and sisters can and do intermarry. Moreover, in the society generally and especially among royal kin, a man may be related to another man or to a woman in many ways; what they will call one another depends upon status or rank or arrangements agreed upon between the families, and is often determined by personal choices and adjustments. A man who wishes to 'play with' his classificatory sister (reckoning relationship through, say, the father) will call her cross-cousin (reckoning relationship through, perhaps, the mother). How such a situation can arise is at once clear when we remember that a man may have a woman as his legal father, even taking her lineage name; but it arises in many other ways, such as the tremendous entanglements in the *mawyale* system. Among many neighbouring tribes a special ritual of 'cutting the kin' sometimes makes possible the marriage of incestuously related mates; among the Lovedu such a device is unknown. Many tribes have a highly developed technique of love
533 charms; the Lovedu regard love charms as illegal, akin to sorcery and witchcraft, though there is one interesting exception, a rite based upon a religious pattern. Resort to love charms, except in the service of the arrangements of the social structure, would obviously strike at the basis of the conception that spouses are 'born for' one another.

513 We may now turn very briefly to the marriage ceremonial which, in harmony with the leading part played by the institution it supports, is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu life. Apart from its function of transferring the cattle and laying the foundations of a structure within which the greater part of human interrelations are enacted, the ceremonial stresses many values unconnected with marriage. The general plan of the ceremonial is patterned to the needs of the ideal form of marriage, that with the cattle-linked cross-cousin. In some neighbouring tribes, a man must bespeak his cross-cousin by paying a special beast; in others he must hand over an additional beast for her; but among the Lovedu all marriages are arranged on the one model, as if there were no other competing forms of marriage. Because the girl is said 'to be
534 born' for the boy, his parents simply send the 'goat of the skin cradle' to intimate that he is coming. It is a most appropriate action for, as she is 'born for' him, his people must provide the wheewithal in which to carry her, the cradle symbolizing nursing, tender care, and upbringing. Marriages to strangers, nevertheless, are initiated in the same way, as if the conception of being 'born for' the boy and its implications were projected upon them. It is only in the case of cross-cousin marriage that

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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
769 a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cognates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member of the kindred (*mudzo*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
• 602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
639 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to *vafumi* (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*muhlahale*) and, by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes parent-in-law (*nwakkale*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and relatives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiating from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies, but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked
641 with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, convert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of subjects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the social institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
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An omen or bane (*lemla*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lemla*, and so can a *lukeps*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *pala* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 787 825

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*ramela*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*makawa*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *makawa* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *makawa* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *makawa*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 777 602 [758] [769]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (*Uelei*)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *uelei* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Uelei* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Uelei* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *uelei* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *uelei* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*uelei eye rasia*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*uelei eye matiawa*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 754 [571]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as concerned to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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A	B	C	D	E	F

Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.
[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-195. See category 116.--Analyst]
[Facing kinship diagram.]

642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
648 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
662 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batemi* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
659 districts now held by commoners originated from *batemi* but
587 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batemi*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ba loka*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
645 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
659 with money or a daughter to *loka* the queen for rain. Once a
658 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[602] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[604] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[636] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1943 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

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The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *mupo* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family. The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhoto* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit. Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhoto*) of the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mukhale* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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421 591 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable [591] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily [573] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintaining [591] social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 911 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the 431 form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new 911 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small 602 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even 421 591 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples. 431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went 911 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour 613 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies. 591 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a [588] *shori* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. *'Ge leda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga masadi a de a sikhidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

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ships between the families involved but upon it rests the whole 591
character of the domestic group. Payment of bride-price transfers the reproductive powers of the woman to the husband's 591 593
agnatic group. The husband has genetricial as well as uxorial 593
rights. Genetricial rights apply not only to any children born 595
after the marriage whoever their biological father might be, but also in retrospect, so that any child born before marriage automatically becomes the child of whoever pays the bride-price, with full rights of succession and inheritance from its sociological father. There is thus, in contrast to other tribes such as the Zulu, no way in which a Lobedu man can obtain the right to his biological child other than by marrying its mother. Emphasis on sociological as opposed to biological fatherhood among the Lobedu is very strong and this is an important factor in Lobedu social structure. The rights of a father to a child involve control over it; the right to the bride-price of a daughter (subject to the right of her brother to marry with his sister's castle and of her mother to the services of the woman married with her daughter's bride-price); and corresponding to his right to his daughter's bride-price the duty to help his son to marry. A father may and often does marry an [595]
additional wife with his daughter's bride-price. A father also has the right to be cared for in his old age by his sons.

The levirate is practised, the junior levirate being more 587
common than the senior levirate. The brother raises seed to 595
the deceased and takes over the responsibility of a father and husband though the children he begets are counted as belonging to his deceased brother. Frequently the heir, eldest son of the chief 'house' inherits a young wife of his father. In this case, similarly, the children born of the union are looked upon as the deceased's, i.e., as brothers and sisters of the heir, not his children. The sororate also is practised in all its forms, sororal [595]
polygyny being very common. Where a sister is sent to 'awaken the house (*ho dzusa ndu*)' of a barren or deceased wife full bride-price is due for her although, since bride-price is never an absolutely fixed amount, less may be asked for than in the first marriage.

The marriage of a woman transfers to her husband's group 591
the right to her labour. Initially it is the husband's mother 602
even more than the husband himself that benefits, as we shall

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Masuale a a fude*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tutse* (or *mudulule*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*mudulule*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1952.

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asked about this the reply was not as I expected it to be, that 583
Andrew's daughters were attending school and would be 588
averse to such a marriage but 'we just gave Kewele to Maserika because she is *ikadi* (i.e., sister in a ritual sense) and "to knit together the family" (*ho ruka ikadi*)'. This desire to keep alive 582
the links between brother and sister and to maintain and 581
renew marriage links with women of the lineage from one generation to another is very strong. The marriage of a woman at her father's sister's (i.e., mother's brother's daughter marriage) is called '*ho dusa mulele*'—to awaken or renew relationship.

There are several variations of mother's brother's daughter 582
marriage that arise from or are bound up with obligations con- 583
nected with cattle that have passed. If in the case of cattle-linked brother and sister (D and C in Figure 22), the latter has a daughter but no son who could marry her brother's daughter, she might, rather than break the link with her brother and allow her husband to use the cattle to create new links with strangers, nevertheless, with the agreement and consent of her husband, hand over her daughter E's bride-price to her brother D so that he can marry a second wife and establish a 'house' from which her daughter E may claim a woman later to marry her son and to 'come and cook for her'. Here marriage (of F to G) is with the mother's mother's brother's daughter. When such girl is actually married bride-price will again pass. If, in such a marriage, the woman were to run away or if there 586
were a divorce, both bride-prices could be claimed, as we saw in the 1930's. Today, however, probably as a result of European administrative policy, only one bride-price is paid back, though it is commonly known that both used to be returned.

Besides marriage with the mother's mother's brother's 582
daughter, other variations of mother's brother's daughter marriage are found, such as marriage with the mother's brother's son's daughter (one generation below), with the father's mother's brother's daughter or even with a father's mother's brother's son's daughter.

The fact that in the above example of marriage with the 58
mother's mother's brother's daughter two lots of bride-price 602
are handed over yet only one bride is received, indicates that the economic aspect is not paramount; it is the permanent link

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between descendants of brother and sister that is valued. In cases where a man has received cattle on the 'security' of a small girl, to all appearances a predominantly economic transaction, the creditor also hands over cattle a second time when the girl comes over to be married. This is puzzling. When asked about it the Lobedu usually quote the proverb '*mabala ndo ea ngwale*– the opener or establisher of a "house" pays marriage cattle', i.e., every girl commands bride-price. The explanation possibly lies in regarding the passing of property in the case of wife No. 2 of D in Figure 2a and also the first handing over of property in an economic transaction on the security of a girl as the creation of a cattle-link similar to handing over to a brother the bride-price of his sister to acquire

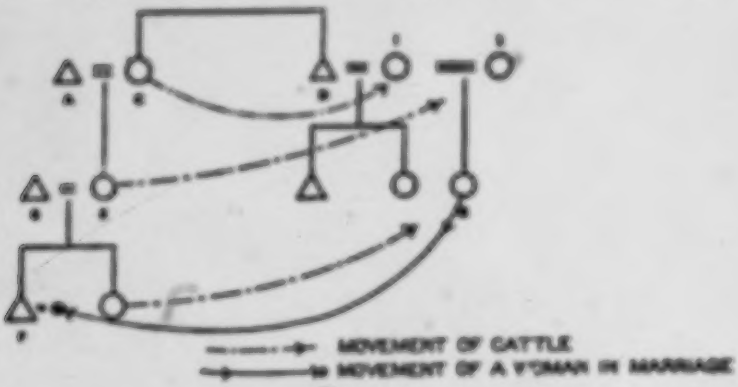

FIG. 2A.

a wife. The subsequent transactions are then on a par with ordinary preferential marriage between the children of cattle-linked brother and sister.

If, in contrast to the case illustrated in Figure 2a where the cattle-linked sister has no son to marry her brother's daughter, it is the brother who has no daughter to give in marriage to his sister's son then sometimes, as in a recent case, the preferred marriage takes place in the next generation. Here (see Figure 2b) the daughter (G) of the son of C's cattle-linked half-brother (D) married the son (F) of the son of the cattle-linked sister (C). In this case E had a brother to use her cattle and there was no need for her cattle to be sent to the mother's brother to establish a new 'house' or 'open a gate', as it is sometimes phrased.

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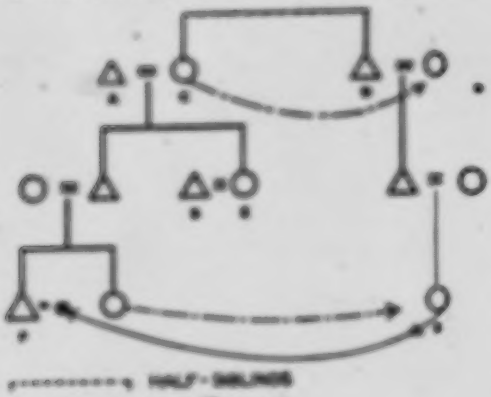

FIG. 2B.

Once a marriage has taken place, even where originating in an economic arrangement, the relationship is self-perpetuating as is shown in Sedena's case. Sedena's elder brother (A in Figure 3) used the bride-price of their only sister; so when Makeakati, his daughter (C), was born this elder brother said to Sedena (B), 'There are your cattle', indicating his baby daughter. When the girl was eight years old and her father already dead, Sedena (B) took her to Mogodo (D), a relative (a classificatory 'sister's son', descendant of his father's half-brother), and, indicating that she was his *ledala*, asked for cattle to marry a wife. He was given cattle which he used to marry Marita (E). In due course when Makeakati (C) grew up she was sent to marry Mogodo (D), who gave five head of cattle as bride-price (five to eight is the usual amount). Many years later Marita's only daughter, Mojaji (F), followed her 'sister'

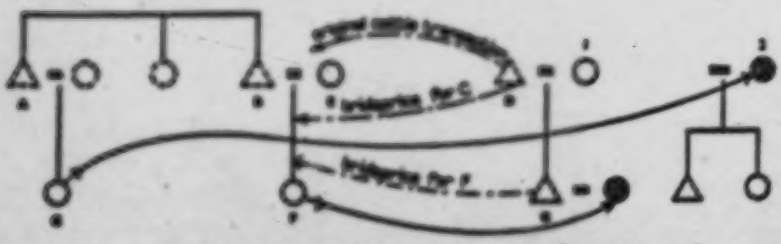

FIG. 3. Preferential marriages arising out of an economic arrangement.

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and married Nakampe (G), Mogodo's son by another wife. Makeskati's (C's) 'house' had first claim on the daughter of the man (her father's brother) who had used her cattle, but as her son was a Christian the girl was given to the son of a different 'house'.

Once a link has been created by a marriage a bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship follows, which tends to be reinforced not only by one but by numerous subsequent marriages. Thus, A married a girl from lineage B. Both his sons and his grandson followed in his footsteps (see Figure 4).

The same tendency is present in Lobedu polygyny where the sororate is very popular. Most Lobedu who are not Christians have more than one wife. But it will almost always be found

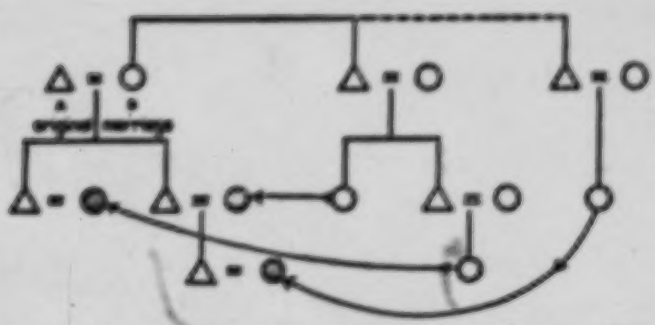

FIG. 4. Reinforcement down the generations of a marriage link between two lineages.

that at least one is a sister or younger relative of one of the other wives. Thus M, a chief councillor, married seven wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's daughter; (2) his mother's half-brother's daughter; (3) his mother's half-brother's daughter's son's daughter; (4) a non-relative; (5) a non-relative; (6) his mother's brother's son's daughter (brother's daughter to No. 2 and therefore a wife's brother's daughter); (7) a sister to (1) by the same father but a different mother.

S, a man in his thirties, has three wives: (1) his mother's mother's brother's daughter; (2) a non-relative and (3) the uterine sister of his first wife.

Old K had five wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's

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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a different mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*masila mobo o boya le noto ea hwe*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

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595 422 593 house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

595 423 602 A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

[422] 573 602

595 602 769 Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families) and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

584 In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him.

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking.

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *maka* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*[illegible]*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people.

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact

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592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
66 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirsla* for her son-in-law, or crack open *marula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirsla* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[607] he also is a *mudzhula*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

748 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[609] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[593] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

748 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home-
stead was built. When Mabuiana died in the 1940's his daughter
a married woman who does not live in the area was made
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's
child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some-
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thaga*
mayo ho dala mudubulu—where a master is lacking there sits the
nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often
ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant
cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long
reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being
ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the
rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed
dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers.
Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains
the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portions
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknow-
ledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near
by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a
homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a
married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more
likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area
with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

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its males is counter-balanced by a 'knitting' together of the men with their sisters who have married out and a strengthening of their ties with their maternal kin by means of preferential marriage supported by cattle links. This process is illustrated in Figure 9.

The proportion of mother's brother's daughter marriages in its various forms to the total number of marriages among two generations of members of a large lineage which was analysed in detail (counting the marriage of each woman in a polygynous union as a separate marriage) was 34 per cent, of which 91 per cent were marriages with the mother's uterine brother and its derivations. If married men were to be considered, the proportion would be higher, 63 per cent of the married men having contracted at least one mother's brother's daughter marriage; 80 per cent of these were (or were based on) marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter. This tallies with a random sample of 100 cases taken in 1936 in the royal area (excluding the Capital itself) in which 67 per cent of the married men were found to have married a mother's brother's daughter. But the situation had materially altered by 1962 when a similar sample of 243 cases in the same area showed mother's brother's daughter marriages to have decreased from 67 per cent to 34 per cent. Of these 94 per cent were with the mother's uterine brother or his descendants, which indicates that despite strong forces making for change and increased opportunities for contacts with strangers of the opposite sex which have greatly diminished marriage with distant maternal kin, the values attached to 'knitting' together close relatives are still strong. The most potent forces at work for breaking down preferential marriage are Christianity, which condemns it and school education which by inculcating Western values makes preferential marriage unthinkable to any school child today however short a period he has spent at school.

That men consciously use marriage to keep alive family relationships and that they are deeply concerned about these alliances, can be seen from the case of Modidi (M) in Figure 7.

M's homestead abutted on that of V, whose half-sister K he had married (see Figure 7). When they were both old. M took his granddaughter L, (his son by V's half-sister K having died years before) to his friend V saying, 'I see we are in danger of

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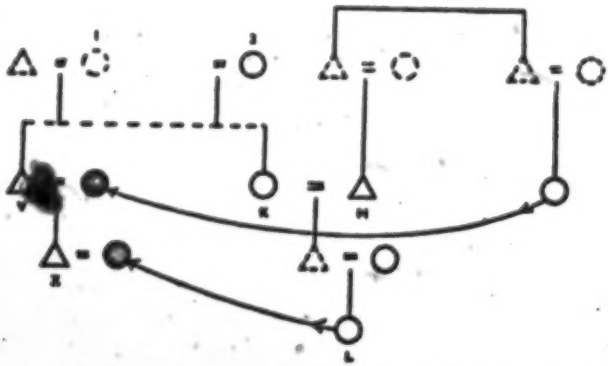

FIG. 7. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*ruka leloko*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine 582
brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor 613
worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and 769
mother's sides so that they become *moloko o motes*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an 755
illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage 893
(which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions 603
to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their 769
lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbourhood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,

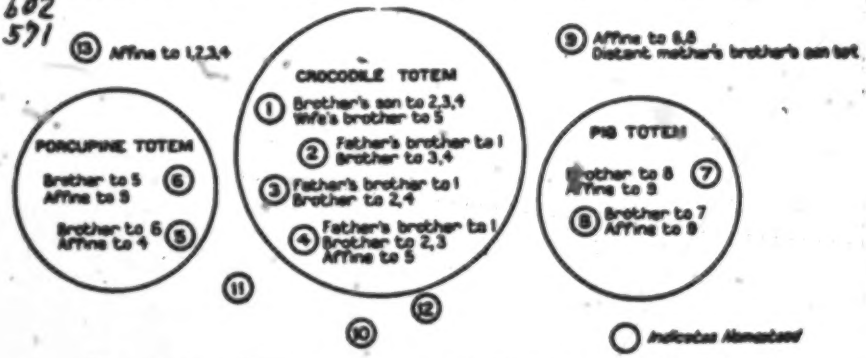

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*baduhulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

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Conclusion

182 Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of
421 property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu
571 social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

595 The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the
602 Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djeatane ke ba khonane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and
[613] their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

582 An important principle in the social structure is preferential
602 marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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one hand a means of binding the women of the lineage, even after their marriage, by strong links to their father's family and on the other of maintaining from generation to generation the bonds with the maternal kin created by the marriage of the parents.

A woman has a dual role in the social structure. On the one hand by establishing a 'house' in her husband's lineage, she is the means whereby his lineage is perpetuated and its numbers increased; for even after the death of her husband his brothers will raise seed to his name and in the absence of sons she can herself ensure the continuation of her husband's lineage by marrying a woman on behalf of a fictitious son. On the other hand a woman remains important to her own lineage: if she is the eldest child of her 'house' she will officiate at all important religious offerings (if her brother is older he may officiate but she will always be called to collaborate with him); when she dies her name and those of her sisters will be included among the names of ancestors called upon in prayer; she divides out the inheritance on the death of her uterine brother; she guards the interests of the children of her cattle-linked brother's 'house' whence she will obtain a daughter-in-law; upon her falls the responsibility in the absence of her parents of providing an heir in her mother's 'house' (of her father's lineage) should there be no son; and she may even act in the place of her deceased father as ruler over a district until the heir is of age or until one can be raised.

The maintenance of links with married sisters and its complement marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter, by means of which one's links with one's wife's (or mother's) family are perpetuated, are supreme values in Lobedu society. That is why a wife who has no son has little difficulty in persuading her husband to hand over her daughter's bride-price to her brother rather than create links with a strange family. It is possible thereby to 'build a house' (or 'make a gate') at her brother's home from which her daughter's son will obtain a wife. This may at first sight appear to be very like the transfer of rights from mother to daughter but this is not the case. It is made possible by the transfer of cattle belonging to the daughter's husband and is bound up with the great desire to maintain links between the descendants of brother and sister. The right

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of a woman to 'someone to stamp for her' from the 'house' created by her bride-price also enables the father of a woman who has no uterine brother to control to some extent, by the placement of his daughter's cattle, the marriage of her sons. Her husband 'follows the tracks of his cattle' to find a wife for his son but it is her father who determines where these 'tracks' will lead to.

There are thus to be found in Lobedu social structure a neat balance between the various kinds of kin; a combination of patrilineal principles with strong matrilineal bonds; a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family; and an equality in the importance of paternal and maternal kin which is seen on all social and ritual occasions and is reflected also in the composition of local groups.

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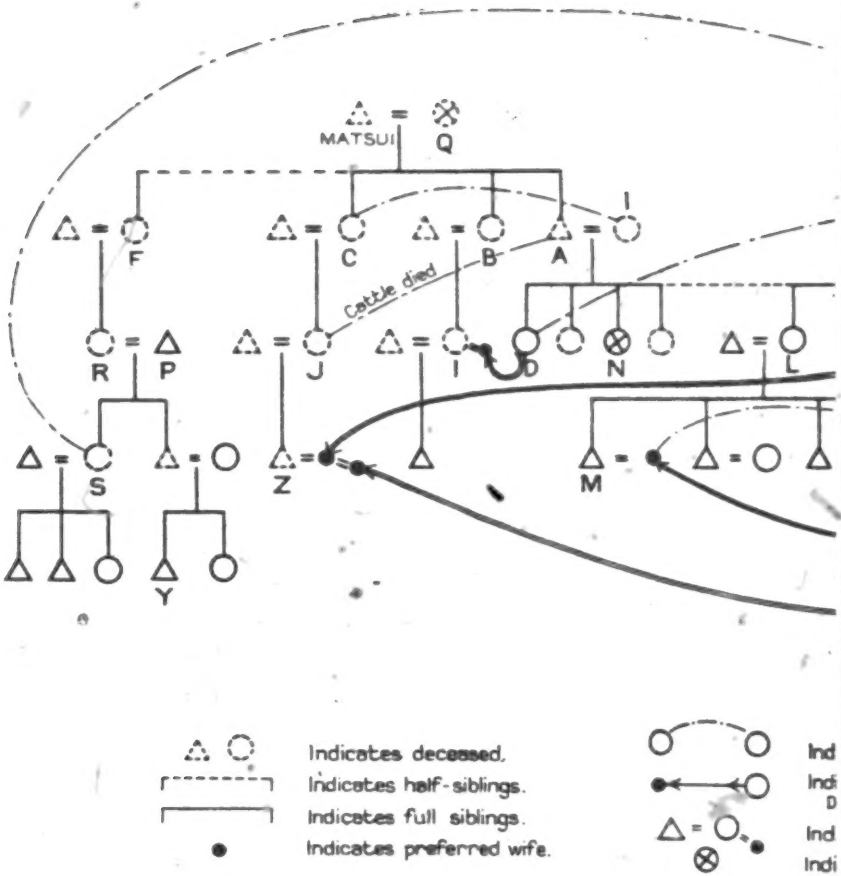

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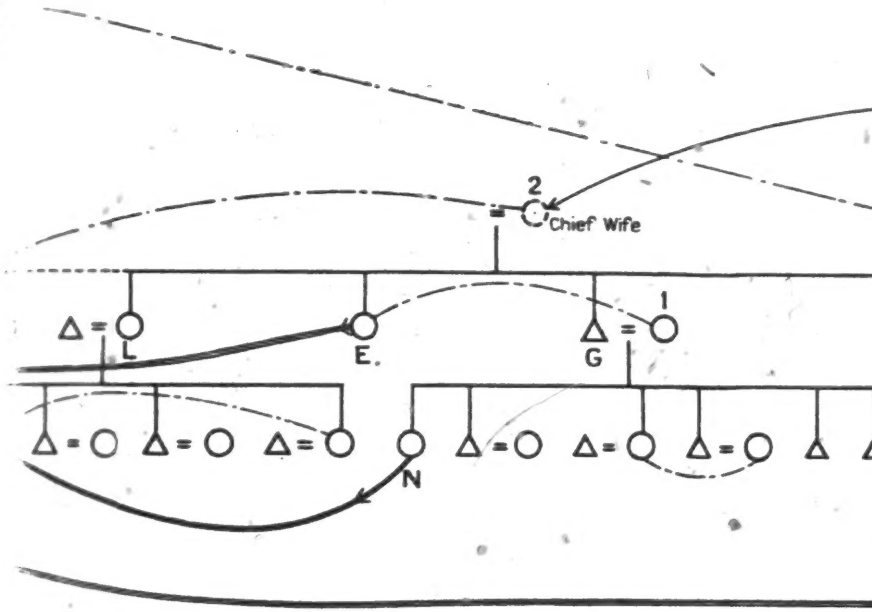

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a woman in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wives
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her de

Indicates women marriage of a girl with a married female relation.

Indicates a woman who is or has been a motanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[p. 192-B]

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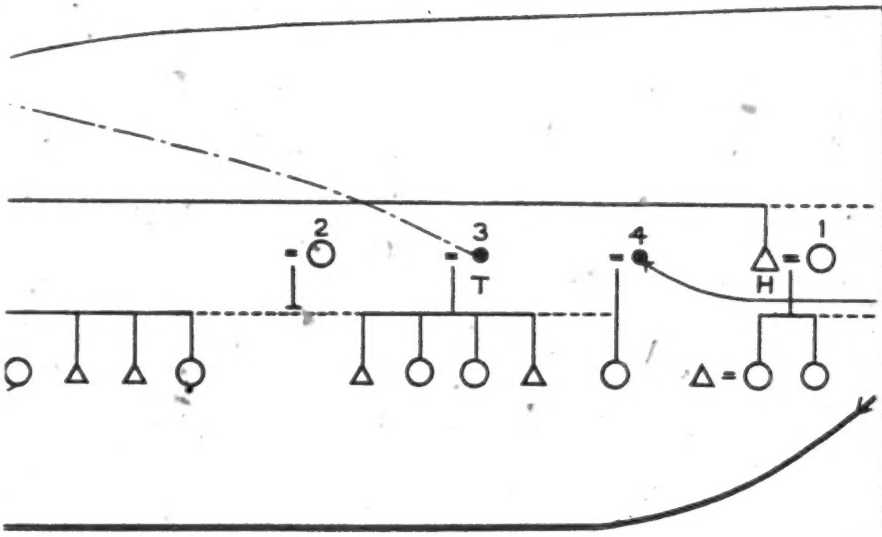

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
ncoming wives from the same lineage.
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FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a line

[p.192-C]

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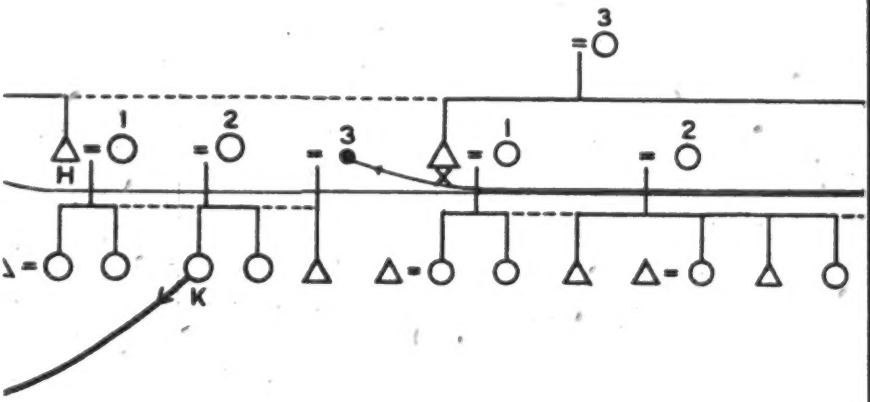

links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-D]

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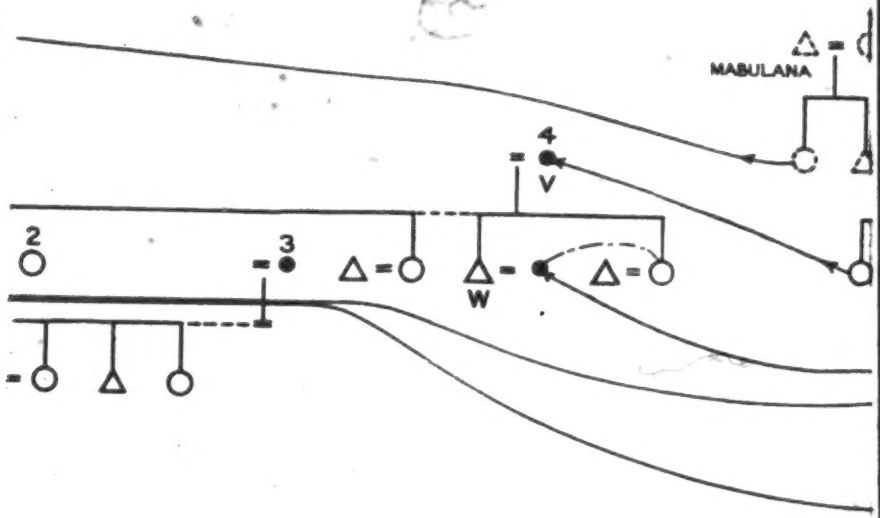

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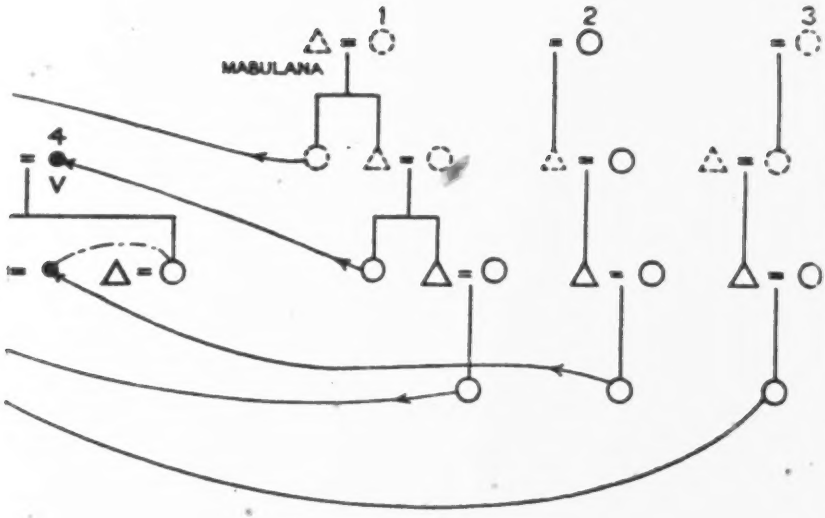

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

APPENDIX I

THE manner in which many of the characteristics of Lobedu marriage arrangements operate in practice is illustrated in the case of the lineage segment of A and his descendants set out in Figure 9. The arrows in the diagram all represent the passage of women in preferential marriage from their parental home to that of their husband: single arrows indicate women of the mother's brother's family (i.e., the Mabulanas) who have married into A's lineage (Matsui); double arrows indicate the departure of women of A's lineage to marry at their father's sister's. The following are points to be noted: 582 591 602 613

(a) The tendency for Lobedu polygynists to marry more than one wife from the same family is seen in Figure 9 in A's marriage to his fourth wife who was his second wife's brother's daughter. [595]

(b) The manner in which cross-cousin marriage perpetuates links with the wife's kin down the generations is illustrated by the marriages of A's sons G, H, W and X. G's fourth wife, H's third wife and W's first wife all come from the same lineage, that of their mothers (A's second and fourth wives). A's son X's third wife is also his uterine cross-cousin but it was not practicable to indicate her family of origin also in the diagram.

(c) Besides reinforcing links with the maternal kin, mother's brother's daughter marriage serves also to knit together descendants of a man and his sisters. The bonds between A and his sisters B and C have been kept alive over a span of two generations of their descendants by the marriage of A's daughter D to I (daughter of his sister B) as indicated by the double arrow in Figure 9, and the marriage of A's daughter E to Z (son of J, and grandson of A's sister, C). Similarly G's daughter N by his first wife is married to the son (M) of his sister L (see double arrows), and H's daughter K is married to her father's sister E, widow of Z, a marriage which took place in 1961.

(d) The part played by cattle links in ensuring preferential marriage is also illustrated in the diagram; but it is clear too that children of brother and sister who are *not* cattle-linked often also marry one another. Z married E because of cattle-links two generations above him as is explained below. But when E grew old and needed a 'wife' G had no suitable daughter; so H's daughter K 'married' her. Cattle-links also did not account for the marriage of A's daughter, D, to his sister I, nor of G's daughter N to his sister L's son M. These indicate the tremendous value attached to maintaining links with married sisters. The reasons for the marriage of 582 583 591 602 613

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582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realizing he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

588 591 (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I; that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. [634] In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *motanoni* of the queen.

613 582 588 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.

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482 of pumpkins and green mealies for the evening meal. One woman, carrying a bundle of sugar-cane, is being tormented by two men who, despite her obvious unwillingness to give them any of it, are helping [262 themselves; for people are thought to have a sort of right to picked sugar-576] cane, which is not a food, but like sweets among ourselves, something pleasing to the palate, to be shared with others. Last of all, and panting heavily, come the young girls who went to fetch wood, each with a heavy load on the head.

252 In the village some of the fires are already lit. One woman is cooking pumpkins for the evening meal. She cuts them into convenient pieces, removes the pips but not the outer skin, then packs them one above the other in a large pot, at the bottom of which there is a little water. A second pot, wide-mouthed and shallow, is inverted over the top, smeared down with a little of the red substance covering the seeds, and the whole allowed to steam over the fire. Green mealies for the evening meal are cooked in the same manner. Though pumpkin and mealies cooked in [263 this way are very pleasant to eat, the European misses the salt, which is never added. Another woman is preparing some relish to eat with porridge from the morning. It grows darker and darker. The fires, some in the courtyard, some in the huts, but each the centre of a little family group, become a deeper crimson, their cheerful flickering giving one a sense of homeliness and quiet joy. At the courtyard fire where you are sitting, a small girl is cooking her tin of 'food', consisting of five treasured grasshoppers mixed with tomato, which she found growing in the kraal hedge. Every now and then she stirs this brew with a stick. The others are roasting mealies and nuts. A herdboy comes in and lays down beside 431 his grandmother a bird he has killed. She is pleased with the gift, thanks 603 him warmly and praises him by the praise of his name, 'You have done 551 well, Dwagu, you who eat birds and take the heads to give your playmates' ('*U shumile Dwagu wa hu la dinɔnyana a jia dithɔhɔ a fa vasimana*'). If his name had been Boga, the praise would have run, 'Boga, it falls upon people, that thick bush of Mujaji of Muhale' (*Boga le wala vathu lewai la Mujaji a Muhale*); for almost every Lovedu name has its praise, whoever might bear it. Boys are always told by their grandmothers to bring them birds; this they like doing, for there are so many ways in which grandmothers can return the gesture—boiled *njugo* beans, monkey nuts, or sugar-cane being always welcome.

571 In the *khɔrɔ*, the three men of the village are sitting by their 521 fire; the herdboys sit at another. The boys are listening to a spirited account of the ways of European farmers given by a boy of fourteen whose good clothes and white sandshoes testify to his having just returned from work. A boy, who has just been called to supper, comes back with a cake of porridge and some relish in his hands to eat it in male company in the *khɔrɔ*. Another goes home to eat, but returns later on. The conversation has veered round to the hunting of cane rats with wooden traps, the prevalent sport of this time of the year, when one of the boys comes with some monkey nuts which he has begged from an old woman. These are roasted in their shells in the fire and eaten by the company. Another has managed to obtain some mealies
to roast

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593 Within this general pattern, however, there can be infinite variations. Mulata beats his mother whenever he loses his temper and on one occasion severely wounded her with an axe. He is admittedly a bad lot and the talk of the neighbourhood, but such things do occur. Batamedi, who moved away from his brother's village and, as the youngest son, took his mother with him, did not provide her with blankets for the winter nor interfere when his wife shamefully neglected the old woman by visiting for months at her own home. So his mother betook herself back to her elder son, where she was accustomed to receiving better treatment.

603 The husband's mother, the grandmother of his children, is then an 854 important person, an essential member of the individual household. She has much to do with the children; she it is who, for the first few months, feeds and baths the new baby. Having little to do, she tends the child while its mother is busy, and very often the young baby spends as much time strapped to its grandmother's back as to its mother's. Being old, the grandmother is mild in her treatment of the children, her policy being to pacify and placate rather than to force.

593 It is not easy to define the relationship between father and children. Because he spends most of his time with the men, there is little personal contact between father and young children, who in their turn are mostly in the company of those of their own age. A Lovedu child, who lives in a large kraal may not see his father for days or speak to him for weeks. A girl has little to do with her father, but the boy finds that his father admonishes him or shows displeasure when he cries and on occasion inculcates manly values. The father keeps his distance, yet he becomes the personification of manly ideals, and a boy tries to be like his father. The father has authority, but his authority is never oppressive like that of European fathers, whose children live in much closer contact with them. If a boy has done wrong or let the cattle stray, he will avoid his father by not making an appearance at home till after dark. Dumedi spent two nights curled up in a sledge, afraid to appear at home lest his father should beat him for letting the goats stray. Fathers who wish to punish their sons are very often forced to resort to the plan of appearing at the entrance of the boys' sleeping hut long before dawn, there to round them up and beat them soundly before they have a chance of disappearing for 595 the day! The father represents the polygynous family. Through him brothers by different mothers are linked and, not more than a few years back, fathers used sometimes to call their sons to sit with them at night. Then they would exhort the sons not to quarrel among themselves, to live together in peace, to be mutually helpful, and to behave as men. To-day, however, with the long absence of men in towns, this active education on the part of the father is rapidly disappearing.

Brothers by the same father, though not as closely linked as uterine brothers, nevertheless have certain responsibilities towards one another. They stand by each other in disputes and act in unison against outsiders. In claiming back bride-price for a deserting wife, a man will never act alone; he and his brothers will go together, showing a united front. If a man has to pay a fine and has no goat, his brothers will be expected to help him. When he dies, it is his brothers who will care for his widow

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him. 593 591 571

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking. 592 571 603 462

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *mosha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*mudukulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people. 592 571 602 604

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact 592 571 606

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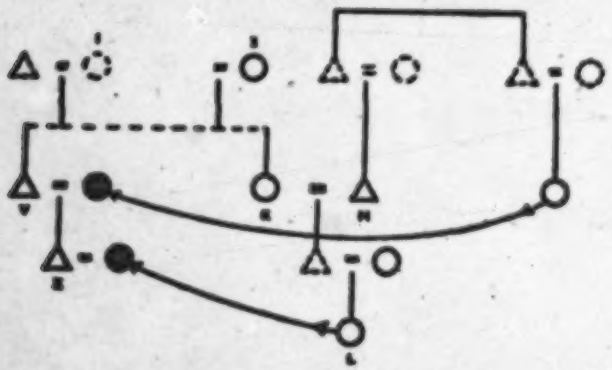

FIG. 7. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*ruka leleko*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's sides so that they become *moleko o motse*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage (which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbourhood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,

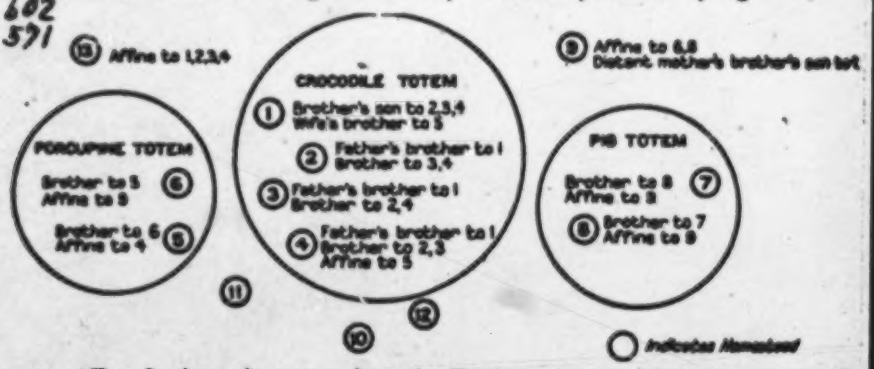

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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and children. Sometimes, in the absence of his brother in town, a man may be consulted by his brother's wife, but he has no real right over her. For a man to beat his brother's wife or order her about, as is said to be the case among Pondo, is quite unheard of. There is nothing special in the relationship between sisters, except that they may marry the same husband, for, quite apart from considerations of the sororate, it is thought at all times good to marry sisters, who will be less liable to make quarrelsome fellow-wives than unrelated girls. Obligations towards classificatory sisters and brothers, children of the mother's sister or father's brother, are not the same as those to brothers by the same father, and the tie is not nearly so close. 595

Lovedu society is characterized by a very special relationship between brother and sister, a relationship that is given shape to and maintained by the Lovedu pattern of bride-price involving marriage with the mother's brother's daughter and supplemented by the role of women in the religious system. With this are also bound up the close links between two groups of people, the *vamakhulu* and *vaduhulu*—a man's own people and those of his mother or wife. The linking of uterine brothers and sisters in pairs, in order that the brother may obtain a wife with the cattle received for the sister, creates this special relationship between them and obliges the man to send his daughter to marry at his sister's place. No man will accept a suitor for his daughter until he has ascertained whether his linked sister wants the girl or not, for though in general it is the sister's son who marries the girl, it is the sister who receives a bride to stamp for her and lessen the labours of her old age. The sister has, in fact, a legal right to the girl. If the girl were to run away or be married to some one else, the court would support the father's sister's claim to the girl or the return of the cattle her brother used. Legally, it is even possible for the sister to dissolve the marriage of her brother by demanding back these cattle, but in practice this is rarely found. It is a common custom for a bridal party to call in at the village of the sister, by means of whose cattle the bride has been obtained, 'to show her the girl who is to bear a bride for her son'. A goat will then be slaughtered by her husband for the bridal party to show their pleasure in the marriage. A value that is constantly being expressed in Lovedu society is that it is fitting and desirable for a girl to 'cook for' her father's sister. 593 604 582

The house of the brother is thought to have been created by the sister whose cattle made the marriage possible. That is why, when he builds a new village, it is the sister who has to draw the magic circle of protection which renders it safe from witches. When the sister visits her old home, it is in the house of this wife that she will 'put her things' and make herself at home and, when she is called to beer, she will be given a special pot in the house of this wife. The sister even wields a certain amount of authority in the house of her brother, as was well illustrated at a gathering we attended where the man of the house was quarrelling with his wife about an uninvited guest. In the midst of the uproar a voice was heard: 'This is my village which I have built. I will have no unseemly behaviour here.' It was the sister rebuking her brother, who subsided immediately and went on with the ceremonial as if nothing had happened. So strong 593 [789]

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than the chief wife, plays little part in a man's life; she is merely a female 605
relative to whom a certain amount of respect and attachment is due. 595
Often a woman's son marries daughters of several of her brothers. It is, however, only to the daughter of that brother who used her cattle that she has a right—has, as the Lovedu put it, an 'entrance' to his village.

In view of the position of sisters and brothers later in life, one would 593
not expect great familiarity or freedom between them during their childhood. Brother and sister may talk freely to each other, but if they rollick together their parents will stop them. Hence the riddle, 'What is [E24]
it that is at hand and yet beyond reach?' (*Kha ntsita khi e ma?*) The answer, 'The breast of my sister,' refers to the playful catching hold of the breasts of girls by young boys, which is taboo in case of a sister. In strong contrast to the free, yet proper, relationship between brother and sister stands the joking relationship between cross-cousins. Derived from the brother-sister relationship is that of the father's sister, who is accorded honour and respect by the children of the house she has established. The term *khadi* is used loosely to denote either father's sister or eldest sister, for it is the eldest sister who will take over the religious functions of the father's sister after her death.

A well-marked characteristic of Lovedu society, one that clearly 602
distinguishes it from the strictly patrilineal Zulu, Xhosa, and Pondo, is 604
the importance of the mother's side of the family. Nothing of interest or importance takes place without their presence; even at the annual harvest beer offerings given to the gods on the father's side, relatives on the mother's side, who are not concerned in the religious aspect of the ceremony, will be present for the beer and social amenities. Important in maintaining close links between a man and his mother's relatives are the bonds of interdependence between the families of a brother, and the sister whose cattle he used. The sister's son is a potential son-in-law, who will be accorded great honour in the household of his mother's brother. A man's mother may also be the *khadi* who has to go and make offerings in the mother's brother's household, and in her absence her son might officiate for her. Later, when a man is engaged to his mother's brother's daughter, there will be gifts of beer from the girl's family. They are thus bound together by a variety of links.

But the greatest of all bonds between a man and his mother's side of 602
the family is conceived by the Lovedu to be one of love. There is a saying, usually quoted by women, '*Wa mma u sme; wa rare gi mabahataka*,' which, freely translated, means, 'Love lies on the mother's side of the family; ownership on the father's'. One's relationship with the mother's side of the family is modelled on that towards a mother and is much influenced by the petting and spoiling received at the hands of the maternal grandmother, with whom most children spend a few years of their life, generally soon after the birth of a younger brother or sister. Every child recalls with delight the good time he had when at his mother's brother's village with his mother's mother; how she treated him to tit-bits, how she scolded or beat only her son's children if her grandchildren quarrelled and fought. For, it is said, a woman loves her daughter's children (who only come on visits) far more than those of her

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602 son (whom she has always with her). The mother's side of the family, no doubt because of this love, are thought to be peculiarly suited to the [736] rearing of a child whose mother has died. Such a child is, in Lovedu society, never left in the hands of a fellow wife of its mother, but goes to its mother's mother, if she is alive, or its mother's brother or even a mother's sister—any one, in fact, an the mother's side who is kind-hearted enough to wish to rear an orphan.

● 604 In constrast to Shangana-Tonga, there is in Lovedu society no joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother. Your mother's brother may be kind to you, but you have to show him respect: if he asks you to go on a message or to help him in the fields you cannot refuse; while, if he needs you, you may be sent to herd for him or help nurse his small children. Moreover, he may one day be your father-in-
605 law and his wife your mother-in-law. The people whom one is privileged to tease to one's heart's content, and with whom one may exchange ribald jokes, are one's cross-cousins, the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister or their children, cross-cousins once-removed, a generation below. When very young, a child may be conditioned to this type of easy relationship by being given a stick and told, 'Go and beat your cross-cousin. Show him your cousinhood,' whereupon he is expected playfully to beat his cousin. If the cousin cries, they will pacify him, saying, 'Gracious! How can you cry? Don't you know it's your cousin? You too can beat him some other time.' Or they will give him a stick and say, 'Go and avenge yourself.' Whenever one finds people behaving uproariously in each other's company or calling out vulgar jokes, one can be quite sure they are cross-cousins. Cross-cousins marry each [582] other; but while cases of a man marrying his father's sister's daughter sometimes occur, specially in the royal family, they are regarded as not quite regular and mother's brother's daughter marriage is by far the most usual. When a man tries to make love to his father's sister's daughter, she may tease him, saying, 'Away with you. We marry you, not you us. We are the husbands who find wives in your family.' The joking relation- [584] ship between a man and his cousin gives place, immediately marriage negotiations are begun, to one of strict avoidance between prospective bride and groom and a certain amount of respect even between the boys in the two families. Men say they can often tell by the attitude of their cross-cousin that there is an understanding between him and their sister even before negotiations have begun.

602 Relatives-in-law are quite as important as relatives by blood. Where marriage with the mother's brother's daughter has taken place, the marriage strengthens an existing blood link, giving far greater meaning and intimacy to the bond. The importance of relatives-in-law lies in the fact that there is conceived to be a lasting bond between the two families for generations to come, since where a man has married there his son will find a wife. The bond is kept alive by various social usages, not least among which is the beer that is always passing (about once a year, unless the harvest is bad) from the village of the wife's family to that of their son-in-law. Moreover, a man's relatives-in-law become to his children the mother's side of the family, which plays so important a part

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231 creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and re-alignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

433 The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough
556 for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an
436 economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a
431 doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the
476 general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

612 The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

582 One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and
583 sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-link-
●604 ing of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister
[588] of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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see. But the fruits of her labour go to swell the property only of that unit of the lineage which constitutes the wife's own 'house', the independence and rights of which must be respected even by the husband.

Bride-price generally consists of some five to eight head of cattle, a number of goats and money (to the extent of at least £5). Today people sometimes pay a sum of money instead of cattle—£40 in a recent marriage. This represents eight head of cattle, bride-price cattle having been regarded as equivalent to £5 each, irrespectively of market prices, for the past fifty years at least. The amount given is, however, never a fixed one as the passing of bride-price initiates a continuous relationship of gift exchange between the two families concerned and the marriage puts the bridegroom under a lifelong obligation to extend economic help to his wife's people. '*Monoalo a o fede*—bride-price is never completed', it is said. When the wife's people have to pay a fine, if they need cattle or goats for the marriage of a son, they will approach their *tsetse* (or *muduhulu*)—son-in-law. The man who has provided a wife has given something 'bigger than cattle' and is in this sense in a superior position. On the other hand the son-in-law (*muduhulu*) or wife-receiver is accorded great honour by his wife's people and once a year at least receives a gift of beer and grain. The relationship is one of reciprocity and the son-in-law must for his part also show respect for his wife's people. He must ever be ready to grant their requests and may never refuse. There is no evidence for Leach's suggestion that the Lobedu have a 'kind of Kachin structure in reverse' with a 'strong tendency for the wife-receiving group to rank the higher'.[1] In endogamous unions in the Lobedu royal group both husband and wife may be members of the same lineage. Lobedu society is, moreover, not a stratified society though the royal lineage enjoys great prestige.

Fully to understand Lobedu marriage one must approach it also from the point of view of the woman. Usually a uterine brother marries a wife with the cattle that have accrued from his sister's marriage. This sometimes happens in other tribes too. But where the Lobedu situation seems to be distinctive is that every woman whose marriage-cattle have been used to

[1] Leach, 1951.

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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even 582
a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 583
'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her 604
husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked 588
brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that 604
even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *noeji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, [601]
who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The 588
children take the surname of the husband of the woman just 604
as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises 851
as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own 553
cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mosha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage 588
—for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an 613
heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the [584]
girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the 588
lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. 583
Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman 851
the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on 582
behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband' 588
601

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such a quarrel involves the mother rather than the son and the whole house hives off, the son taking his mother with him. 593 591 571

The birth of the first child is an important step in the development of a house. The Lobedu child is born in a homestead in which there are at least three generations represented—that of the grandmother, that of the parents, including usually also the father's brothers and unmarried sisters and that of his own contemporaries. The first child is tended largely by the father's mother while the mother goes about the hard work of stamping, working in the fields, fetching firewood if there are no young sisters of the husband to help, and cooking. 592 571 [603] [602]

The husband's mother is an essential part of the household and has a dominating influence. She controls and advises her son, especially in regard to his relations with his wife and the needs of his children, and he usually defers to her knowledge and experience. Long after her sons are married and even when they have grandchildren the unit is known as her *mosha* (house). It would seem that a unit of husband, wife and child would hardly be viable in a subsistence economy based predominantly on the agricultural activities of the women. Even the smallest Lobedu homestead includes the husband's mother. It is only when there are several adolescent children or the cash earnings of the husband enable a wife to buy the staple food instead of relying wholly upon what she grows herself that smaller units can survive. Even then they generally live near, and attach themselves to, some relative.

Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*muduhulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people. 592 571 602 604

The marriage of the first daughter brings about the first acquisition by the developing house of a large amount of property in bride-price and ensures, even in the absence of sons, the continuation of the house. As important is the fact 592 571 606

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592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[602] he also is a *muduhulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

768 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[604] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[593] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

768 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home- 634
stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, 562
a married woman who does not live in the area was made 429
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from 604
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting 692
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable 604
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's 634
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to 643
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The 634
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some- 602
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thoga monye bo dula muduhulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging 592
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance 592
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portion 571
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become 571
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels 578
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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593 is the interest of a sister in the house established by her cattle that she may on occasion even exercise some control in her brother's choice of a wife. Dwagu wanted to marry Mabula, who was already married. His sister's husband then said, 'We shall not allow you to use my cattle to marry that woman. She will bring nothing but trouble.' If the wife obtained by means of the sister's cattle is badly treated by her husband, she may run to his sister, who will intervene on her behalf, or even in extreme cases arrange for her to live permanently away from her husband, who could then never claim a return of the bride-price from his wife's parents. Muhale, whom we knew well, had, under the influence of his second wife, chased away his chief wife, who ran to his sister. She advised the wife to make some pardon beer and take it as a peace-offering, but when he refused this his sister arranged for the woman to live with a widow in the village next door to her. Now, when Muhale's second wife quarrels and refuses to cook for him, he takes refuge with the wife he chased away till the storm is over!

The influence of a sister is reinforced by her religious position. At [782] the annual harvest offering to the gods, it is always the eldest sister in the family who has to officiate. She is the one best able to intercede with the spirits. Any displeasure or secret grievance against her brother on [753] her part may have the effect of stirring up the spirits to cause illness in his household, especially among his children (certain other relatives also have this power, but one hears most often of the sister). Hence it is said, 'The sister should roast pips; if she roasts the village [is angry] it will go up in flames' (*khadi e hadiga dithaga; ya hadiga mutse u ya swa*). Sometimes a sister may threaten her brother, saying, 'If I complain, nothing [428] will be good in your village.' On the death of the father, it is the eldest sister who, together with the father's brother, divides out the inheritance, and, at the only installation of a district head that we were able to witness, the emblems of office were handed over to the young heir's sister for him, though he was already in his twenties. In view of all these facts, a man's sister has great influence over him and may be called to remonstrate with him, more especially in matters affecting his own household when even his parents have been unsuccessful. But she has no right to interfere without just cause and, if she were to make needless trouble, her brother would very soon ask her to leave his village in peace.

Not all sisters play the role that has been ascribed in general terms to a man's sister. Though every sister is potentially priestess and guardian of her brother's household, in practice all these offices are seldom combined in one person. In religious ceremonies affecting the family as a whole, the eldest daughter of the chief wife would officiate; in case of illness, a man's uterine sister might be asked to officiate. If the sister whose cattle has been used is younger than her brother, she may have little influence as compared with her elder sister; furthermore, where the sister is a woman of no personality, her influence may be negligible. It is a man's uterine sisters that play the biggest part in his life, for in this, 605 as in everything, the individual family is always asserting itself as against 595 the larger, polygynous family group. A classificatory sister, one by the mother's sister or father's brother, or one by a wife of the father other

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than the chief wife, plays little part in a man's life; she is merely a female 605
relative to whom a certain amount of respect and attachment is due. 595
Often a woman's son marries daughters of several of her brothers. It is, however, only to the daughter of that brother who used her cattle that she has a right—has, as the Lovedu put it, an 'entrance' to his village.

In view of the position of sisters and brothers later in life, one would 593
not expect great familiarity or freedom between them during their childhood. Brother and sister may talk freely to each other, but if they rollick together their parents will stop them. Hence the riddle, 'What is 524
it that is at hand and yet beyond reach?' (*Kha ntsita khi e maf*) The answer, 'The breast of my sister,' refers to the playful catching hold of the breasts of girls by young boys, which is taboo in case of a sister. In strong contrast to the free, yet proper, relationship between brother and sister stands the joking relationship between cross-cousins. Derived from the brother-sister relationship is that of the father's sister, who is accorded honour and respect by the children of the house she has established. The term *khadi* is used loosely to denote either father's sister or eldest sister, for it is the eldest sister who will take over the religious functions of the father's sister after her death.

A well-marked characteristic of Lovedu society, one that clearly 602
distinguishes it from the strictly patrilineal Zulu, Xhosa, and Pondo, is 604
the importance of the mother's side of the family. Nothing of interest or importance takes place without their presence; even at the annual harvest beer offerings given to the gods on the father's side, relatives on the mother's side, who are not concerned in the religious aspect of the ceremony, will be present for the beer and social amenities. Important in maintaining close links between a man and his mother's relatives are the bonds of interdependence between the families of a brother, and the sister whose cattle he used. The sister's son is a potential son-in-law, who will be accorded great honour in the household of his mother's brother. A man's mother may also be the *khadi* who has to go and make offerings in the mother's brother's household, and in her absence her son might officiate for her. Later, when a man is engaged to his mother's brother's daughter, there will be gifts of beer from the girl's family. They are thus bound together by a variety of links.

But the greatest of all bonds between a man and his mother's side of 602
the family is conceived by the Lovedu to be one of love. There is a saying, usually quoted by women, '*Wa mma u sme; wa rare gi mabakataka*,' which, freely translated, means, 'Love lies on the mother's side of the family; ownership on the father's'. One's relationship with the mother's side of the family is modelled on that towards a mother and is much influenced by the petting and spoiling received at the hands of the maternal grandmother, with whom most children spend a few years of their life, generally soon after the birth of a younger brother or sister. Every child recalls with delight the good time he had when at his mother's brother's village with his mother's mother; how she treated him to tit-bits, how she scolded or beat only her son's children if her grandchildren quarrelled and fought. For, it is said, a woman loves her daughter's children (who only come on visits) far more than those of her

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602 son (whom she has always with her). The mother's side of the family, no doubt because of this love, are thought to be peculiarly suited to the [736] rearing of a child whose mother has died. Such a child is, in Lovedu society, never left in the hands of a fellow wife of its mother, but goes to its mother's mother, if she is alive, or its mother's brother or even a mother's sister—any one, in fact, an the mother's side who is kind-hearted enough to wish to rear an orphan.

604 In constrast to Shangana-Tonga, there is in Lovedu society no joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother. Your mother's brother may be kind to you, but you have to show him respect: if he asks you to go on a message or to help him in the fields you cannot refuse; while, if he needs you, you may be sent to herd for him or help nurse his small children. Moreover, he may one day be your father-in-
●605 law and his wife your mother-in-law. The people whom one is privileged to tease to one's heart's content, and with whom one may exchange ribald jokes, are one's cross-cousins, the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister or their children, cross-cousins once-removed, a generation below. When very young, a child may be conditioned to this type of easy relationship by being given a stick and told, 'Go and beat your cross-cousin. Show him your cousinhood,' whereupon he is expected playfully to beat his cousin. If the cousin cries, they will pacify him, saying, 'Gracious! How can you cry? Don't you know it's your cousin? You too can beat him some other time.' Or they will give him a stick and say, 'Go and avenge yourself.' Whenever one finds people behaving uproariously in each other's company or calling out vulgar jokes, one can be quite sure they are cross-cousins. Cross-cousins marry each [582] other; but while cases of a man marrying his father's sister's daughter sometimes occur, specially in the royal family, they are regarded as not quite regular and mother's brother's daughter marriage is by far the most usual. When a man tries to make love to his father's sister's daughter, she may tease him, saying, 'Away with you. We marry you, not you us. We are the husbands who find wives in your family.' The joking relation- [584] ship between a man and his cousin gives place, immediately marriage negotiations are begun, to one of strict avoidance between prospective bride and groom and a certain amount of respect even between the boys in the two families. Men say they can often tell by the attitude of their cross-cousin that there is an understanding between him and their sister even before negotiations have begun.

602 Relatives-in-law are quite as important as relatives by blood. Where marriage with the mother's brother's daughter has taken place, the marriage strengthens an existing blood link, giving far greater meaning and intimacy to the bond. The importance of relatives-in-law lies in the fact that there is conceived to be a lasting bond between the two families for generations to come, since where a man has married there his son will find a wife. The bond is kept alive by various social usages, not least among which is the beer that is always passing (about once a year, unless the harvest is bad) from the village of the wife's family to that of their son-in-law. Moreover, a man's relatives-in-law become to his children the mother's side of the family, which plays so important a part

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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Raselaka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Raselaka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*hu suma*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Raselaka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the last dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lɔsha* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaau*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khɔrɔ* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Pɛkela, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khirula* beer to their *tsɛzi* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*hu pɛbɛla*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mushiji khi le; gi y'ɔ sheva ga nama*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10*s*. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsɛzi*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

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goodwill or reciprocal exchanges would be considerably enlarged if we included unilateral gifts (*mpho*), such as delicacies given by the mother's mother to a grandchild, goats to important visitors, money or clothes to wives or in-laws, soap and cloth to lovers or concubines, and so on. We have excluded them, but they all arise out of institutionalized situations; to lavish donations or gifts of goodwill upon anyone but relatives is very unusual. So much is needed to maintain reciprocity between relatives that this kind of generosity to strangers is mere lack of balance. The society specially insists that people should direct their energies towards building up firm friendship between those kin whose relationship to one another is subject to strains. There are endless sources of quarrel between relatives-in-law; hence sons-in-law must always help parents-in-law, while the latter must perpetually be bringing beer to their sons-in-law. The gifts that pass, by anticipation smooth out the differences or relieve the strains arising from structural arrangements; mainly they are not what we would call 'friendship gifts'. The clue to a man's behaviour is not to be found chiefly in personality choices; there are no defined occasions, such as marriages or Christmas among us, when friends can show their goodwill or when the whole world is supposed to be well-disposed. Kinship is the scheme in which reciprocity is most appropriate, at least in exchange transactions.

Among the gift-barter exchanges the most distinctive are certain institutionalized gifts, such as *khirula* beer, the *gosha*, and *munyawalo*. Essentially they do not belong to a trading context at all; they are not economically motivated and do not result from any objective diversification of needs; yet the attitudes appropriate to them are reflected back upon the trading situation. *Khirula* (*hu rula*, to lift off the head) is beer carried to a relative or occasionally a friend, the most impressive occasion being when relatives-in-law bring beer to the *tsezi*, son-in-law. As many as twelve calabashes (35–40 gallons), equivalent to one head of cattle, may be carried. One calabash is usually consumed on the way, a second is given to the carriers on their arrival, and the rest is partaken of by any one, including the carriers, who attend the beer-drink. The recipient is expected to return a gift, generally two goats, one slaughtered immediately for the carriers as relish, the second taken home by them and often called 'the walking stick of the in-laws'. The situation is one of good fellowship and friendliness; there are no displays of suspicion and no mutual recriminations as in some other tribes; the givers and the receivers meet one another with joyful shouts and leave one another mutually exhilarated.

There are no special occasions to which *khirula* beer is appropriate, though it is usually stated to be brought for some, usually a fictitious, reason, such as 'to cause us to see the young grandchild', who, in fact, has been seen often before. An old man sometimes asks a distant relative or even a non-relative who has just returned from town for a jacket or pair of trousers perhaps. Some time later his wives brew beer and he 'gives' the beer to the young man, praising him for his generosity and announcing to all that he was indebted to the young man. This is the beginning of a never-ending series of exchanges, for the young man must

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584 courting visits are paid by the boy without seeing the girl at all. He is
431 entertained by the bridesmaids. After a few such visits, the boy will give 10s. or £1 to 'see the girl', to remove this taboo. The bride and her sisters similarly avoid all brothers of the groom till they *sosa* her by means of a small gift after the marriage. One often sees such boys teasing these girls to try to get an answer to some question, but they keep resolutely silent. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system, there are areas such as the queen's district, where most of the inhabitants are related in some way. Here many men and women cannot speak to each other because the men cannot afford to *sosa* all the brides of the family. After some years the women will tire of the avoidance and begin to speak to these men.

585 On arrival at the village of the husband, a bride avoids every one (by
431 not speaking) till given a small gift. Her mother-in-law gives her a gift
●606 during the first week while she is still secluded, but the father-in-law usually waits longer. On the arrival of any visitor, the bride will lie down on her side in respectful salutation till given some small gift. As soon as a boy begins to avoid his prospective bride, he avoids also her mother. They may not be together in the same hut, the mother may not serve food to the boy, and, should they happen to come near each other, the woman will avert or partially cover her head. But whereas avoidance between groom and bride ends before marriage, that between a man and his mother-in-law ends usually about a year after the marriage, when the woman is given 10s. or a blanket. Andress gave 15s. after the birth of his first child. Nevertheless, a man will always take care never to talk loudly or angrily in the company of his mother-in-law. If he does, she will walk away and if a man were to have words with his mother-in-law or scold her in a bout of drunkenness, he would have to pay a pardon goat to her family.

607 The most lasting form of avoidance is that between a man and his wife's brother's wife, especially the one who has been obtained with the cattle he handed over for his wife and who will bear the future wife of his son. Frieda always covers her face when meeting her husband's sister's husband. If he is in a hut, she may not enter it. Beyond exchanging greetings, she does not sit with him or talk directly to him and she may
[835] not herself serve him with food. The uterine sister of the husband of Madinji married Nagambi and so, according to all the rules, she should avoid him; but in reality she is his lover. He, Madinji, is known to be the father of one of her, Nagambi's, children, yet they are not socially ostracized nor have their actions been publicly condemned.

835 That this sort of breach of accepted standards is neither directly punished nor actively disapproved, unless forcibly brought before the public eye in a case, is in keeping with the haphazard nature of Lovedu social arrangements. Lepacula, who, on the death of his parents, came to live with his grandfather (mother's mother's brother), has had four children by the wife of his mother's brother, the son of his grandfather, though he himself is a married man. We were at first inclined to attribute this state of affairs partly to culture contact conditions, which have kept the woman's husband in town, though not determining her choice of

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often, if at all, only after the death of both the father and his heir, the eldest brother who succeeded him as head of the homestead. Full independence is not an ideal that is striven for.

In its early stages the new unit or incipient 'house' is still dependent on the bridegroom's natal house (house of orientation). The new bride works for her mother-in-law. She has no fields of her own to begin with, no utensils, nor a hearth and very often not even a sleeping hut of her own, the young couple using the mother-in-law's sleeping hut while she sleeps in her kitchen hut. The bride cooks on her husband's mother's hearth, works with her husband in a field allocated to them and helps her mother-in-law in hers. The husband will, if he has not done so before bringing his bride home, build her a new hut after the marriage at any time convenient to him. Simeon made sun-dried bricks himself, paid one pound to have the walls built, had a work-party for the framework of the roof and did the thatching himself. A man's father may help him but usually a young man uses his own money earned by previous migrant labour.

A woman cooks for her mother-in-law until a new bride, either of her husband's brother or of her husband arrives when she may be given her own pots. When Simeon's second wife arrived both wives cooked together for the mother-in-law for a while. Then when they began to disagree one (the younger one in this case because she was unrelated) was given her own pots to cook separately. Being given her own hearth is an important thing in a woman's married life marked by a little ceremony and a visit home to announce her new status. Even when she has her own hearth, however, she must continue to provide food for her parents-in-law. Children are thus an insurance against old age and it is the duty and responsibility of a son, more particularly the youngest son, to care for his mother in her old age. The father may have young wives to care for him when his elder sons are married.

Even after his marriage a man remains under the jural control of, and subordinate to, his father. Only after his father's death is he free to choose whether to remain in the village under the heir or to hive off. Sometimes, though rarely, a married son does, however, quarrel with his father and move aw[illegible]

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Once children are born, the wife's brother (mother's brother to the children) begins to play a part in forging links between them and the relatives on the mother's side. He will give gifts to the sister's son (*mudukulu*) who often goes to stay for a while with his mother's people; and in his turn the sister's son whenever he returns from migrant labour will be expected to give a gift to his mother's brother. Sometimes he also helps a mother's brother with cattle to marry. As the size of a man's family increases more fields may be needed to feed the children and very often these are obtained by the wife from her own people. 592 571 602 604

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571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[607] he also is a *mudubulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

768 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[604] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[593] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

768 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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584 courting visits are paid by the boy without seeing the girl at all. He is
431 entertained by the bridesmaids. After a few such visits, the boy will give 10s. or £1 to 'see the girl', to remove this taboo. The bride and her sisters similarly avoid all brothers of the groom till they *nosa* her by means of a small gift after the marriage. One often sees such boys teasing these girls to try to get an answer to some question, but they keep resolutely silent. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system, there are areas such as the queen's district, where most of the inhabitants are related in some way. Here many men and women cannot speak to each other because the men cannot afford to *nosa* all the brides of the family. After some years the women will tire of the avoidance and begin to speak to these men.

585 On arrival at the village of the husband, a bride avoids every one (by
431 not speaking) till given a small gift. Her mother-in-law gives her a gift
606 during the first week while she is still secluded, but the father-in-law usually waits longer. On the arrival of any visitor, the bride will lie down on her side in respectful salutation till given some small gift. As soon as a boy begins to avoid his prospective bride, he avoids also her mother. They may not be together in the same hut, the mother may not serve food to the boy, and, should they happen to come near each other, the woman will avert or partially cover her head. But whereas avoidance between groom and bride ends before marriage, that between a man and his mother-in-law ends usually about a year after the marriage, when the woman is given 10s. or a blanket. Andreas gave 15s. after the birth of his first child. Nevertheless, a man will always take care never to talk loudly or angrily in the company of his mother-in-law. If he does, she will walk away and if a man were to have words with his mother-in-law or scold her in a bout of drunkenness, he would have to pay a pardon goat to her family.

●607 The most lasting form of avoidance is that between a man and his wife's brother's wife, especially the one who has been obtained with the cattle he handed over for his wife and who will bear the future wife of his son. Frieda always covers her face when meeting her husband's sister's husband. If he is in a hut, she may not enter it. Beyond exchanging greetings, she does not sit with him or talk directly to him and she may not herself serve him with food. The uterine sister of the husband of
[835] Madinji married Nagambi and so, according to all the rules, she should avoid him; but in reality she is his lover. He, Madinji, is known to be the father of one of her, Nagambi's, children, yet they are not socially ostracized nor have their actions been publicly condemned.

835 That this sort of breach of accepted standards is neither directly punished nor actively disapproved, unless forcibly brought before the public eye in a case, is in keeping with the haphazard nature of Lovedu social arrangements. Letavula, who, on the death of his parents, came to live with his grandfather (mother's mother's brother), has had four children by the wife of his mother's brother, the son of his grandfather, though he himself is a married man. We were at first inclined to attribute this state of affairs partly to culture contact conditions, which have kept the woman's husband in town, though not determining her choice of

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houses—that is, between the heir raised in the chief house of the head 634
and the head's cattle-linked sister. The daughter of the cattle-linked 562
brother comes as daughter-in-law to the mistress of the chief house, her cattle-linked aunt, to bear the heir, whether that house has a son or not; and legal precedences support this arrangement and succession. This emphasizes the power of the mother and her lineage. But the position of the cattle-linked sister is also strong, as we have indicated elsewhere, and in cases of succession to the headship of a district is further strengthened if she has been a wife of the queen. Conflicts do often arise and it is not strange that the queen usually leaves them to settle themselves. It is seldom that she interferes or interposes her authority, though she does so when the balance of convenience or interest strongly inclines one way. Tenure of headship is tolerably secure. The queen would only exceptionally and for very good reasons favour the displacement of a district head of one of the old groups; and in that case the district itself must strongly desire it while, not a stranger, but the nearest acceptable relative of the lineage will be substituted. If, however, the links with the royal family are not close, tenure by the lineage is less secure and it occasions no surprise that a man, coming to the queen with a few pounds, may be given a district where there has been trouble. We have seen a few such cases and it seemed incomprehensible to those with whom we discussed them that we suspected bribery and corruption.

The district is singularly autonomous in its political arrangements. 634
Land is allotted by the district head not, as in many neighbouring tribes, 425
by the chief. The district head, if he wishes, gives land to people living 609
in other districts; at Mawa, for instance, non-residents hold over 300 423
fields. The district head reports the settlement of a stranger from another tribe by taking £1 to the queen, but it is to him as district owner that landholders annually bring beer. A non-resident also nowadays cultivates the district head with beer, clothes, and even money before asking for land. The land given to a non-resident is not very securely held; the tenure is so imperfectly institutionalized that practice varies from one district to another and definite rights and obligations cannot easily be deduced; on the whole, it is not unlike lending, though the culture does not recognize lending of land for a consideration. A non-resident holding land in a district, unlike a resident, cannot, generally speaking, interchange it with or lend it to others without the consent of the head; but at the capital he can, even without reporting to the queen; and there also a resident may break new land without any one's permission.

Land tenure is too complicated for treatment here, but we may note 634
that where a district head takes back the land of a resident, the queen's 425
court may, but does not usually, interfere in the interests not so much of 423
security of land tenure as of peace. If a resident quarrels with the district head, he cannot beg pardon with beer, highly though that method of reconciliation is appraised, because he would be 'humbling himself with the mealies of the land' or, as it is sometimes phrased, 'paying a fine with the calf of the cattle of the district head'. A resident migrating from the district should bid its head farewell with 'the beer of greeting'; application

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Highveld. When, after many private consultations with diviners, a man decides to make an accusation of witchcraft, he and the accused will *betcha* or lay a wager of money or cattle on the matter, after which, accompanied by a witness, the 'ears of the chief', supplied by the Head Kraal, they set out to consult a far-away smeller-out, nearly always a Shangana–Tonga who lives too far to know anything of the people concerned. Unless the smeller-out is able to give the totems of all members of the party and successfully find an object that has been hidden beforehand, they will pass on to another until some one suitable is found. The verdict of the smeller-out is taken to court where it is always accepted and the guilty party told to pay his wager, the modern counterpart of the death penalty of old. A distinction between murder and accidental homicide is everywhere found in the Lowveld, punishment for the latter being the handing over of a girl to the injured family. She never returns home, nor does any bride-price pass.

Bantu etiquette, which makes it impossible for a case to be reported to the chief except through a third party, generally among other Sotho tribes one or two specially appointed men, has in the Lowveld given rise to a rather more complicated system whereby each district has its 'mother' at the Head Kraal, through whom reports are made and actions brought. Where a person in one district has a case at the Head Kraal against some one in another district, the 'mother' of the complainant's district will approach the 'mother' of defendant's district to call his 'children' to the court, and various payments are connected with the system. Most of the important men living at or near the Head Kraal are such 'mothers', many having more than one district in their charge.

Family and Clan. There is among Lowveld Sotho no term distinguishing the father's from the mother's side of the family, the word *moloko* being used to denote all relatives whether on the father's side or the mother's; and in practice, whether at weddings or at working parties, both sets of relatives play an equally important, if sometimes different, part. A man inherits his totem and family name from his father, but in his education and social life his mother's people have great influence. Most children spend some years of their life with the

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

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231 creating and maintaining the all-important social relationships and re-alignments in the social structure that arise from marriage. Cattle are not 'gods with the wet nose' as among Tswana, but they may be dedicated to the ancestor spirits.

433 556 The economy is largely a subsistence one. A man should have enough for his family's needs as well as to entertain friends and neighbours with beer to maintain his good name and reputation for liberality, and to fulfil his kinship obligations. But accumulation of goods is frowned upon: in any case, in the absence of markets or methods of preservation of the crops, an 436 economic incentive is lacking. Payment for most services, even that of a 431 doctor, is made in beer. Exchanges on the whole are usually not motivated by differential needs but by goodwill, the obligations of kinship, and the 476 general emphasis upon long-run reciprocity; they are for the most part not business transactions but gift exchanges. Kin and neighbours co-operate in work parties for weeding, reaping, building. Helpers are honoured as workers (*vashumi*) and treated to beer at the end of the day, yet they cannot be said to receive any specific reward, for the gate-crashers (*vahobedi* or beggars), who join the party when it repairs to the home of the host for beer, drink calabash for calabash with the workers. In ploughing partnerships, in which each of the parties contributes his services or some commodity, there is complete disregard of equivalence between what is contributed by a partner and the service he is entitled to. Reciprocity operates through the instrumentality of economic goods, but it owes its significance as a moral force to the interdependences that arise from the social and political structure.

●612 The society is patrilineal and marriage patrilocal, but cognates, agnates, and affines are not segregated into distinctive groups; each category overlaps to such an extent with the others, through cross-cousin marriage and other factors, that both structurally and functionally it is the bilateral kin-groups that are significant.

582 583 604 One of the basic features of the social system is the linking of brother and sister whereby the cattle (*munywalo*) coming in from the marriage of a sister are allocated to her brother to enable him to marry a wife. This cattle-linking of brother and sister is co-ordinated with cross-cousin marriage and an alignment of lineages into wife-providers and wife-receivers. That a man is expected to marry where his father has married or, more accurately, where his mother's marriage cattle have been used to establish a 'home', is the inevitable consequence, according to Lovedu conceptions, of the right of a sister to her cattle-linked brother's daughter as a daughter-in-law, who will cook and stamp for her and care for her in her old age. The arrangement implies that this girl should marry the son of the cattle-linked sister of her father, but should there be no such son her paternal aunt may nevertheless 'marry' her, in which case she will bear children by some person appointed by the aunt to act for her non-existent son or 'pick them up' as she wishes.

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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion. 593 562 [588]

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vamalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vamukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsezi*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaḓuhulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin. 613 601 612 613

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's 753 769

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571 619 565 The first thing that strikes us is the large number of constituent groups in the tribe. Some of these groups are totemic, others are not, they come from all points of the compass. They are not clans in the accepted sense of the word and have no functions as such. They are so interwoven with the nuclear group, the Lovedu, and with one another, that it is not easy to disentangle them; they are usually interspersed with the general population, but, for one reason here and another there, they may be more or less concentrated in some part of the country. It is chiefly through the district organization that they become linked, upon the pattern of kinship, of marriage and bride-price, with the nuclear group. These groups are not arranged in any definite hierarchy of rank, though rank is of very great importance in the society. Yet there are distinctions between them: some are as honoured as the Lovedu themselves; some are regarded as rather of lower status, though intermarriage with them is not disapproved; others, mostly of non-Sotho origin, are despised and intermarriage with them is frowned upon.

[565] 621 571 ●613 This does not mean that there are institutionalized classes; there are no rigid lines cutting across the society, just as there are no definite functions that may be said to hold together these constituent groups. Functions of a political nature are bound up with the districts, not with the constituent groups as such; some religious and ritual functions are also bound up with the districts, but most of them (except those of national importance) are connected with kin groups, and this never means the whole constituent group and, indeed, usually not the lineage, but people from both sides of the family. Yet the lineage as a descent group has at least legal significance and to it are attached certain rights. On the whole, however, the lineages pale into significance beside the marriage or the bilateral kin groups. There is structural tension between the group which gives the brides and the group which gives the cattle; but one notices in ordinary life not so much the tension as the elaborate measures for maintaining good relations. Not only do the relations between these two groups obtrude themselves more prominently than those within the patrilineal lineages, but it is the main concern of judicial proceedings in the *khoro*, the most impressive feature of public life, to preserve harmony between them. There is ample reason for this emphasis because the whole social structure and, through it, the whole tribal system and the strongest bonds with the queen, depend upon the proper functioning of these groups. And these are again a part of, and supported by, the bilateral kin, who, with the cattle, the one relying on the other, constitute the ultimate basis of the social structure.

[561] 571 There are also age-groupings in the society. They have some wide integrating functions, but on the whole the organization into regiments is unimpressive and for national purposes of little value. The hierarchy of age plays a part of importance, however, as a regulative device; but it is not coincident with the hierarchy of rank and thus often occasions serious tensions in the social structure. Finally, we should remind the reader, though we cannot deal with them here, of groupings brought about by modern conditions. There is the more or less compact Christian group, with its divergent interests and loyalties, and the very scattered

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and medicines are in their hands, or rather in the hands, not of the group, but of the specific family. That family may be honoured by being given a district to rule, and, as marriage is patrilocal, the area gradually may contain a fair percentage of the lineage of Crocodiles of Rasekwalo. They may be lucky and retain the privilege, but there need be no necessary continued association between the *varasekwalo* and the *gomana*. All depends on the circumstances. 571 794 619

No one thinks of a certain group as having certain functions, from which other groups are excluded. Yet only some district heads may, for instance, hold the great national 'schools'; it is rather the privilege of those heads whose people have traditionally held them. But this is not considered to be a privilege of the groups; it is the privilege of a lineage if that lineage happens also to be in charge of a district, for the organization is territorial. The Lovedu, indeed, use the word *khɔrɔ*, but, as applied to groups of people, it does not mean a segment of any kin group. One speaks of the *khɔrɔ* of Mavulana, for instance; but the term refers to the people that live in the district of Mavulana, not the *vamavulana* who are scattered over many districts. One may even speak of the *khɔrɔ* of Mulogwane, meaning a section of the capital which was in charge of Mulogwane. Equally, one hears of the groups, the Mudiga, the Mahasha, the Crocodiles of Vudupi and so on spoken of as the *dikhɔrɔ* of the tribe. The connotation of the term is quite indefinite; it is as likely to refer to a group or sub-group of people as to a district; the word is not commonly used and is considered to be foreign. 571 794 613

The patrilineal groups or sub-groups have as such no functions. They do not regulate marriage, nor do they imply co-operation and mutual helpfulness. They are not at the basis of solidarity in legal and political situations. It is not unilateral grouping which unites people in their common interests or common activities, except when we come to the smaller sub-divisions, in which close relationship is acknowledged. If there was any real cohesion within them, the groups or sub-groups would cut across both tribes and districts; they would constitute a challenge to the principle of local contiguity, and the culture would be as diverse as the groups are numerous. Lack of group cohesion helps the diffusion of the fundamental values and institutions. There is great diversity in details, but the broad pattern of the culture stands out boldly. Unilateral grouping of a smaller kind, such as the core of a lineage, is not disruptive, for, on the one hand, the lineages which give tone to the remarkably autonomous districts are intimately linked with the queen and the tribal structure and, on the other hand, they harmonize admirably with that local unit which is a great political unit. Co-residence tends to be limited to the immediately effective lineage, the regulative principle being patrilocal marriage. The sentiments developing about co-residence are strengthened by inheritance and succession in the male line; the core of the lineage has common property and other interests. The segregation of this core is promoted by the tendency to take a name which, according to the circumstances, is the name of a grandfather or a father. It is the lineage, or, rather, the operative segment of a lineage, that may be regarded as an important institution in the society. 571 613

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571 613 The patrilineal lineage, however, is a formal rather than a friendly group, at least when one goes beyond the brothers' sons of one father who, as the phrase goes, 'share even the head of a locust'. There is nothing, however, apart from the name of its members which divides it from sub-groups or groups. It has no generic name and no observances such as special milk or other taboos; but marriage within the patrilineal lineage is incest, at least outside the royal family. It is the group which exercises certain kinds of control; though it must be remembered that the head of a lineage is head only of his, not of his brother's or even his son's village. Within the lineage there is more often than not considerable friction. The conflict is a conflict about legal precedences, for if seniority is emphasized in the society, if the influence and status of a man or a woman depends largely upon his or her age or seniority in a certain position, it is the chief son or daughter, the issue of a man's mother's brother's daughter, however young he may be, who steps into the shoes of his father. A younger brother, whatever his legal status by this reckoning, calls his elder brothers 'great one' (*muhulu*) and later in life, when the chief brother becomes district head or councillor, there is at least the 'war of the eyes' between them. You will see struggles for influence and position everywhere within the lineage for this reason. The enormous weight of the social structure is massed behind the chief son; but seniority is given precedence in the 'schools' and in the kinship terminology.

571 602 It is not our intention to give more than a glimpse of the patrilineal lineage. But it is necessary to insist, on the one hand, that it is the *mulɔgɔ* relatives, both on the father's and on the mother's side, that the Lovedu have constantly in mind, and, on the other hand, that the groups with the most impressive reciprocal rights and obligations are the *vaḑuhulu* and the *vamakhulu*. In the most general sense and whenever these groupings are spoken of as linked groups of people, the *vaḑuhulu* are the people where one gets bridegrooms—that is, it gives *munywalo* cattle and receives brides. The *vamakhulu* in this context are the people who supply the brides and in return receive cattle. These two terms, in other contexts, have other connotations; for instance, the *vaḑuhulu* include all one's grandchildren, own and classificatory, but the term also refers to children of one's sister (man speaking). The pivot of the alinement of the two groupings is the cattle-linking of brother and sister and its co-ordination with cross-cousin marriage. The primary linking of brother and sister, described elsewhere, is immensely strong; and this strength is transmitted to the further linking of the two groups. The *vaḑuhulu* and the *vamakhulu* are not so much separate groups as interlinked people, and the bonds between them are partly kinship bonds, for they both are part of the *mulɔgɔ*; but the specially emphasized link is the link forged by the cattle. The linkage must, in its widest application, be regarded as binding together people who do not live together.

The patrilineal lineage is the core of co-residence units, such as the village and the districts. But the strongest links between these units are the links binding together the *vaḑuhulu* and the *vamakhulu*; they are the cattle links. The cattle forge links within the *mulɔgɔ*, a much wider group, ramifying both through males and females throughout the society. But

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855 mother's mother, especially in cases where the next baby has arrived before three or four years have elapsed; and a young motherless child is often sent by his father to his mother's brother's people (where his mother's mother will be) in preference to being handed over to a fellow wife of the mother, for it is generally considered that the mother's people are best able to rear (*hodisa*) a child.

593 A very special relationship exists between a man and his sister, especially his eldest sister, who is or will become the priestess of the family. She is the person who has greatest influence over him, who will be called to reason with him when even his parents are unable to persuade him. The sister whose cattle he used to obtain a wife also has a special interest in his household affairs. This house is the place where she will 'put her things' and make herself at home when visiting her old home; his daughter will one day marry her son; his wife may run to her or her elder sister if he ill-treats her, whereupon she will remonstrate with her brother or even in extreme cases arrange for permanent protection of such a woman away from her husband. [753] The sister's rights are supported by a powerful sanction, for if she 'feels dissatisfied in her heart' owing to bad treatment at the hands of her brother, the ancestors are liable to make his children ill. When this happens, the brother will have to approach his sister humbly to come and end matters, after openly airing her grievances, by interceding with the ancestors on behalf of his children. Not all sisters are, however, in practice able to control and influence their brothers: here, as in all human relationships, much depends on the character and good sense of the parties concerned; and I have seen a 'bad lot' just back from town slap the face of a sister who had been called to remonstrate with him about a loose woman he had brought to his wife's house from town.

• 43 The clan, if it can be said to exist at all, does so only in a vague way, and there are no functions or usages associated with it. Relatives belong to no clearly marked group but can be traced in ever-widening circles from the individual family just as we trace relationships in our own society. There is no term for clan: *moloko* refers to relatives on both father's and mother's side, while *khoro*, a word most commonly used to denote that portion of any village where the men sit, but also meaning court, clan, or tribe, is too vague in its connota-

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tion. There is no trace whatever in the Lowveld of the Tswana ward. 613
Lowveld tribes are totemic, but the totem is neither exogamous nor bound up with any single lineage group. People of the same totem are often not related at all and the lineage group cuts right across the tribe, relatives from the same place of origin and with the same totem often being found in several different tribes. Indeed, the tribe consists only of a small nucleus of members of the ruling family after which it is named, the greater portion being accretions from any and every neighbouring tribe. Thus the majority of members of the Narene are not Narene at all; they are Lobedu, Khaha, Phalaborwa, Kwena, Tokwa, and others who have joined the Narene at various times; and so it is with all Lowveld tribes.

FORMAL EDUCATION. The tribes of the Lowveld have five initiation 881
schools[1]; two, known as *khoba* and *byale*, for girls, three, *bodika*, *boxwera*, 794
and *komana*, for boys. These schools are not peculiar to the Lowveld; all of them are found also among Sotho tribes of the Highveld of the Northern Transvaal while some, like the *bodika* or circumcision, have a very wide distribution in South Africa. But the *byale* and *boxwera* in our area have a typical form, not found elsewhere, being held at the same time, while the *komana* appears in its strongest and most characteristic form among Phalaborwa, Khaha, and Narene in the south of our area where, most probably, it had its origin, for it is absent from Pediland.

Khoba is the private initiation and seclusion of a girl at or shortly after reaching puberty when she is taught the things she should know and do as a woman. The *bodika* or circumcision school is too well known to merit attention here, but the *boxwera*, for boys, which in Sekukuniland and other parts of the Northern Transvaal is held alone, in the Lowveld is linked with and held together with the *byale* girls' school, the central feature of which is a wonderful 'bird' in a special enclosure which appears on moonlight nights and dances and speaks in a whistle.[1] The true significance of the *komana* has not yet been

[1] In late years these schools have been languishing or dying out in the northern portion of our culture area. The Lobedu have held neither *byale* nor *komana* for 30 years, while their last circumcision was in 1919. In the south of the area, on the other hand, all the schools are still in full swing, the Letswalo having held their last *bodika* in 1934 and *byale* in 1936.

[See 2: Krige and Krige for further information on Lovedu cults — A]

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion. 593 562 [588]

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*namalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*namakhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*natsani*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *nafukulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin. 613 601 612 613

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's 753 769

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *goma*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794

With the *vyali-vukwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*vyali*) and for boys (*vukwera*), are associated many *digoma*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khiudogwie*, Bird of Muhale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *vyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *goma* and a symbol of the royal ancestors. 881

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *vyali-vukwera* with its great *digoma* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digoma*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalaborwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir sits on the smallest drum while being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vadimo* (gods) as well as *digoma*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gomana* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [N+ 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digoma* are the *vuidajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thugula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gomana*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *lenga* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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A	B	C	D	E	F

Chart of Positions of Kinship Diagram.
[This chart refers to the contents of Appendix I of the text, found on pp. 193-195. See category 116.--Analysis]
[Facing kinship diagram.]

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
557 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*bataxoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
557 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[634] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mokale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1943 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term mokoko or
● 613 *leloko* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[789] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhobo* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*mutse*). As neighbours
[476] and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

[562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[582] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhobo*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *noeji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mosha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

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592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[602] he also is a *muduhulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

768 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[604] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[583] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

768 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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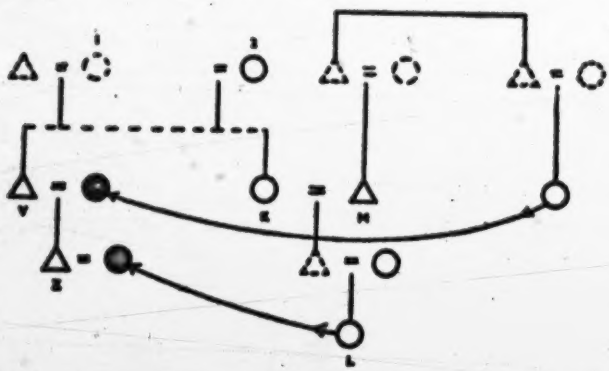

FIG. 7. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*ruka leloko*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine 582
brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor 613
worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and 769
mother's sides so that they become *moloko o motes*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an 755
illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage 583
(which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions 603
to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their 769
lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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Conclusion

182 Emerging clearly from this study is the fundamental role of
421 property in maintaining the distinctive features of Lobedu
571 social structure. The scarcity of cattle among the Lobedu and the fact that they play little part in subsistence, coupled with an attitude to property which makes its accumulation of little interest and in which economic aspects of property are not always clearly distinguished from the social relationships it creates and maintains—all these factors make for a social system in which the main function of cattle is their use as bride-price and in which women can be used in quasi-economic transactions without their status being in any way depressed thereby.

595 The independence of the 'house', a basic feature of the
602 Lobedu lineage, likewise rests upon property, a husband being subject to strong sanctions to respect the economic independence of each house as against other similar units. Both husband and wife have an interest in the development of the 'house' as an entity. From the point of view of the husband each house, besides increasing his following and adding to his prestige, also adds to the number and strength of his relations with affines upon whom he can count for economic help and as friends and allies. '*Ba djealane ke ba khonane*—people who marry one another are people who agree', it is said when a man has the support of his affines. To the wife her 'house' is a means of personal fulfilment and advancement. She has considerable say over the property of her 'house'; everything she does for its advancement is for the benefit of her own sons, its heirs; the bride-price of her daughters ensures an old age free from arduous toil, while the marriage of her sons brings in addition the prestige and control that a mother has in the households of her sons and
● [613] their wives. The 'house' is the most important unit in the structure of the husband's lineage yet at the same time has strong economic and social links with the wife's family.

582 An important principle in the social structure is preferential
602 marriage between the son of a sister and the daughter of her uterine brother who has used her bride-price. This form of marriage and the moral right of a sister to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her marriage cattle are on the

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one hand a means of binding the women of the lineage, even after their marriage, by strong links to their father's family and on the other of maintaining from generation to generation the bonds with the maternal kin created by the marriage of the parents.

A woman has a dual role in the social structure. On the one hand by establishing a 'house' in her husband's lineage, she is the means whereby his lineage is perpetuated and its numbers increased; for even after the death of her husband his brothers will raise seed to his name and in the absence of sons she can herself ensure the continuation of her husband's lineage by marrying a woman on behalf of a fictitious son. On the other hand a woman remains important to her own lineage: if she is the eldest child of her 'house' she will officiate at all important religious offerings (if her brother is older he may officiate but she will always be called to collaborate with him); when she dies her name and those of her sisters will be included among the names of ancestors called upon in prayer; she divides out the inheritance on the death of her uterine brother; she guards the interests of the children of her cattle-linked brother's 'house' whence she will obtain a daughter-in-law; upon her falls the responsibility in the absence of her parents of providing an heir in her mother's 'house' (of her father's lineage) should there be no son; and she may even act in the place of her deceased father as ruler over a district until the heir is of age or until one can be raised.

The maintenance of links with married sisters and its complement marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter, by means of which one's links with one's wife's (or mother's) family are perpetuated, are supreme values in Lobedu society. That is why a wife who has no son has little difficulty in persuading her husband to hand over her daughter's bride-price to her brother rather than create links with a strange family. It is possible thereby to 'build a house' (or 'make a gate') at her brother's home from which her daughter's son will obtain a wife. This may at first sight appear to be very like the transfer of rights from mother to daughter but this is not the case. It is made possible by the transfer of cattle belonging to the daughter's husband and is bound up with the great desire to maintain links between the descendants of brother and sister. The right

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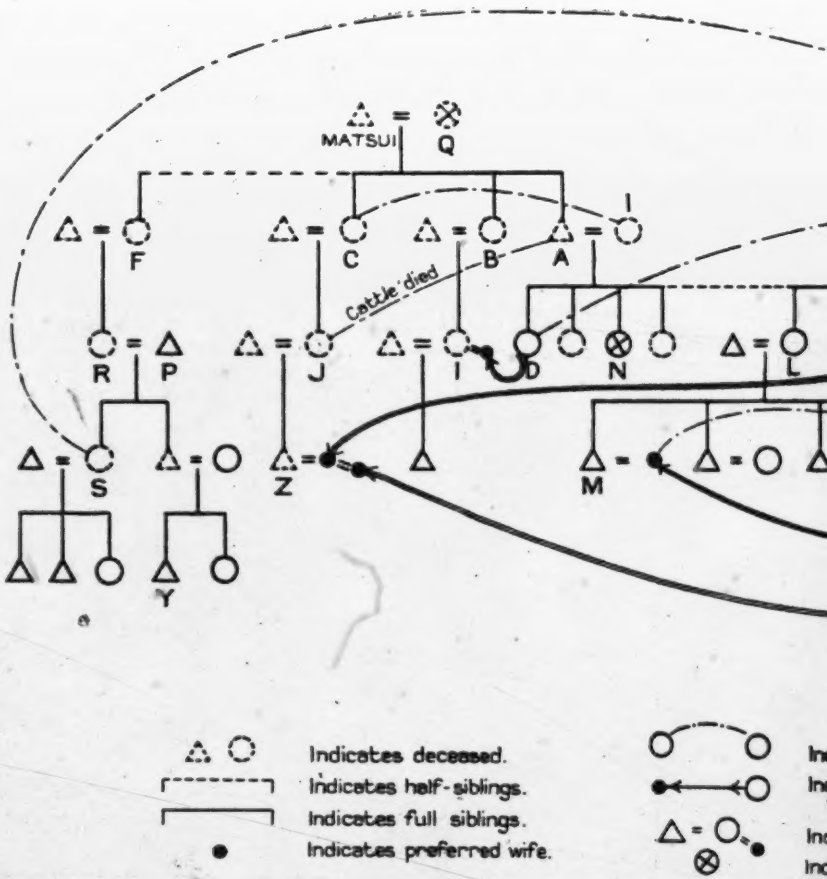

[p. 192-A]

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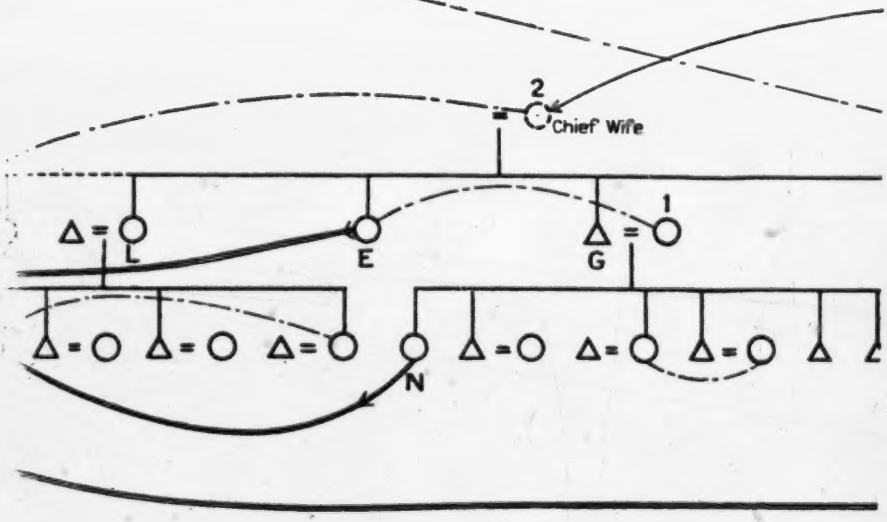

Indicates cattle-link between a wife and the husband's female relative with

Indicates passage of a woman in marriage. Single lines denote incoming wives
Double lines denote outgoing females marrying a father's sister or her de

Indicates women marriage of a girl with a married female relation.

Indicates a woman who is or has been a motanoni ('wife') of the queen.

[p. 192-B]

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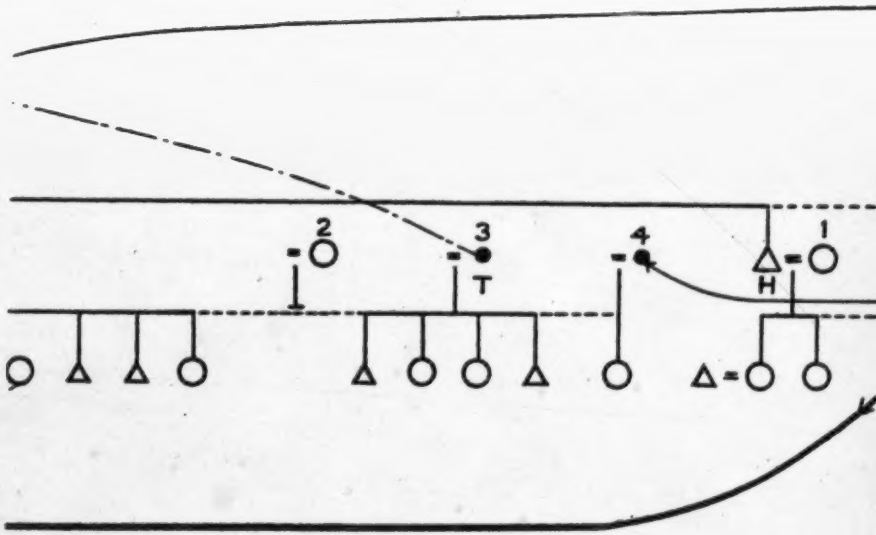

relative with whose cattle she was acquired.
ncoming wives from the same lineage.
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the queen.

FIG. 9. Preferential marriages and cattle links in a lineage

[p.192-C]

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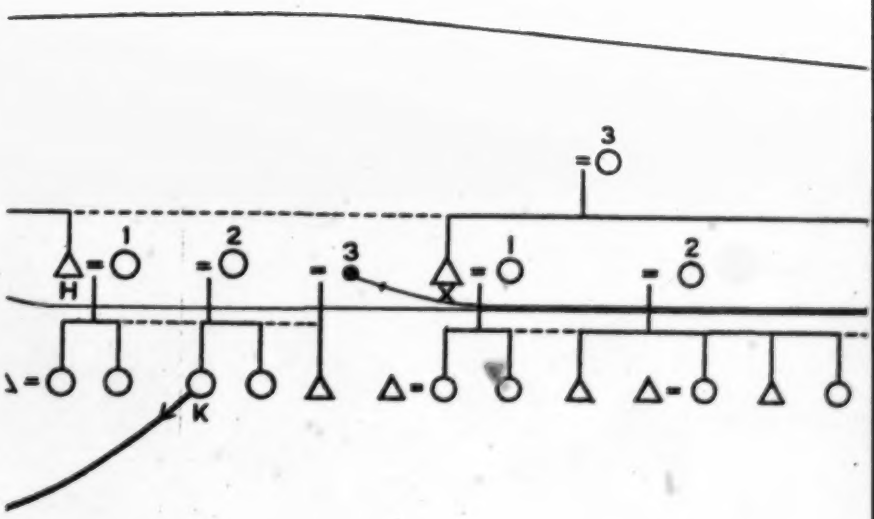

e links in a lineage-segment.

[p. 192-D]

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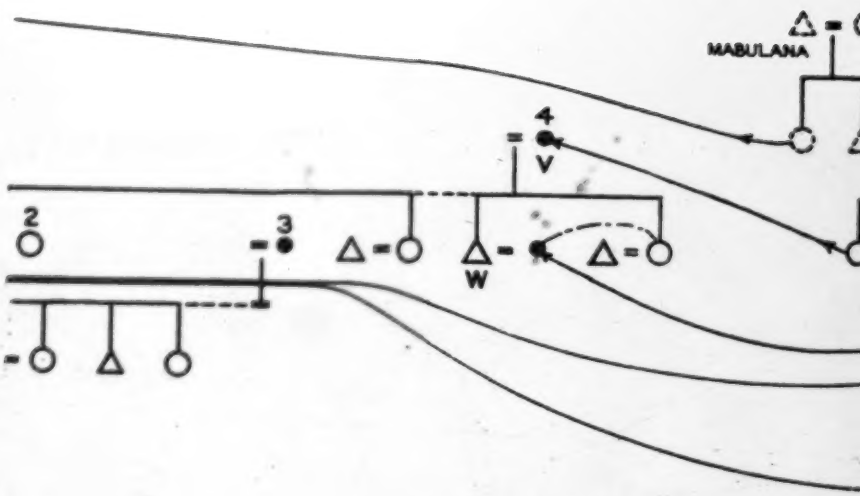

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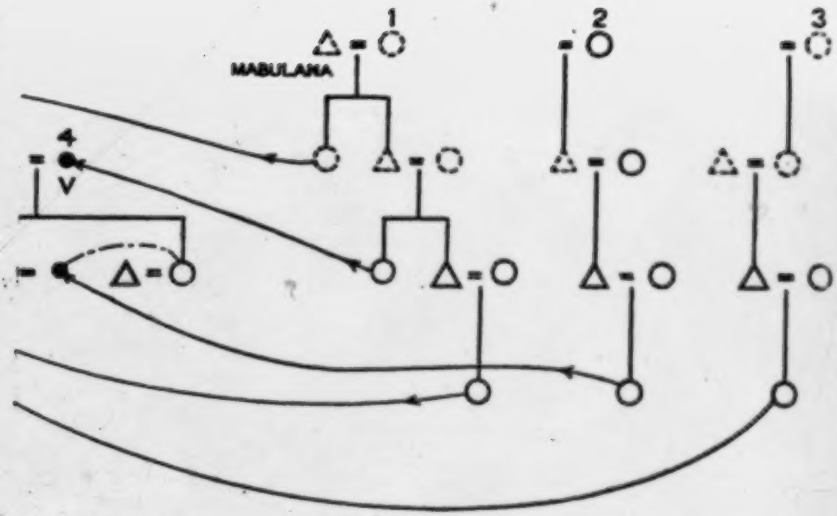

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

APPENDIX I

THE manner in which many of the characteristics of Lobedu marriage arrangements operate in practice is illustrated in the case of the lineage segment of A and his descendants set out in Figure 9. The arrows in the diagram all represent the passage of women in preferential marriage from their parental home to that of their husband: single arrows indicate women of the mother's brother's family (i.e., the Mabulanas) who have married into A's lineage (Matsui); double arrows indicate the departure of women of A's lineage to marry at their father's sister's. The following are points to be noted: 582 591 602 613

(a) The tendency for Lobedu polygynists to marry more than one wife from the same family is seen in Figure 9 in A's marriage to his fourth wife who was his second wife's brother's daughter. [595]

(b) The manner in which cross-cousin marriage perpetuates links with the wife's kin down the generations is illustrated by the marriages of A's sons G, H, W and X. G's fourth wife, H's third wife and W's first wife all come from the same lineage, that of their mothers (A's second and fourth wives). A's son X's third wife is also his uterine cross-cousin but it was not practicable to indicate her family of origin also in the diagram.

(c) Besides reinforcing links with the maternal kin, mother's brother's daughter marriage serves also to knit together descendants of a man and his sisters. The bonds between A and his sisters B and C have been kept alive over a span of two generations of their descendants by the marriage of A's daughter D to I (daughter of his sister B) as indicated by the double arrow in Figure 9, and the marriage of A's daughter E to Z (son of J, and grandson of A's sister, C). Similarly G's daughter N by his first wife is married to the son (M) of his sister L (see double arrows), and H's daughter K is married to her father's sister E, widow of Z, a marriage which took place in 1961.

(d) The part played by cattle links in ensuring preferential marriage is also illustrated in the diagram; but it is clear too that children of brother and sister who are *not* cattle-linked often also marry one another. Z married E because of cattle-links two generations above him as is explained below. But when E grew old and needed a 'wife' G had no suitable daughter; so H's daughter K 'married' her. Cattle-links also did not account for the marriage of A's daughter, D, to his sister I, nor of G's daughter N to his sister L's son M. These indicate the tremendous value attached to maintaining links with married sisters. The reasons for the marriage of 582 593 591 602 613

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582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realizing he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

582 591 (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I; that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. [634] In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *matanani* of the queen.

613 582 581 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.

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LOBEDU PROPERTY, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

(h) The incidence of cross-cousin marriage and its variations in two generations of descendants of A (counting only the actual members of his lineage as shown in Figure 9) over a time-span of over sixty years (i.e., from about 1895 to 1962) was 31 per cent (nine out of twenty-nine marriages).

The arrangements in the above lineage segment are by no means unusual. This lineage is that of a district head, but it is representative of numbers of cases that could be chosen from among non-Christian traditionalists who still form the majority of the tribe.

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CHAPTER VI

SOME SOCIAL GROUPINGS

Groups in the tribe—analysis of the groups of a district—character, divisions, and subdivisions of groups—the patrilineal lineage as the core of co-residence—marriage groups, age sets, and regimentation.

THE Lovedu tribe is not, in the main, a body of kinsmen tracing descent from a single far-off ancestor. The nuclear or royal group are the Lovedu proper. They are, strictly speaking, *kuevo*, though you will very rarely hear this word, because it and its praise-title are associated with *ku kuevo*, to elongate the *labia minora*. Ignoring popular usage and Lovedu sensitiveness, we may still call them *kuevo*, leaving to posterity to decide whether the name will survive or be lost in oblivion. This nuclear group, the *kuevo*, constitutes no more than 10 per cent. of the tribe; or, in other words, only one person in every ten bears the nuclear group name, *kuevo*, which we must think of as a patrilineal descent name, not unlike such oft-recurring surnames as Jones or Smith among us. There are numerous other group names and people bearing different names of this kind may be regarded as having originally been unrelated. They constitute over 90 per cent. of the tribe.

It is obvious that in these circumstances very strong bonds must exist to maintain the allegiance of the non-related groups, just as, among us, a vast network of institutions, of interlinked organizational systems, ramifying throughout the society, exists side by side with common sentiments of loyalty and of solidarity. But the interlinking machinery is very different from ours, and neither nationalism nor ideology is important as unifying sentiments or principles. There are important structural links which, on the one hand, form part of the social system and on the other are intimately bound up with the political system; and in this way both *hindhip* and *mayuale*, or bride-price, are used to strengthen the solidarity of the tribe as a unit. These links are discussed elsewhere. They make good the absence of the bonds between the nuclear ruling group and the other groups. There are, for instance, the fundamental reliance upon the rain-making powers of the queen, the periodical tribute to the queen by the districts, and the national organization of some of the 'schools'. In this chapter we are concerned to point out some of the social groupings in relation to one another and to the solidarity of the tribe. The great work they have to do in the society will be realized when we remember how complicated and all-pervasive in our society are the links which unite us to one another and to the state. The work is all the greater in a society in which the language is the language of a group larger than the tribe, the historical background and traditions are not uniform, but diverse, governmental machinery is incipient and hardly impinges upon the subject, and there cannot be said to be much organization of common interests and ideals.

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571 The first thing that strikes us is the large number of constituent
619 groups in the tribe. Some of these groups are totemic, others are not,
565 they come from all points of the compass. They are not clans in the accepted sense of the word and have no functions as such. They are so interwoven with the nuclear group, the Lovedu, and with one another, that it is not easy to disentangle them; they are usually interspersed with the general population, but, for one reason here and another there, they may be more or less concentrated in some part of the country. It is chiefly through the district organization that they become linked, upon the pattern of kinship, of marriage and bride-price, with the nuclear group. These groups are not arranged in any definite hierarchy of rank, though rank is of very great importance in the society. Yet there are distinctions between them: some are as honoured as the Lovedu themselves; some are regarded as rather of lower status, though intermarriage with them is not disapproved; others, mostly of non-Sotho origin, are despised and intermarriage with them is frowned upon.

[565] This does not mean that there are institutionalized classes; there are
621 no rigid lines cutting across the society, just as there are no definite
571 functions that may be said to hold together these constituent groups.
613 Functions of a political nature are bound up with the districts, not with the constituent groups as such; some religious and ritual functions are also bound up with the districts, but most of them (except those of national importance) are connected with kin groups, and this never means the whole constituent group and, indeed, usually not the lineage, but people from both sides of the family. Yet the lineage as a descent group has at least legal significance and to it are attached certain rights. On the whole, however, the lineages pale into significance beside the marriage or the bilateral kin groups. There is structural tension between the group which gives the brides and the group which gives the cattle; but one notices in ordinary life not so much the tension as the elaborate measures for maintaining good relations. Not only do the relations between these two groups obtrude themselves more prominently than those within the patrilineal lineages, but it is the main concern of judicial proceedings in the *khotla*, the most impressive feature of public life, to preserve harmony between them. There is ample reason for this emphasis because the whole social structure and, through it, the whole tribal system and the strongest bonds with the queen, depend upon the proper functioning of these groups. And these are again a part of, and supported by, the bilateral kin, who, with the cattle, the one relying on the other, constitute the ultimate basis of the social structure.

[561] There are also age-groupings in the society. They have some wide
571 integrating functions, but on the whole the organization into regiments is unimpressive and for national purposes of little value. The hierarchy of age plays a part of importance, however, as a regulative device; but it is not coincident with the hierarchy of rank and thus often occasions serious tensions in the social structure. Finally, we should remind the reader, though we cannot deal with them here, of groupings brought about by modern conditions. There is the more or less compact Christian group, with its divergent interests and loyalties, and the very scattered

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group of sophisticated men who, influenced by their experiences of European town life, have acquired values and needs disruptive of the old alinements. They have already come to our notice. But if we deal with them, we must also discuss the disturbances in the old settled spheres of men as distinguished from women. For this and for any elaboration of the manifold aspects of the various social groupings touched upon in this chapter we have no room. It will be sufficient to draw attention to a few points only.

Let us look briefly at the tribe as a whole. We shall obtain some impression of its constituent elements by merely listing the group names of the various district heads. For the moment it is sufficient to accept this name as a kind of distinctive designation; it may be the name of a totem or a place, of a dynasty or a tribe. Within the effective jurisdiction of the queen, which extends considerably beyond the reserve and the tribal farms, the following group names of district heads are found: thirty-four district heads bearing the name *kwevo Muhale*, or the name of the royal group; sixteen Elephants, mostly of very different ancestries and very divergent places of origin; nine *kwevo raudigwa* or *vamudiga*; fifteen *kwevo rathole* or *vamahasha*, both spoken of as 'brothers' of the royal group, and also four *kwevo mutshazi* or *vamavulana* not originally related but now the great maternal uncles of the queen's group; eleven Crocodiles, mostly from the west, but some with secondary designations indicating probable diverse ancestries; thirteen Venda, some with, some without totems, some from as near as Tswale, others from as far as Mpefu; five Lions whose interrelations, if they exist at all (coming as they do from such different directions and at such different times), are wholly obscure and lost in oblivion; and besides these, smaller numbers of Leba, those curious kosher-killing, exclusive wanderers with their moon ritual from the north, of Wild Dogs from the highveld, Khalaga and Dibanyika from Rhodesia, of Shangana-Tonga of various branches of that great group of peoples whose tenure of headship is only half recognised, of Koni who, in proportion to their numbers, hold very few districts, not to mention Ramafalo, who is a Pig of Lundz, one *kwevo madzvele*, a few Sia of Levia, and several sub-heads under the *vamamadeba* who are descended from Mugodo, the last of the Lovedu kings.

It is not to be thought that the relative number of heads of this or that constituent group in any way reflects the number of people of that group in the tribe. There is, for instance, a considerable population of Porcupines, of Impalas, of Mbezi, of Goats, but there are no district heads of these groups or clusters. Nor must we conceive of these groups as entities having something more in common than their name and, where it has not been lost in oblivion, a background of history and tradition. There is no solidarity between their members. Where some of them live together in a district, it is their relationship to the head or the emphasis upon the common life of the territorial unit that holds them together rather than any conception of a link with a far-off ancestor or of a mystical bond with their totem. They are said to swear (*ku ana*) by their totem, which is sometimes called *mayono* (what is sworn by), sometimes *matupo* (what is grouped together)—these two words are occasionally sharply

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571 622 619 distinguished, but more often, especially among the common people, they are identified or hopelessly confused. But if to swear by one's totem means something in some cases and among some groups, it usually signifies as little as when we swear by Jupiter.

571 619 Before embarking upon a further elucidation of these names, let us look more closely at an area in Ḓulovedu so as to obtain a better idea of the distribution and nature of these constituent groups. We select an area towards the south-west, of about four square miles, because if we go to the centre we shall obtain an exaggerated impression of the proportion of *ḓuvo*, the royal group, whereas in the extreme north we may well think that we are in a tribe of Shangana-Ṭonga.

[161] In this area, which has a population of about 830 people, there are, counting the group names of both men and women, Elephants, Cattle, Crocodiles, Leopards, Porcupines, Goats, Lions, Pigs, Duikers, Impala, Wild Dogs, Khalaga and Sia without totem, besides a fair sprinkling of Shangana-Ṭonga and even people using the name Zimbabwe. There are two individuals calling themselves Oorlams, one Bush and one Kapa (Cape coloured), which is most unusual and does not reflect the position in the tribe as a whole. There are, finally, some whom we must merely designate Venda because, as they say, they swear by no animal or object and they do not know to what Venda group they belong. That is not the end of the matter, for in the Elephants (*ḓou*) cluster there are fifteen different groups. Some of them may be remotely related, but they distinguish themselves by different secondary names and know of no common ancestry or of any links in the past; indeed, as they come from very different parts, they positively deny a common origin. For instance, there are *ḓou* of Khalaga, recent-comers from Rhodesia, *ḓou* of Tsubye, far away to the south-east near Phalaborwa, *ḓou* of Thovob in the Game Reserve to the north-east, *ḓou* of Ravothata, the messengers, it is said, of the royal group when they migrated from Rhodesia, *ḓou* of Sefareni, whose nearest relatives are in Nareni (Mahlo) country. Similarly, there are ten different groups of Lions: some, like the Khiba, were the aboriginal inhabitants, who are said to have known no fire and no political organization, and were ousted by the Lovedu; others, like those of Selowa, come from the far east with the cult of the possessed, which they might have adopted from the Ndau in Portuguese Moçambique, and still others hail from Vendaland and Ḓuḓokwa. There are likewise clusters of Crocodiles with four, of Duikers with four, of Pigs, Khalaga, Sia, Impala and Wild Dogs, each with two different secondary designations (division or group names). Among the Shangana-Ṭonga, though they are comparatively few in number, there are no less than four different totems and nine different other names (*shibongo*), such as Loyi, Khosa, Mavunda, Mathie and Ngoveni. Reckoning all the differently named groups as distinct, we have over sixty such groups in this area alone.

The following table gives a rough representation of the position in the area in question:

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PEOPLE IN AN AREA OF FOUR SQUARE MILES, WITH A POPULATION OF *c.* 830

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Cluster	Per cent. of Population	No of Groups	Remarks
1. Elephant	14	15	Groups very divergent as to tribe (including Sotho, Venda, Khalaga, Leba—Shangana-Ṭonga. Elephants are enumerated under 7, below), place of origin and time of immigration. Majority of groups reducible probably to common, very far back, but now forgotten ancestor. A fortuitous cluster.
2. Khalaga	14	2	No animal or object of reverence. Mostly recent-comers and directly from the north. Interrelations obscure, but some appear to be Sothoized Shangana-Ṭonga or Nyai.
3. Pig	11·8	2	One of the groups, the *kmcvo*, is of the royal nucleus and has further subdivisions; the other is from Mamavolo, a tribe which split from the Lovedu about 250 years ago. The two groups no longer acknowledge relationship. A genetic cluster.
4. Lion	11·8	10	Groups very divergent as to tribe (Sotho, Venda, Khiɔga) and time of immigration. Some are aboriginal and were thinly scattered over a wide area, and their common ancestor, if any, has been forgotten; these aborigines cannot even remotely be linked with recent-comers from the north (Ṽirwa), from the east (Thovolo) and from the south (Pedi). A fortuitous cluster.
5. Porcupine	10·2	2	Said to be distinct from one another, coming at very different times from Phalaborwa and from Thapina; the connexion between them, if any, is obscure and is denied.
6. Duiker	8	4	These are all Koni and the secondary designation refers to four tribes (Khaba of Maupa, Maake, and Mamija, all of whom are Koni, and the Letswalo). A genetic cluster.
7. Shangana-Ṭonga	8·3	13	Four are totemic, totems being borrowed from the Sotho; the rest have retained their *ahɔngo*. Some came before the great migration, 1840–94; others as part of it. Still call themselves Ṭonga, but come from very different parts of Ṭongaland.

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Cluster	Per cent. of Population	No. of Groups	Remarks
8. Crocodile	6·9	4	Groups are reducible probably to two genetic clusters, the Kwena of Ʊudupi, who are Ngwato from Bechuanaland, and the Kwena from Khimosa in the east near the Game Reserve.
9. Mbezi	3·5	1	People from East Vendaland, who are probably Nyai. All river animals are taboo to them.
10. Cattle	3·2	1	All from Nareni originally and largely as a result of the transportation of the Letswalo in 1894. But some came later.
11. Goat	3·0	1	All Venda, i.e. of the Kwinda group. Have lost the Venda observance of peeling the skin off the goat's tail before killing, which is still practised by the Tswale tribe near by.
12. Impala	2·4	2	Some of them are from the north, some from the east. The Lovedu are sometimes also called *phala*, but the true significance of that is obscure. *Phala* in the east (Phalavorwa) are regarded as having had no fire, and were ousted by fire.
13. Sia	1·3	2	Appear to have been neighbours of the Lovedu since very early times, living to the north of them. Some come from the Mashau (Venda); others from Molepo. Affinities obscure.
14. Venda	0·4	1	Venda who cannot trace their origin or ancestry to any definite group; not all related.
15. Zimbabwe	0·3	1	People from the north; they also call themselves Khalaga. Do not know the Zimbabwe ruins.
16. Wild Dog	0·2	2	Probably these two groups are related, but the relationship is not recognized; all we can say is that they are Sotho.
17. Leopard	0·2	1	Recent-comers from the highveld (Ɖokwa).

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Cluster	Per cent of Population	No. of Groups	Remarks
18. Bush	0·2	1	Said to be Vaalpens; a mixture of Bush and Bantu. From the towns.
19. Kapa and Oorlam	0·2	1	Cape coloured. The word 'Oorlam' has a special connotation, implying sophistication. From town.
20. Springbok	0·1	1	Origin obscure; come from Phalavorwa.
Total	100·0	67	

This is the position in a single area. It is somewhat more complicated in the tribe as a whole; we certainly would not like to say how many clusters, groups, and sub-groups are to be found; and as for disentangling their origins and histories, and linking them up with common ancestors, that is a task which, if it can be successfully undertaken at all, will require infinite labour and extensive research. For our present purpose, it will be sufficient to indicate the nature of these groups. And let us first consider the nuclear group.

If you ask a Lovedu what his *mutupo* (group name) is, he might say *kwevo*; some, however, will say Wild Pig (*golove*). But upon closer examination it will be found that *golove* is really the *muyano*, though this is not a word that many of the other groups use. Certainly the name *golove* includes, not only the royal group, but also groups in several other tribes: Mamaila, Sekhopo, and Rakwadu are also Pigs of Muhale. The Pigs of Luɔde, the Ramafalo, are associated with the Venda, though there are many in Ʊulovedu and since long ago some of the important national doctors assisting with the initiation 'schools' have come from this group. The Ramafalo are not regarded as being of the same group as the royal group, but they are nearer to it than the Mamavolo, Pigs of Maḍaji, who live on the highveld and with whom all, except the very oldest men and women, strenuously deny any relationship whatever. There is certainly nothing in common between the Pigs of Muhale and the Pigs of Maḍaji; even their customs and institutions differ more widely than those of the Lovedu do from such unrelated neighbours as the Khaha or the Nareni. There are quite a number of Pigs of Maḍaji, especially in the south-western districts of Ʊulovedu, and they are, of course, also scattered among many other tribes.

There are no all-pervasive bonds between these scattered *golove* people; there are merely bonds within the families and lineages of which they are made up. With their relatives in Ʊulovedu, who are not Pigs at all, their bonds are much closer than with people of the group name who fall outside the kin. If, again, we consider the Pigs of Muhale, we shall find that the relationship between their branches Mamaila, Rakwadu, and Sekhopo, on the one hand, and the royal group in Ʊulovedu, on the

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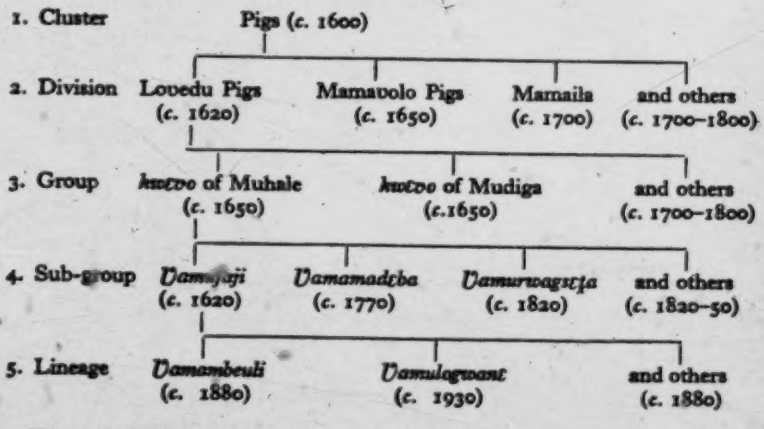
other, is hardly a close one; it is certainly not as close as that between the groups, the Mudiga, the Mahasha, and the royal family, which came into existence long before the Rakwadu and Sekhopo broke away. The Mudiga and the Mahasha are not clans; they have the same *mutupo* and *muyano* as the royal group, but each has his own distinctive praise (*khirɛdo*), though there are also distinctive praises of still further subdivisions, the sub-groups, especially when a member of such sub-group is a district head.

The process of division and subdivision can be traced back to the very earliest times; but there are specific periods when the tendency towards division was specially marked, often coinciding with national crises, the parcelling out of new districts to relatives of the royal group, or the emergence of outstanding personalities. To-day in the royal family it is curious to observe how some of the sons of the queen's deceased brother say they are Mulogwane, others that they are Mujaji. They have strenuous arguments about the matter, as they are not quite sure whether the new designation is in imitation of surnames among Christians or in accordance with precedents of the past.

To sum up the position and to clarify the confusion somewhat we may state the position as follows:



There is, first, the all-inclusive group which we may call the *cluster* (1) of the Pigs. This is a genetic cluster because, although it is not generally recognized that all the Pigs are related or descendants of a single ancestor, their group histories are interconnected. Clusters are not all genetic; nor are they all totemic. In a fortuitous cluster, such as that of the Elephants or Lions, the histories cannot be linked up and no genetic relationships can be established or are recognized in any sense at all. Within the fortuitous cluster there may be smaller genetic clusters—for instance, some Lions or Elephants who have a common ancestor. The genetic cluster has large *divisions* (2), sections that broke away completely very long ago—for instance, the Lovedu Pigs or *kwɛvo* and the Mamavolo Pigs, with whom relationship is only very faintly recognized as a matter of

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history and by a few of the oldest men, and also more recent segments, such as the Mamaila Pigs and the Pigs of Sekhopo, with whom relationship is recognized fairly generally, but as a matter of form. Two individuals of such divisions cannot, however, concretely trace relationship. Within the divisions there are *groups* (3), such as the *kwevo* of Muhale, of Mudiga and so on, some very old, some of more recent date. These are real groups, however, in which some bonds exist, such as a common praise, and a few specially placed individuals can trace relationship to one another. These groups, again, are divided into *sub-groups* (4) of various orders and arising at various times, such as the *vamujaji*, who came into existence 100 years ago. According as we go further and further back, less and less people can trace relationship, and the sub-group imperceptibly merges into the group. On the whole, however, in spite of infinite variations, distant lineal relationship is generally recognized, but it is not given concrete expression in kinship terminology or in behaviour patterns. Finally, we have a further sub-division, which we call the *lineage* (5), between the members of which kinship terms and behaviour patterns come into play, to a greater or lesser extent according to the operation of a large number of circumstances, such as family pride, contiguous residence, agreement among one another, and so on. There are lineages in the process of being formed to-day, such as the *vamulogwane*, the children of Mulogwane, who died in 1934; but at present they are still members of a family, acting in concert in domestic situations, with which the lineage is usually not concerned at all.

Each of these, from the cluster to the lineage, as we have defined them, is functionally distinct in some ways; but they do not have distinctive generic names. We must not make the mistake of thinking that they are sharply demarcated from one another. The patrilineal alinement is secondary; it is overshadowed by the territorial alinement, which may cut across and break up the solidarity of the comparatively small and closely linked lineage. The largest group or cluster, such as the *golove*, has no cohesion whatsoever. This is evident among the *golove*; but it is much clearer among such clusters as the Elephants and the Lions, in which the groups bearing the names Elephant or Lion with a secondary designation may not be segments of a single original group at all. It is quite evident that a Shangana-Tonga Elephant cannot have any common ancestor with a Sotho Elephant; it is equally clear that there can hardly be any relationship between Elephants of Selowa, of Sia, and of Sefareni, for the Selowa people are from the north-east and the Sia and Sefareni, though local, have entirely different histories and ultimate origins.

The names by which people designate themselves cannot be relied upon to establish relationship. A man may designate his group or ancestry or tribe by a totem or chief or dynasty or place or other name or a combination of these. Tradition records several unaccountable or arbitrary changes in these designating names, even in totems; often a non-totemic group adopts a totem of another group or a totemic group adds to its existing totems with subsequent loss of some. And this process occurs, not only in respect of totems or primary names, but also in respect of secondary names. There is a word (*phodemulogo* or *khaga-mutupo*) for

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571 a person who, not merely when he has no legal father, takes the totem or
619 secondary name of another group. We can, therefore, make no off-hand deductions from the names. Identity or similarity of name may or may not imply similar ancestry. A positive assertion of similarity or identity based upon the similarity or identity of the descriptive name is not conclusive; it may merely reflect a present sense of being related, important in itself, but with no basis in history or fact. It is by no means easy to deal with a situation of such infinite complexity; and from our present point of view there is no need to do so. Except where the name is significant for some other purpose, not that of reckoning relationship as such, and except within the functioning unit, little attention is given to these names. For the purposes of rank within the tribe, against other tribal units, it is important to designate oneself, not Elephant or Lion, but Lovedu. But when we have said this as regards the general position, we have also, as in everything else, to begin pointing out exceptions.

571 An Elephant of Ravothaṭa has as such nothing in common with an
565 Elephant, say, of Selowa. Their backgrounds, their origins, even their
619 customs, are conceived to be different. The Elephant of Ravothaṭa have come in recent years to tolerate the Elephant of Selowa; intermarriage is beginning to establish bonds, and common allegiance to the queen is breaking down the old barriers; yet on the whole an Elephant of Selowa is a *murska*, a person of the low country, not fit to aspire to such high positions in the tribe as the Elephants of Ravothaṭa. The *murska* is, however, much closer to the Ravothaṭa than the Shangana-Ṭonga Elephants; the latter are not unlike the lower classes, the dwellers in the slums, as compared with the aristocracy, among us. Through sagacity and some forms of achievement, they can rise in the scale, but as yet intermarriage is frowned upon and there are some strong barriers between them. What we wish to point out is that the Elephants of Ravothaṭa are far more closely associated with their immediate blood relatives and their relatives-in-law, whether they be Elephants or Lions or Pigs or what not, than with Elephants of Selowa or other Elephants, including far-off *varavothata*; and by far off we mean not merely any one of the sub-group within which kinship terms and behaviour obtain, but also any one of this lineage who lives far away or with whom there is no agreement. And yet there is something more to the matter. The history of the Ravothaṭa, their very early association with the royal group as messengers on the way from Rhodesia, the fact that since the earliest times their heads held an extensive district and still do, their prestige as makers of the skin of the sacred drums, all this and more places them in a special position. These things distinguish the Ravothaṭa as a group; they are like the crest of a noble family or like its traditions. They are scattered all over the tribe, it is true, and any ordinary member of the group would not presume to give himself airs because of the achievements of the past. They never act together, except within the limits of the interested family or lineage, just as happens anywhere else; yet there is some consciousness of belonging together, as indeed there is among families among us.

The same may be said of any other groups in Ḋulovedu. There are, for instance, the *vamavulana*, so closely linked to the royal group to-day

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that they are called the *kwɛvo* of Tshazi. Their history also dates back 571
to the earliest times, when they were Tshazi quite unrelated to the 565
kwɛvo. They are now and have been since the time of Khiali (*c.* 1740) 819
the great maternal uncles of the royal group. They have their distinctive
praise-titles and also a distinctive laudatory response. If one of the Mavulana 571
is called by his superior he answers by prefixing his words with the 565
praise *moni*. These laudatory responses (for which there is no generic 554
name) are found only among a few groups. The Ravothaṭa say *zemula*,
the Crocodiles of Vudupi *myagani*, the *kwɛvo mulemyazi*, the Dipanyika 619
nɛpya, some Venda (those from Twsale) *sigo*, the Khaḍa *khɛnɛlo*, and the
Lions of Magwale *maan*. This laudatory response honours both the
speaker and the person addressed; and it occurs sometimes in the great
praises of the group—for instance, 'Mavulana of Vutshazi! At Makhifaja,
the place of pasturing, we pasture our cattle in autumn; at Ḍaja it is that
the cattle graze in spring. We are *moni*.' A specific response does not,
however, belong to the whole group. You may hear a *kwɛvo* say *mule-
myazi*, but, after all, the Tswale also call themselves *kwɛvo*, and they say
sigo, while the Mahasha, who are *kwɛvo rathɔle*, may answer *mulovedu
rathɔle*, and a Crocodile of Vudupi, *vudupi vya mamyaka*.

The cluster, such as all the Pigs or all the Elephants, never has one common praise-title. One does not even find a common praise for many groups or sub-groups, such as the Crocodiles, say, of Vudupi; and the same is true of most of the groups. The members of some of the groups and sub-groups use common praise-titles, but the really live praises, those that stir people and stand as a symbol of their unity, are the district praises. They are taught in the *vyali* initiation and are sung when beer is brought by the district to the queen. The district praise may or may not coincide with the praise of the sub-group or lineage of the head of the district. The Mudiga of Madumani, for instance, one of the sub-groups of the Mudiga, identify themselves closely with the royal group, but their distinctive praise-title refers to the mountain of their district, just as the distinctive praise of the Mudiga of Mareroni, another district, refers to the place name as well as to a forebear to whom the district was originally given. In addition, both Madumani and Mareroni have the old Mudiga praise, 'You are hemmed in [by lions]' (*le a digwa*). The local district praise is far more alive than the group or sub-group praise, if it exists at all, in the case of people living in the district who are not Mudiga, but Crocodiles or Elephants or Lions and so on. It is thus far more usually a locality than a group praise, though, with regard to the people of the lineage of the head, it often is both. The exquisite poetry of these praise-names cannot easily be rendered in English, '*Vuuga vya uuga bula ea na*', the praise of Levibi, we may translate as 'When it thunders at Vuuga, the rain rains', but we cannot recapture the rumbling of the *u*'s nor the pattering of the *a*'s.

Let us look more closely at the Crocodiles. They are by no means 571
a real group at all. At Matsui, where one of them is a district head, they 619
are very closely linked to the royal nucleus; the mother of Matsui was a relative of Mamujaji the mother of the first Mujaji, and it is at Matsui that the cow Mamujaji, belonging to the head of the district, is dedicated

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571 to the spirit of Mamujaji. These Matsui Crocodiles, though they can
619 trace their ancestry to the Ngwato of Bechuanaland, are, firstly, a closely linked lineage in their district and, secondly, they are relatives-in-law of the royal group as well as of several other groups, including Mavulana; but the other Crocodile groups never so much as obtrude themselves in their interests or consideration. There are the Crocodiles of Maunadala, who also answer *myàgani*; yet they have a distinctive praise in which they refer to themselves as the 'outcasts of the rain' (*murɔha wa metsi a bula*), because they are unable to make rain. They also are Crocodiles of Vudupi, but they are quite distinctive. They have a long history; they lived on the furthermost southern boundaries of Vulovedu relatively independent even for these parts; they held their national 'schools', as they still do to-day, with scant deference to the precedence that should be accorded to the queen; and among them are celebrated doctors of the *vuhwera*, *vyali*, and *gomana* complex of institutions. They owe their solidarity not so much to their common ancestry as to their concentration in a district in which they have been able to rule themselves and to build up their own traditions; but it is the solidarity of the people of Maunadala, whatever their totem or ancestry, not that of the Crocodiles. And much the same applies to Khada, the Elephants of Sefareni, also called *dou Khalaga*. Their genetic relationship with the Leba, though, by way of derogation, affirmed by their neighbours, cannot be credited; there is no association, no intermarriage, no acknowledged relationship with the Leba. Their immediate alliance is to Khada and the district; their ultimate alliance is with the royal nuclear group; with other Elephants they have nothing in common. And so we may go through all the constituent groups.

We have said enough to dispel the idea that the tie of real or supposed common ancestry in itself is of importance. In the larger groups the union that exists is due to other factors. The bonds within them do not even necessarily imply an informal feeling of preferential comradeship. The groups and sub-groups are not as such charged with specific functions, though, as we have seen, individuals in them may have special functions. For some time now one of the families of the Mudiga has been responsible for distributing the rain medicine (*vufugo*), but it would be a conception foreign to the Lovedu that the Mudiga only could be entrusted with this work. Not only Ramafalo, a Pig of Luɔdz, but many others of different groups are doctors of rain; and the same applies to other special positions.

571 It is not difficult to see how these things work. One may still observe
794 the process of the introduction of a new cult in neighbouring tribes.
619 Rasekwalo, a Crocodile, recently brought the *gomana* to the Tswale tribe, just as another Crocodile brought it to the Virwa of Makhatho. By running the 'school', these foreigners pocket some of the fees and naturally try to safeguard their rights. Their children follow them and the special function or privilege appears to be attached to the group of Crocodiles. But in time the drums of the cult become the drums, not of the Rasekwalo, but of the chief; his descendants may still take a prominent part, not because they are Crocodiles, but because some of the secrets

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and medicines are in their hands, or rather in the hands, not of the group, but of the specific family. That family may be honoured by being given a district to rule, and, as marriage is patrilocal, the area gradually may contain a fair percentage of the lineage of Crocodiles of Rasekwalo. They may be lucky and retain the privilege, but there need be no necessary continued association between the *varasekwalo* and the *gomana*. All depends on the circumstances. 571 794 619

No one thinks of a certain group as having certain functions, from which other groups are excluded. Yet only some district heads may, for instance, hold the great national 'schools'; it is rather the privilege of those heads whose people have traditionally held them. But this is not considered to be a privilege of the groups; it is the privilege of a lineage if that lineage happens also to be in charge of a district, for the organization is territorial. The Lovedu, indeed, use the word *khɔrɔ*, but, as applied to groups of people, it does not mean a segment of any kin group. One speaks of the *khɔrɔ* of Mavulana, for instance; but the term refers to the people that live in the district of Mavulana, not the *vamavulana* who are scattered over many districts. One may even speak of the *khɔrɔ* of Mulogwane, meaning a section of the capital which was in charge of Mulogwane. Equally, one hears of the groups, the Mudiga, the Mahasha, the Crocodiles of Vudupi and so on spoken of as the *dikhɔrɔ* of the tribe. The connotation of the term is quite indefinite; it is as likely to refer to a group or sub-group of people as to a district; the word is not commonly used and is considered to be foreign. 571 794 613

The patrilineal groups or sub-groups have as such no functions. They do not regulate marriage, nor do they imply co-operation and mutual helpfulness. They are not at the basis of solidarity in legal and political situations. It is not unilateral grouping which unites people in their common interests or common activities, except when we come to the smaller sub-divisions, in which close relationship is acknowledged. If there was any real cohesion within them, the groups or sub-groups would cut across both tribes and districts; they would constitute a challenge to the principle of local contiguity, and the culture would be as diverse as the groups are numerous. Lack of group cohesion helps the diffusion of the fundamental values and institutions. There is great diversity in details, but the broad pattern of the culture stands out boldly. Unilateral grouping of a smaller kind, such as the core of a lineage, is not disruptive, for, on the one hand, the lineages which give tone to the remarkably autonomous districts are intimately linked with the queen and the tribal structure and, on the other hand, they harmonize admirably with that local unit which is a great political unit. Co-residence tends to be limited to the immediately effective lineage, the regulative principle being patrilocal marriage. The sentiments developing about co-residence are strengthened by inheritance and succession in the male line; the core of the lineage has common property and other interests. The segregation of this core is promoted by the tendency to take a name which, according to the circumstances, is the name of a grandfather or a father. It is the lineage, or, rather, the operative segment of a lineage, that may be regarded as an important institution in the society. 571 613

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

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137 [272] morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga* [533] *dzwala ga fɔlɔja, ga vucla vuphabaleni*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise 431 song of a district in Ulovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach [364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiṭhulelenu*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiṭhulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

•621 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any 789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lentḋwa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the [417 protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were 824 set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Ziziphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *tipigwani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [824]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*hu dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khoro*, an open [361]
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dona*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khoro*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a
most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them unestable. They are called *maduni* and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khoro* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khoro* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khoro*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khoro*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khoro* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 234
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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CHAPTER V

FAMILY TIES

Personal relations within the polygynous household—the sister as the centre of the social system—behaviour patterns and avoidances between potential and actual relatives-in-law and their modification by personality and adjustment—the position of orphans.

●621 At every turn we seem to be stumbling upon the kin. It cannot be otherwise, because they are very important in the everyday life and contacts of the Lovedu man or woman. The village is a group of relatives, chiefly on the father's side, but sometimes including one or two people from the side of the mother or wife, and even the district consists largely of kin. The modern tendency towards smaller and smaller villages has, in contrast to what one might have expected, hardly acted as a counteracting force, for so often a cluster of small villages, each with no more than two or three huts, turns out on closer inspection to represent what once was a single village. They have moved apart in space, but the ties are still recognized, sometimes even to the extent of acknowledging one man as their 'village' head. In our discussion of the district as a political unit, we refer to the manner in which kin and locality coincide. Suffice it here to say that in one district, with a large element of foreigners, 56 per cent. of the people are relatives of the district head. Of these, 36 per cent. are close relatives—that is, brothers, sisters, uncles—who would be recognized in modern European society, and 20 per cent. classificatory relations.[1] In many areas the percentage of relatives to the headman is much higher.

602 The Lovedu thus grows up in a circle of kin. As a child, his playmates are relatives; his boyish fights, loves, and hatreds involve his kin; and he grows old along with them. But blood-relationship does not act alone in binding people together. It does not determine the nature and strength of the contacts, the degrees of reciprocity that are to prevail. Here it is that other elements in the social structure step in, strengthening one type of link, perhaps at the expense of another just as close in degree, binding ever more closely certain of the kin and allowing others to drift apart. By means of complicated rights and duties between the individuals, these other elements tend, in different societies, to mould social relationships into different patterns, so that a father in one society has functions very different from those of a father in another, and a maternal uncle, in one society a man with authority over you, in another is perhaps a kind elderly playmate.

595 An important moulding force in Lovedu family relationships is polygyny. Each wife has her own household, her own fields and grain stores, but polygyny cannot stop at making plural wives independent in these ways; it must create special interrelations within its structure,

[1] The classificatory system of relationship, in which the terms 'brother' and 'sister' are extended to children of father's brothers and mother's sisters as well as other more distant relatives, and in which one has many 'fathers' and 'mothers', is too well known to require attention here.

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571 619 565 The first thing that strikes us is the large number of constituent groups in the tribe. Some of these groups are totemic, others are not, they come from all points of the compass. They are not clans in the accepted sense of the word and have no functions as such. They are so interwoven with the nuclear group, the Lovedu, and with one another, that it is not easy to disentangle them; they are usually interspersed with the general population, but, for one reason here and another there, they may be more or less concentrated in some part of the country. It is chiefly through the district organization that they become linked, upon the pattern of kinship, of marriage and bride-price, with the nuclear group. These groups are not arranged in any definite hierarchy of rank, though rank is of very great importance in the society. Yet there are distinctions between them: some are as honoured as the Lovedu themselves; some are regarded as rather of lower status, though intermarriage with them is not disapproved; others, mostly of non-Sotho origin, are despised and intermarriage with them is frowned upon.

[565] This does not mean that there are institutionalized classes; there are no rigid lines cutting across the society, just as there are no definite •621 functions that may be said to hold together these constituent groups. 571 Functions of a political nature are bound up with the districts, not with 613 the constituent groups as such; some religious and ritual functions are also bound up with the districts, but most of them (except those of national importance) are connected with kin groups, and this never means the whole constituent group and, indeed, usually not the lineage, but people from both sides of the family. Yet the lineage as a descent group has at least legal significance and to it are attached certain rights. On the whole, however, the lineages pale into significance beside the marriage or the bilateral kin groups. There is structural tension between the group which gives the brides and the group which gives the cattle; but one notices in ordinary life not so much the tension as the elaborate measures for maintaining good relations. Not only do the relations between these two groups obtrude themselves more prominently than those within the patrilineal lineages, but it is the main concern of judicial proceedings in the *khoro*, the most impressive feature of public life, to preserve harmony between them. There is ample reason for this emphasis because the whole social structure and, through it, the whole tribal system and the strongest bonds with the queen, depend upon the proper functioning of these groups. And these are again a part of, and supported by, the bilateral kin, who, with the cattle, the one relying on the other, constitute the ultimate basis of the social structure.

[561] There are also age-groupings in the society. They have some wide 571 integrating functions, but on the whole the organization into regiments is unimpressive and for national purposes of little value. The hierarchy of age plays a part of importance, however, as a regulative device; but it is not coincident with the hierarchy of rank and thus often occasions serious tensions in the social structure. Finally, we should remind the reader, though we cannot deal with them here, of groupings brought about by modern conditions. There is the more or less compact Christian group, with its divergent interests and loyalties, and the very scattered

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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
769 a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love for them.

●621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cognates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member of the kindred (*mulogo*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to *vafumani* (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*mukhwale*) and, by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes parent-in-law (*nomukhwale*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and relatives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiating from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies, but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked
641 with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, convert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of subjects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the modal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
182

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is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbourhood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,

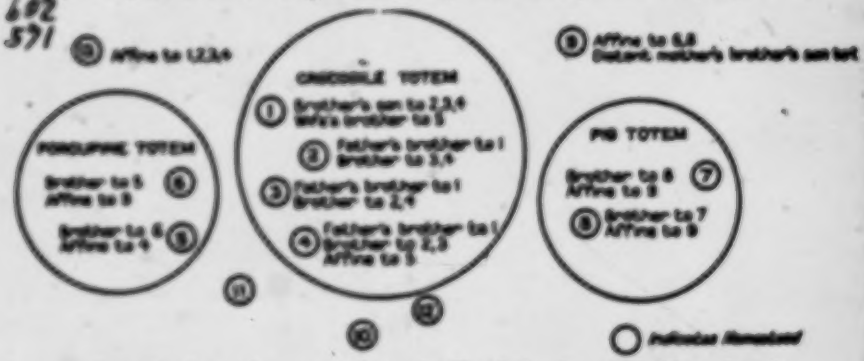

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moleke*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*badubulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

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group of sophisticated men who, influenced by their experiences of European town life, have acquired values and needs disruptive of the old alinements. They have already come to our notice. But if we deal with them, we must also discuss the disturbances in the old settled spheres of men as distinguished from women. For this and for any elaboration of the manifold aspects of the various social groupings touched upon in this chapter we have no room. It will be sufficient to draw attention to a few points only. 571

Let us look briefly at the tribe as a whole. We shall obtain some impression of its constituent elements by merely listing the group names of the various district heads. For the moment it is sufficient to accept this name as a kind of distinctive designation; it may be the name of a totem or a place, of a dynasty or a tribe. Within the effective jurisdiction of the queen, which extends considerably beyond the reserve and the tribal farms, the following group names of district heads are found: thirty-four district heads bearing the name *kuzwo Mubale*, or the name of the royal group; sixteen Elephants, mostly of very different ancestries and very divergent places of origin; nine *kuzwo vaudigwa* or *vamudiga*; fifteen *kuzwo vathole* or *vamahuba*, both spoken of as 'brothers' of the royal group, and also four *kuzwo matshazi* or *vamavulana* not originally related but now the great maternal uncles of the queen's group; eleven Crocodiles, mostly from the west, but some with secondary designations indicating probable diverse ancestries; thirteen Venda, some with, some without totems, some from as near as Tswale, others from as far as Mpefu; five Lions whose interrelations, if they exist at all (coming as they do from such different directions and at such different times), are wholly obscure and lost in oblivion; and besides these, smaller numbers of Leba, those curious kosher-killing, exclusive wanderers with their moon ritual from the north, of Wild Dogs from the highveld, Khalaga and Dibanyika from Rhodesia, of Shangana-Tonga of various branches of that great group of peoples whose tenure of headship is only half recognised, of Koni who, in proportion to their numbers, hold very few districts, not to mention Ramafalo, who is a Pig of Lozdi, one *kuzwo madevele*, a few Sia of Levia, and several sub-heads under the *vamamadebe* who are descended from Mugodo, the last of the Lovedu kings. 619 571 622

It is not to be thought that the relative number of heads of this or that constituent group in any way reflects the number of people of that group in the tribe. There is, for instance, a considerable population of Porcupines, of Impalas, of Mbesi, of Goats, but there are no district heads of these groups or clusters. Nor must we conceive of these groups as entities having something more in common than their name and, where it has not been lost in oblivion, a background of history and tradition. There is no solidarity between their members. Where some of them live together in a district, it is their relationship to the head or the emphasis upon the common life of the territorial unit that holds them together rather than any conception of a link with a far-off ancestor or of a mystical bond with their totem. They are said to swear (*ba ana*) by their totem, which is sometimes called *mayano* (what is sworn by), sometimes *matupo* (what is grouped together)—these two words are occasionally sharply

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571 622 619 distinguished, but more often, especially among the common people, they are identified or hopelessly confused. But if to swear by one's totem means something in some cases and among some groups, it usually signifies as little as when we swear by Jupiter.

571 619 Before embarking upon a further elucidation of these names, let us look more closely at an area in Uulovedu so as to obtain a better idea of the distribution and nature of these constituent groups. We select an area towards the south-west, of about four square miles, because if we go to the centre we shall obtain an exaggerated impression of the proportion of *kuzwo*, the royal group, whereas in the extreme north we may well think that we are in a tribe of Shangana-Tonga.

[161] In this area, which has a population of about 830 people, there are, counting the group names of both men and women, Elephants, Cattle, Crocodiles, Leopards, Porcupines, Goats, Lions, Pigs, Duikers, Impala, Wild Dogs, Khalaga and Sia without totem, besides a fair sprinkling of Shangana-Tonga and even people using the name Zimbabwe. There are two individuals calling themselves Oorlams, one Bush and one Kapa (Cape coloured), which is most unusual and does not reflect the position in the tribe as a whole. There are, finally, some whom we must merely designate Venda because, as they say, they swear by no animal or object and they do not know to what Venda group they belong. That is not the end of the matter, for in the Elephants (*ɸou*) cluster there are fifteen different groups. Some of them may be remotely related, but they distinguish themselves by different secondary names and know of no common ancestry or of any links in the past; indeed, as they come from very different parts, they positively deny a common origin. For instance, there are *ɸou* of Khalaga, recent-comers from Rhodesia, *ɸou* of Tsubye, far away to the south-east near Phalaborwa, *ɸou* of Thocolo in the Game Reserve to the north-east, *ɸou* of Raoothata, the messengers, it is said, of the royal group when they migrated from Rhodesia, *ɸou* of Sefareni, whose nearest relatives are in Nareni (Mahlo) country. Similarly, there are ten different groups of Lions: some, like the Khinga, were the aboriginal inhabitants, who are said to have known no fire and no political organisation, and were ousted by the Lovedu; others, like those of Selowa, come from the far east with the cult of the possessed, which they might have adopted from the Ndau in Portuguese Moçambique, and still others hail from Vendaland and Uudokwa. There are likewise clusters of Crocodiles with four, of Duikers with four, of Pigs, Khalaga, Sia, Impala and Wild Dogs, each with two different secondary designations (division or group names). Among the Shangana-Tonga, though they are comparatively few in number, there are no less than four different totems and nine different other names (*shilongo*), such as Loyi, Khosa, Mavunda, Mathie and Ngoveni. Reckoning all the differently named groups as distinct, we have over sixty such groups in this area alone.

The following table gives a rough representation of the position in the area in question:

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marriage. Where the chief is a woman, her own son or daughter succeeds. The Lobedu now have a distinct preference for women rulers; the last three chiefs have been women, and the present queen succeeded in preference to her elder uterine brother. It would seem that the fashion was set by the Lobedu, for tribal genealogies show no women chiefs in the Lowveld prior to the accession of Modjadji I. Shortly after that we have the appearance of the first queen in the Khaha and Mamaila tribes, followed later by Letswalo and Mahlo. Lowveld tribes are no exception to the general tendency among Bantu for succession to the throne to be accompanied by trouble and bloodshed. They have, however, an interesting method of submitting the case of various claimants to the decision of the powers that be by the ordeal of trying the door. All claimants to the throne are brought to the closed door of the hut in which the old chief died. One by one, they step forward shouting their own name and ancestry to try the door which, while resisting all efforts of other claimants, flies open at the touch of the rightful heir.[1]

The Lowveld chief is assisted and advised in the government of his country by his relatives,[2] generally known as *bakhomana*. There are no formal councils, as among Tswana, and it is even doubtful whether the *pitjo* or meeting of all adult men in the tribe ever had power to make decisions. Certainly to-day it is called only when orders or notices from European authorities have to be transmitted. No one in the Lobedu tribe ever knows what is happening even in important matters affecting them all, and the tribe accepts with equanimity the most outrageous favouritism of the royal family.

The district, bounded by natural features such as streams or depressions down the hill-sides, is generally quite small, varying in extent from about one square mile to five, so that in a country like Modjadji's with an area of some 140 square miles there are about 100 headmen. Aggregations of districts into larger units under sub-chiefs, such as are found in Zululand, though not unknown, are not

[1] Some one is, of course, inside to hold the door against the wrong claimants and in Modjadji's tribe the chief always has one hut with two doors, said to be for this purpose.

[2] The *rangwe* (father's brother) or *rakhadi* (father's sister) are often important advisers or, especially where a woman is ruling, the *malume* (mother's brother).

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634 characteristic of Lowveld political organization. Districts are still of
624 great importance, and the district head is a busy and important man, both socially and politically. Contact with the European has resulted in two diverse tendencies observable in our area: among small tribes,
634 such as Phalaborwa and Sekhopo's Lobedu, there has been increased
624 centralization, the chief taking over functions, such as allocation of
178 land, which used to be the province of headmen; elsewhere, especially in the large kingdom of Modjadji, district headmen are in many respects becoming more independent, exacting from underlings labour to which they are not entitled and even controlling other districts to which they have no right.

624 Women may here, as among Venda, be heads of districts,[1] and, though the proportion of women to men is never high, they are often
562 the most important district heads in the tribe. Women become headmen in a variety of ways: among Lobedu a woman of the royal family may be appointed head of an area (generally, nowadays, over newly-bought tribal land) and though in practice her husband may do most of the work, she it is who is recognized and approached in the last resort. A daughter of the chief house succeeds her father even if there are sons of other houses; a woman may succeed her husband when the children are too young, and though, strictly speaking, she is only a regent in this case, she often continues to rule until her death and long after her son has attained his majority. Or a *rakhadi* may be asked to act as regent for her nephew, in which case she very often secures the succession for her own son, ousting the rightful heir.

695 LAW AND JUSTICE. The Lowveld was the land of the ordeal, the only method by which witchcraft could be discovered or difficult cases of theft and adultery, where evidence was inconclusive, be decided. Boiling medicated water which scalded only the hands of the guilty might be used or a concoction be drunk which intoxicated the culprit, leaving the innocent unaffected. Except for occasional use among the Phalaborwa, however, the ordeal has been completely ousted by the Shangana–Tonga smeller-out and a modern method of dealing with witchcraft has developed over the whole of the Lowveld, which has spread not only into Vendaland but also into portions of the

[1] Except among Phalaborwa, Tsubye, and the people of Tswale and Sekhopo.

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857 of *letate* (*Mariscus sp.*) or *lejchtjchi* (*Cyperus immensus*), rush-grasses which the ants seize with their antennae. The girls who have been stamping now set out with some friends from a neighbouring village, all armed [561] with axes, to collect firewood. The girls of this company are age-mates; they share their labours, confide their love affairs, bathe together, and, in [832] the late afternoon, when they go to the bush, they sit together elongating their *labia minora* (*hu kwova*). Meanwhile the village lies basking and dreaming in the afternoon sun; except for the pecking fowls there is hardly a stir. '*Uu gae*' ('Where is it—beer'), says Raselaka to his son Sekware, as he returns with some poles on his shoulder for repairing his 574 wife's granary. 'There is beer of *lejema* [work-party] over at Mudziri's,' 273 is the reply; and the men, accompanied by the visitors, set out for the beer drink, knowing they will be allowed to partake even though they have done no work.

The hum of voices as you near a certain kraal leaves you in no doubt that this must be Mudziri's village. A fair crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the woman who is holding the *lejema* and a typical beer-drinking scene meets the eye. The centre of the picture is a large pot of beer placed in a rounded depression made for it in the courtyard. Beside it stands a flat winnowing basket containing long-handled calabash cups from which the beer is drunk. Beside the pot sits a man who serves the beer, using a beer-cup as ladle; he gives each cup to a young man of about twenty, who hands it round. The guests have ranged themselves on either side of the beer pot, women on one side, men on the other. As each calabash is emptied, it is brought back by the young man who is doing the waiting, to be filled. There is no hurry. Each one drinks at his leisure and conversation flows freely. Every one knows he will be given in his turn and, if one man is handed a second cup, he will pass it on to any one who has not yet been served, till all have had four or five. It is a pleasant social gathering and all the latest gossip is discussed. Small children toddle about in between the drinkers and may even be given a 651 little of the beer. Ominously Pheduli remarks, 'Madume has seen police 625 near Medingen. There appear to be four of them. What can they be wanting?' 'Oh,' replies Dwagu, 'they are no doubt raiding for tax defaulters!' There is general uneasiness, for about a fifth of the gathering are in arrears. Muhale is six years in arrears and, as he never goes to town to work, he has not once been caught. 'They won't catch me napping in my home to-night,' volunteers Mathekha. '*I shall go into the* bush again. Are they Shangana-Tongs or Sotho, those police Madume saw?' a very relevant question, because the Shangana-Tongs, more likely than not recruited from outside the reserve, will not know these hiding places in the forests and caves. Here Pikela describes how his friend Setimela, who had himself always been in default and knew all the best hiding places, had joined the police the previous year. Consequently, at the very next raid the police made a most successful scoop, catching ninety-six defaulters, whom they marched to Duivelskloof.

574 The beer-pot is almost empty and people are merely sitting talking 273 when the host calls Raselaka and his European guest aside into his reception hut, together with a few other intimates. A woman brings in a small

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181 of course, not congenial to every one, and frustrations occur; but the society provides for procedures whereby serious frustration is minimized. Thus the loss to one family of a murdered man is solaced by replacing him from the family of the murderer and building up permanent marriage and *mungwalo* links between the two families. Tolerance of variations harmonizes with the insistence upon compromises, and in the setting of the culture it does not create serious problems of instability and insecurity. Security is provided by the integration and coherence of the dominant motivations and interests, the long-run reciprocities of the social system, and the unshakable confidence in the powers of the queen. At the same time the predictability necessary for stability is of a different order from that of our social arrangements; and it is measured very largely by the spirit and the willingness and attitude of people.

181 Conformity is not secured by external sanctions of force and only to a
'36 remarkably small degree by the ancestors. Nor are people so delicately conditioned to the values of the society that they spontaneously react to conscience. The internal sanctions are only moderately developed and there is no undue sensitiveness to shame or guilt, ridicule or abuse. An offender is not cast out; and a witch, generally speaking, is not ostracized. Over-sensitiveness to rebuffs, even in delicate situations such as when a man begs the favour of joining a beer drink, is deprecated, for, as they say, 'To chase a guinea-fowl [the beggar] is to cause it to go where it can scratch for food', so that it is foolish to feel crestfallen when the remedy is to pass on and seek beer where you will be well received. Nor should a man be sensitively timid or unnecessarily diffident: 'He who feels cold need not be shown the fire'; one may ask for favours and should not feel injured if refused; and there is no disgrace in begging for whatever one needs. Indeed, just as 'An ant bearing a burden cannot crawl under dry wood' (that is, things that will conceal him), so a man who has of the good things of life cannot hope to escape sharing with others who may legitimately beg some of them. Europeans often interpret these traits as obtuseness, shameless beggary, insensitiveness to high ideals, and even insolence.

The Lovedu are sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system, and these forces are set into motion against a man when he disregards the reciprocities upon which the system relies. Since there are few repressed fears the pressure of which on the mind can be removed by confession and atonement, the sense of guilt seldom moves men; offenders very rarely repent merely at the dictate of conscience. The sense of shame is more delicately internalized, but it drives men to make restitution only when the misdeed has been exposed and brought into relation with the reciprocity system. The ego, in other words, is not highly vulnerable, for it is well-balanced, so that frustration of one purpose does not prostrate the individual, and there are many opportunities of escape from an antagonistic to a better disposed group or environment; as they phrase it, 'There is no madman but he has a friend'. Participation in the benefits of the culture depends upon not offending against the reciprocities; but the positive aspect, pride and self-realization in mutuality, is far more important than the negative aspect, fear of being deprived of the reciprocities.

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It need hardly be said that the reciprocities are not precisely calculated equivalences, nor a series of exactly balanced obligations. People do not consciously think of the long-run result of their behaviour, and they know that social duty done is not always sure of its reward. 'Hard as the axe chops, it cannot eat the honey it extracts', they say to warn those who expect that their efforts will inevitably be rewarded.

The traits, motivations, and attitudes of the Lovedu become more and more intelligible in the context of the culture as a whole. Whether they are so delicately integrated that we can speak of the culture as an articulated whole, is not a question we shall try to answer. The tribal boundaries are certainly not the boundaries of the culture, which both in its forms and in its attitudes very gradually merges into the culture of a larger area, the limits of which cannot be exactly determined. In view of the increasingly great variations as one goes further and further from the nucleus, the degree of integration can be regarded relatively only to the area one chooses. Lack of integration is often more apparent than real. With regard both to recently introduced elements and to old elements which in their forms or purposes lag behind the changes of the whole culture, the process of integration is proceeding apace, but can never be complete. Thus the cult of possession is shedding those elements that are incongruous with the culture. There are also apparent inconsistencies in the divergent forms allowed in the districts and in principles of behaviour which are contradictory. Thus, for instance, revenge is permitted in the magico-witchcraft sphere, but is outlawed in the legal sphere. We may compare this contradiction to our approval of killing an enemy in war, which is conceived to be in the interests of national security, and our condemnation of killing a fellow man in peace, which is a crime against the security of life. Cultures often segregate contradictory aspects of social experience into logic-tight compartments, and there is no conflict as long as the contradictions can either be kept distinct or be reconciled. If they are embodied in the cultural system, no pressure is brought to compare them, and there is no lack of integration either in the mind of the individual or in the culture.

Men feel insecure chiefly in the face of disease and death, dissension, drought, and the disruptive danger of European intervention. The Lovedu attribute their fears to witchcraft, aggressiveness and quarrelsomeness, wrong burials, and the 'spoiling' of the country by the white man. We shall deal briefly only with two of these sources of insecurity: disease, which is one of the most constant preoccupations of the Lovedu mind, and the European, whose meddling has changed the shape and meaning of life and has upset the standards of right and wrong.

There is abundant reason for the perpetual anxiety about health, for disease is rife and even minor illnesses provide the occasion for the entry of the witch. Read against the background of their imperfect knowledge of anatomy and of the causation of disease, experience warns men that almost anything, from a simple scratch to the dreaded 'coughing disease', may cause death; in every case, not germs and poisons, but witches and sorcerers, may enter the body and take advantage of the weakness of the patient. Disease is combated, and susceptibility to disease is guarded against, at

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577 769 arms' to cause drought in 1938, it was because he had for personal reasons been buried, at his own express request made before death, in the Christian cemetery instead of in the damp shade of the forest, like his forebears.

577 593 It would appear that this lack of interest on the part of the ancestral gods in the morality of their descendants is in conformity with the pattern of the relationship between living parents and their children. Parental protection and care are given not by virtue of the morality or conduct of their children; it is one of the imperatives of the kinship bond. A parent loves his wayward, bad son as much as, if not more than, his well-behaved, virtuous children. It is only a bad personal relationship between parent and child or neglect of filial duty that could cause a parent to withhold his protection.

•626 Sanctions for right behaviour are, first and most important, the pressure of public opinion and of the reciprocal arrangements of the political and social structure. A man conforms to the code because of his self-esteem and the high regard he has for his reputation for fairness and moderation, wisdom and ability to get on with others, generosity and helpfulness, not merely among his kin but in the wider circle of his friends and neighbours. The next important group of sanctions are the pain and misfortune that may follow if those he has injured use vengeance magic or resort to witchcraft and sorcery against him. Certain types of conduct carry their own automatic ritual sanctions which form a third group of deterrents, even though there is little pressure of public opinion against the conduct and no necessary or immediate consequence to the person himself, unless indeed he is repeatedly guilty. Finally, duties towards the ancestors, such as tendance and recognition, have the religious sanctions of ancestral anger in the form of illness, or misfortune. Ancestral displeasure can also be inferred as a sanction acting indefinitely and over a vague area of conduct to reinforce men's obligations to kin, generally those kin who stand to them in a relation of some authority. This inference may be made, not because ancestors ever directly cause misfortune to a descendant for breaches of correct behaviour to kin as they do in the case of neglect of themselves, but because bad luck may be attributed to failure in one's duties to kin.

626 769

[769] 577 Ancestor worship of the Lovedu plays hardly any part, then, in upholding tribal morality. Nor are people so delicately conditioned to the values of the society that they spontaneously react to conscience. Their moral code is not markedly internalized and Lovedu have no sense of 'sin'. Since there are few repressed fears the pressure of which on the mind can be removed by confession and atonement, a sense of guilt seldom moves men, and offenders very rarely repent merely at the dictates of conscience. Their sense of shame is more delicately internalized, but it drives men to make restitution only when the misdeed has been exposed or brought into relation with the system of reciprocities. Lovedu are sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system, and the moral code is upheld mainly

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Mate selection and marriage exchanges as reflections of the social structure—social and psychological aspects of nuptial rites—the handling of the themes of sex and concubinage, of barrenness and premature death in the marriage situation.

FROM mummeries and masks we turn to marriage and *munyualo* (bride-price). The secrecy of the *digwa* contrasts strangely with the publicity of marriage ceremonial; but they are both cultural devices for dealing with cultural problems. The hidden forces in nature and man are intractable and can be brought under control only by rephrasing them as mysteries, the fear of which is overcome by man-made initiations and cults. Marriage is also an initiation, but its complicated ceremonial is concerned chiefly with laying the concrete foundations of the social structure. This is a gigantic and delicate task, almost beyond the capacity of the culture. Fortunately, we can see more clearly than in the case of the *digwa* how this task has been accomplished, but unfortunately we shall have space merely to glance at the larger features instead of examining closely the exquisite workmanship and superlative ornamentation.

It is not easy to appreciate the immense implications of marriage among the Lovedu. For one thing, the concomitant cattle exchanges transform it into something wholly unlike the contract between two individuals of different sex among us. The fact that a Lovedu woman may, just like a man, marry a wife, warns us that we are in a world entirely different from our own. The elaborate ceremonial reflects the enormous importance of marriage and of the network of links that are forged by the cattle that pass. The bonds that are created in this manner can be put to all manner of uses. They form the basis of the *munyualo* ring of exchanges. They hold together the political system, incorporating as they do foreign elements in the tribe, and casting the net of relationship over the whole country. Marriage and *munyualo* provide the pattern even for dealing with homicide: the murder is not avenged; by handing over cattle or by giving his daughter, the murderer and his relatives become enmeshed in the network of exchanges; he is transformed from criminal to kinsman and a potential blood feud is turned into the reciprocal relations between the people of the bride and those of the groom. A man threatened with starvation when his crops have failed and his cattle have died can, by linking himself to the *munyualo* ring of another, save both himself and his family.

But the most startling proof of the importance of Lovedu marriage lies therein that the tribunals of the *khoro*—in other words, the organization that corresponds to our legal system—are mainly concerned with marriage and *munyualo* tangles; the *raison d'être* of the *khoro* and its law appear to be the preservation of the marriage system. The whole genius of *khoro* law and of *khoro* judicial proceedings is the genius of resolving tensions within the gigantic superstructure built upon marriage and its

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696 The procedure to-day involved in witchcraft cases can be set into motion and these cases may be settled by district heads. In short, set rules as to competence do not exist and district heads are left to cope with as much as they can manage.

576 627 561 A brief discussion of some quasi-judicial processes will enable us to appreciate better, as it will introduce us to the procedure and spirit of the *khoro*. Firstly, there is the method by which especially old women deal with disrespectful or insulting behaviour of younger women. Should one or more young women play a practical joke upon or be disrespectful to an old woman, or playfully 'dance' an infant child, even their own, or prematurely try to make it sit up or walk or scold or beat it, in the presence of the grandmother or of an old woman, their behaviour is regarded as insulting. The conception is that old women in their role as midwives, rather than young mothers, have brought children into the world and the old, not the young, are the guardians of the babes. If one young woman arrogates to herself rights and privileges which belong to the old women, the latter are entitled to take suitable action. The insulted old woman reports to a few of her age-mates and in consultation they decide to punish the age-mates of the young woman resident in the same territorial unit—for example, a district. There is neither 'trial' nor tribunal. The punishment consists of three elements: the age-mates of the young women (say all those who have one baby) must brew beer with which to effect a reconciliation with the older women; in a rite accompanying the beer drink and resembling that used at initiations, the oldest woman canes her immediate junior, who in turn canes the next, and so on, including the culprits; and, finally, the culprits are read a lesson as to the iniquity of being disrespectful to their elders.

One day three young married women, in circumstances that implied disrespect, sent three old women a tiny quantity of snuff. The older women immediately fined the younger and vicariously all their age-mates living in the Christian settlement, for they were all residents there. They were told to grind snuff and restitute their wrong with beer. Five days later the twelve young married women of the settlement came to the house of the oldest woman, bringing large quantities of nuts, light beer, pumpkins, and other food; their husbands, in addition, sent a large tin of snuff and these 'gifts' were divided among the old women. Then followed the rite and the warning. On another occasion all the young mothers of a district were fined because one of them had 'danced' its baby in the presence of its grandmother. Likewise, it is said, though we have not seen a case, that the old women may fine a young father and his age-mates, if he forgets their privileges in regard to babies. But we cannot speak of regimental courts, the age-grades are not determined by the 'schools', the responsibility is territorial, and the punishment is 'beer of reconciliation' (largely replaced by food among Christians).

627 691 The second procedure, that called *ku khumelana* (to beg pardon, to reconcile), has an enormous province and a profound significance, not only for legal arrangements, but in the whole culture. The procedure uses a *mukhumedi*, the emissary who intervenes on behalf of one of the parties to beg the pardon of the other. Its essence is not humiliation of

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the one, but bilateral reconciliation: thus people often talk of *ku khumujana*, to beg pardon of one another, to become reconciled. If A., to whom B. has lent her pot, breaks it, A. should send an old woman as conciliator (*mukhumedi*) to express regret and to ask forgiveness. But the *mukhumedi* figures in every conceivable kind of case, whether or not amenable to the courts: in homicide and adultery settled out of the *khoro*; in breaches of etiquette, such as bad behaviour of a bridegroom on his courtship visits, which cannot be submitted to the *khoro*; in disputes already before the *khoro*. It is not necessarily the wrongdoer, objectively considered, who should initiate the procedure: an illtreated wife who runs away to her parents must be sent back with a *mukhumedi*. Nor will the *khoro* necessarily order the guilty party to *khumchua*: he who must beg pardon is the junior, or the person of inferior rank.

The great province of *ku khumchua* is in family and kinship disputes, only a small proportion of which ever reach the *khoro*. The group of people concerned as a family council is determined by cultural arrangements. A quarrel between a father and son of one of his wives is the immediate concern of that house alone; no one else, not even the father's brother or a co-wife, may intervene; but the cattle-linked sister who built the house with her cattle presides and 'cuts' the case. A brother of that sister may be called in, but it is not necessary, and in any case he may only advise if his opinion is asked. If the matter concerns a wider circle, others may be called in; it is impossible to lay down general rules, since on the one hand, each cultural complex (e.g. marriage or inheritance) implies a different set of interested persons and, on the other, each case has its peculiar aspects. The marriage of the daughter of a house is, as regards its obligation to a cattle-linked house, the concern primarily of that house, but if the daughter is to be married to a stranger the mistress of the cattle-linked house must be consulted. If co-wives quarrel, their differences are the concern of the houses concerned, but if one of the wives has bewitched the other, the husband is a mere spectator as regards the arrangements that may be made between the parents of the co-wives; and even in a *khoro* case, it is not the husband, but the parents who are the parties who may be ordered to *khumujana*.

Ha khumujana may be likened to compounding a wrong, but it clearly has much deeper significance: it may be ordered by the *khoro*, alone or in addition to restitution; and it is quite irrelevant whether the wrong is amenable to the court. There is no wrong that cannot be submitted to this procedure. Though theoretically 'A dog which eats another cannot grow fat' (*i.e.* a murderer must always be killed), *ku khumchua* is in practice always possible, for 'He who kills another kills his brother-in-law' (*i.e.* if the victim's kin agree, the homicide may be made good by a full *mayanale* or a daughter or sister). In modern practice, most interesting cases have arisen. In one case some years ago the murderer, who had killed his victim for medicine, a heinous crime, offered his sister in marriage to the victim's elder brother; the investigation by the European authorities failed; and to-day there is a child of the marriage, and permanent links between victim and murderer because, on the pattern of

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bride and cattle exchanges, they have become cattle-linked kin. The handing over of a bride or of *mayuwale* may supplement the supposedly inadequate punishment meted out by European courts, or *ne* in substitution for the penalty such courts would have imposed if the parties had given away the facts. There is no payment to the queen, no trial, only *ku khumelwa*. The bride is not returned, as is reported in the case of other tribes, when she has borne a child in the lineage of the victim. In 1938, when the sons of A. and B. were herding together, A.'s son pushed a large rock which rolled over and accidentally killed B.'s son. A. sent a *mukhwandi*, but B. refused to accept a mere apology; he wanted 'something to wipe away his tears'. Eventually he accepted four head of cattle, which were brought to the *khwe* of the district head and there handed to him. A little later A. demanded back his cattle, saying that he had lost too much and hoping that publicity would frighten B.; but A.'s object was defeated by a device which we cannot describe here except to say that it was as cunning as it was effective.

Hu khumelwa is the predominant procedure in the districts, and everywhere it is considered especially appropriate to adultery, damage to crops, and 'blood' cases or bodily assaults; it is often the only permissible procedure in family disputes; and it is praiseworthy in theft cases. It may involve an elaborate series of acts, to some features of which we may refer. In one case a wife had committed adultery, and when the husband, after the birth of the child, had discovered the identity of the adulterer, he sent his wife to him. The adulterer, as is customary when he admits his wrong, sent the wife back with the 'goat of [illicitly] meeting one another', which he had borrowed from a neighbour. The goat was killed and the husband gave his erring wife the back leg, the portion that really belonged to him, which was an unusual humiliation. The wife went to an old woman, who took her back to beg pardon on behalf of the wife and to say that the adulterer would later send a cow with his own *mukhwandi*. The procedure in adultery or seduction is not rigid, but essentially the injured husband or the father sends a messenger to adulterer or seducer, who, if he admits the accusation, sends back his *mukhwandi* with an offer of settlement; negotiations may continue for some time and the culprit may be let off lightly, in many cases only a goat being exacted, though, to avoid publicity, more than the usual compensation may be paid. In 'blood' cases *ku khumelwa* strikingly benefits both assailer and victim. In theft, the offender must offer the thing stolen plus a goat or even a head of cattle 'of causing [the thing] to come back'. Mudiwa, living at the capital, one day found that some of his pumpkins had been stolen in a field at Khikhudini. A little later he met a woman who, caught with some pumpkin leaves as she came from the field, admitted her guilt. Mudiwa reported to the district head at Khikhudini, who arranged that the parties met him at the woman's home to discuss the matter. There she offered a pig as pardon. Mudiwa accepted, told her to sell the pig and give him 10s. The proceedings were more or less private, those present being only Mudiwa, the woman and a relative or two, and the district head, in the role technically as judge, but really as *mukhwandi*. If the matter had been between residents of the same district, the intervention

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of the district head would have been unnecessary; but very frequently he acts as *nakhwandi* in these cases. 627 691

Ho khumchua is the only proper initial procedure in cases of damage to crops. The owner of the cattle is called to see the damage, begs pardon with a goat, and is told to strengthen his cattle kraal. If depredations continue, he may be taken to the *khwv*. To omit the preliminary procedure of *ho khumchua* is not necessarily fatal, but is regarded as being revengeful and nothing is abhorred more than revenge. If the man whose crops are damaged refuses reconciliation and makes the owner of the cattle 'pay' instead of allowing *ho khumchua*, the owner will, it is said, seek an opportunity to revenge himself, and the saying that applies is: 'It is the blow that follows, not the first blow, that hurts.' The saying is, however, of general application and is invoked in regard to any injury or wrong. Practice differs in the various districts as regards *ho khumchua* for damage to crops, and when a man is resident in one district and has his fields in another, very interesting conflicts of jurisdiction and law sometimes occur, but we cannot stop to consider them.

After formal complaint—that is, after a case is 'in the *khwv*'—*ho khumchua* may, according to the circumstances, either end the matter or be treated as a confession of guilt (*dumu mulodo*) by plaintiff or *khwv*. *Dumu mulodo* is a term used also outside the *khwv*. If the owner of cattle continues to be careless after several warnings, he may find that his goat of reconciliation will be regarded, not as a goat of begging pardon, but as a confession of guilt, and the victim will exact what he considers to be the real damage. To accept pardon stops *khwv* proceedings, and if after *dumu mulodo* the culprit makes good what the victim demands there also can be no *khwv* trial; but if he does not, the offer of pardon is a confession, not conceived as having been made without prejudice, but admissible in evidence. More often *dumu mulodo* refers to a goat which the defendant offers in the *khwv* in settlement and apology. The circumstances, especially the attitude of the plaintiff and the previous history of the case, will then determine whether the matter ends there. The *khwv* may say, 'This is your *dumu mulodo*; now pay the ox which in our [or the plaintiff's] opinion fits the offence.'

Examples of *dumu mulodo* are difficult to give as a long history is involved and, to understand them, we should have to refer to details of the culture which are not dealt with in this book. But it may be possible to simplify for presentation here the case of *Mabula v. Magubu*, though it lasted six months in the *khwv* of the capital alone. These two women were co-wives of Khidai and were entangled in one of those polygons of jealousies arising in polygyny which are the counterpart of the eternal triangles of our monogamy. The co-wives quarrelled and fought about their extra-marital lovers, and Magubu bit Mabula on the lip. When the wound refused to yield to treatment it was said to be due to the 'bad teeth' of Magubu, who, it was suspected, must be a *lokoga*, a person who had been allowed to live though her upper teeth had appeared before the lower. Having vainly appealed to her husband to order Magubu's teeth to be scraped for medicine, Mabula complained to her parents. After much manœuvring in order to avoid being drawn into the conflict, 797 [326]

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627 the mother and the brother of Mabula went to the parents of Magɔsha,
691 who, however, refused to allow the scraping of their daughter's teeth on the grounds that it implied that they were witches.

When the matter came before the *khɔrɔ*, the view was taken that, 'If a dog bites you and the wound festers, it is not wrong to ask the owner for a hair from its tail': you are not imputing witchcraft and it does not matter that the hair or scrapings may have no healing virtues, the important matter being willingness to help. Many side issues emerged, especially as to whose responsibility was the scraping of the teeth: the husband's or the parent's. Once Mukugoloi, Magɔsha's father, by escaping from his village, evaded the attempt made by Mabula's elder sister to scrape Magɔsha's teeth. There were at times recriminations in the *khɔrɔ*, which showed that the *manyusalo* links were about to be broken. 'If you no longer care for us,' said Mukugoloi, 'I shall pay Mabula's parents'; but Khidai replied, 'What kind of ill-bred woman is that daughter of yours, who is pregnant by a lover, and swears at me by the things inside my trousers. My cattle have provided wives for two of your sons and only I of all your sons-in-law have "gates" in your village.' An old man interjected, 'The jealousies of the child are settled by its parents. Khidai is not responsible. You, Mukugoloi, must *khumchua*.' A week later Mukugoloi offered a goat of reconciliation. But the *khɔrɔ* said, 'No. This goat is *dama mulodu*. We now want you to bring an ox, because the father of Mabula has come to you often to ask you to *khumchua* and you refused.' And the father added, 'Yes, I came also to the *khɔrɔ* (a distance of eight miles) for eighteen weeks, but you did not turn up. Can I "work" eighteen weeks for merely a goat?'

Mukugoloi consented to pay, but urged that he had a case against Khidai, who should have prevented the drawn-out proceedings by settling it. That was another matter, said the court, for 'The kidneys of an elephant cannot be harnessed together' (they are, like two cases, too weighty to be dealt with at the same time). We may doubt whether it was wise, in view of the polygon of conflicts, to treat as *dama mulodu* the goat offered in reconciliation, but in these matters the *khɔrɔ* is generally wiser than we are.

692 *Hu khumchua* and its elaborations lead us to consider the procedure in the *khɔrɔ*. The conceptions are interwoven, but a *khɔrɔ* trial is regarded as essentially different from the quasi-judicial procedures. It is public, unlike *hu khumchua*, and it starts with *hu ɓalia* (a formal complaint to an officer of the court); there are 'opening' and 'closing' fees and compensation or restitution (*mulofu*); and the constitution of the *khɔrɔ* is not based on alinements of interested parties. Before *hu ɓalia*, there is no *khɔrɔ* case; the matter is private. *Hu vola*, privately to ask a debtor to pay, precedes but does not necessarily lead to *hu ɓalia*; it may end in *hu khumchua*. But *khɔrɔ* trials and settlement in the family or by reconciliation out of court do not differ from one another as regards the sanction of force; both rely upon consent. Because the *khɔrɔ* is public, contempt of its authority may be punished, but the humiliation of the offender is a means rather of inducing him to consent than of enforcing a judgement; we have never seen it applied as an alternative to paying the

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confidence in the *Akwa* and its methods, but some men increasingly resort to a mixture of the supernatural, the 'sending back' of the evil, and the processes of the European courts.

'Blood' cases and disobedience to tribal authorities, as well as witchcraft, are dealt with by procedures essentially different from those so far described. Homicide, especially accidental killing (*gwa*), is usually restituted by *ku Ahamchwa* and by converting the criminal to a kinsman, without the intervention of the *Akwa* or payment to the queen. But other procedures were also used: a murderer might be killed in the heat of the moment by a relative of the victim, and in such a case that ended the matter; or he might be executed by order of the queen unless he could escape to one of the recognized sanctuaries in the country; or he might be dealt with as a witch. Homicide in its manifold aspects is too large a subject for treatment here, but since it is, in regard to aspects of law dealt with in this book, adequately illuminated by our next subject, viz. procedure in 'blood' cases, we may content ourselves with the remark that homicide apparently did not involve a *Akwa* trial.

'Blood' cases to-day present a curious mixture of different procedures of the past. One old element of the procedure, being incongruous with the disapproval of self-help, has completely disappeared. Old men told us that 'blood' cases were settled by the kin, not submitted to the *Akwa*. That, but no doubt also the reluctance to appeal to the European, to-day explains the emphasis on reconciliation and the encouragement of *ku Ahamchwa* in these cases. If a 'blood' case comes to the *Akwa*, the victim gets nothing and the assaulter pays heavily; if the matter is privately settled, the victim gets something and the assaulter pays less. In the old days, if private settlement failed, the kin of the victim went to attack the assaulter's village: they reported to the queen, but she exacted no fine if in the attack a man was killed. Though this method of execution is unknown to-day, it is still said that a man who kills an aggressor pays nothing, not even to the queen, for 'He who dies on the road is not to be cried for. Let the aggressor kill himself' (*mufo-dzilwi a u khwi, mulodo u ilodzwi*). This precept is also invoked to justify 'revenge' by means of medicines, but here, as in the case of aggression, it is regarded as self-defence, not self-help, just as killing an adulterer caught in the act—in which case also no blood-money is paid, even to the queen—is thought of as killing a thieving dog. These conceptions leave intact the aversion from vengeance: there is no blood revenge, no vendetta, no trace of the *lex talionis*, though a limb for a limb is known not very far off. Self-help, even in cases where it is admitted among tribes with more highly developed legal institutions, is frowned upon: one may neither kill a pig of another that damages one's crops nor drive cattle that have entered one's gardens into the fields of their owner. A man, provoked or assaulted by another, has no right to retaliate; and it is doubted whether the provocation will mitigate his offence, for no man may take the law in his own hands. Phadzi's relative had been killed by Magwale's sorcery, and in anger Phadzi struck Magwale's cow, which subsequently went lame; yet he was ordered by the *Akwa* to pay the usual compensation.

How has the old procedure merged with the new conceptions? We

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692 can give only part of the answer. The exaggerated abhorrence of self-
682 help and the insistence upon *ku khumelwa*, side by side with the
627 tendency to regard blood as belonging to the queen (phrased as 'the head belongs to the chief'), has not driven the old procedures wholly out of the field. Old men say that 'blood' cases cannot be submitted to the *khoro*, yet they are second in number to *manyonolo* cases. In theory, the procedure is that the victim, having notified his district head, runs to show his blood at the capital, messengers (*mahawula*) of the queen are sent, not to institute an inquiry or conduct a trial, but to collect one goat from every married man in the district of the victim; and each *lehawula* takes two goats for himself and gives the rest to the queen. We have never seen this procedure applied in practice; the danger of European intervention makes it wholly impracticable. Instead, the wounded person reports immediately to the district head, sometimes to the queen, or if the wound is not serious the parties settle the matter by *ku khumelwa*. The district head often arbitrates successfully; but he can neither try nor fine nor exact court fees. If the victim goes to the queen, she sends a *lehawula* (and often more than one) who exacts one goat (the 'fee of the feet') from the assaulter and one from the victim (the 'stick for roasting meat') and should he settle the matter informally, for he cannot conduct a full-dress trial, he receives one further beast (the fine) from the wrongdoer. The latter is given to the queen; the goat given by the victim is killed for the *lehawula*, who takes a hind leg to the queen's *khoro*, where it is eaten chiefly by the councillors; and the victim gets nothing. But if the *lehawula* fails in his mission, which in practice means that the assaulter refuses to submit to him or denies his guilt, he is summoned to the *khoro* at the capital. There is no 'opening' fee, for 'blood' opens the *khoro*; sometimes the parties are ordered to settle the matter between themselves and sometimes the offender is fined one head of cattle, which goes to the queen, and one goat, which is killed for the *khoro*. Sometimes, however, a victim reports to the queen merely to obtain a letter to the Native Commissioner.

692 These general principles are subject in individual cases to many
683 variations which reflect the transitional nature of the procedure and the adjustments that are being made by the society. We have been able to observe the cases that came before the *khoro* far more closely than those settled privately. In one case where a father intervened in a fight between his son and his son's wife, the son in anger stabbed the father; the *khoro* ordered the parties to become reconciled by *ku khumelwa*, the son to beg pardon with a goat. In similar circumstances, where a stranger intervened, the husband was ordered to clear the grass in the queen's garage. In another case the husband wounded the mother of a youth whom he found with his wife, because the mother interfered in the ensuing quarrel between the husband and the youth; the *khoro* told the youth to beg pardon with three goats but fined the husband one head of cattle and one goat. While the *mulajoni* (whistling ancestors) were performing at a religious ceremony, one of them, very much intoxicated, blew his whistle in public and tried to drag one of the women away to the bush. A district head, an initiated man, forcibly ejected the offender, who next

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CHAPTER X

COGS IN THE POLITICAL MACHINERY

Ritual suicide, divine selection, the fire rite, and military as aspects of the royal complex of institutions—links in the political system forged by the wives of the queen—the part women play in politics—structure and individuality of the districts.

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THE political system is not a thing apart, standing aloof from marriage and social structure. These and other institutions are closely interwoven. The political scheme is effective largely because it is patterned upon the arrangements and relies upon the genius of the social system. Its most emphasized aspects are the elaboration of institutions which centre in the queen and the highly developed local administration in the hands of the district heads. The districts form a federation rather than a union, but their autonomy is counterbalanced by subtle devices holding them closely together in the meshes of a web radiating from the capital. The district and the tribe itself may, from certain points of view, be regarded as the village writ large, but the village is not a political unit, and the approach from its organization is not comprehensive enough for fruitful examination.

The district, with its distinctive community life, is linked to the capital upon the pattern of reciprocities created by marriage and exogamy, the system thus harmonizing with the most powerfully supported institutions. The reliance upon the queen as a rain-making divinity further stimulates the growth of a common tribal consciousness. Elsewhere chiefs are also rain magicians, but failure to produce rain is not a fatal defect. The Lovedu queen, however, suffers deposition if she fails, and it is upon her rain-making divinity that are based the structure of the royal institutions and much of the political system. And the two systems, centring apparently poles apart, the one in marriage and exogamy and the other in rain-making, have been interlocked as skilfully as the most intricate piece of machinery.

The complexity of the tribe as regards constituent groups, and the submergence of the royal group amid the other groups create a problem which, from the point of view of tribal solidarity, could considerably be solved in many ways. The Lovedu solution stresses local autonomy side by side with social links. Many functions elsewhere reserved to chiefs are exercised by district heads, and the theoretical authority of the queen is seldom interposed in practice. Yet they are powers of persuasion, not of coercion. Her authority is congruent with the main emphases of the society: the reliance on compromise, the aversion from military institutions, and the subtlety of feminine persuasion. These characteristics promoted the willing allegiance of the many foreigners drawn to the sanctuary of Lobedoudu, where they were safeguarded, not only against their foes, but also against the uncertainties of nature. In return for protection and security, they sent their daughters and sisters to be the wives of the

[See categories 55[illegible] and [illegible] Pt. Analysis]

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queen. And in the system these wives, after a period of training at the royal court, were re-allocated to district heads and royal relatives.

The system is not unknown elsewhere. Among the Shona, so we are told by Bullock, when one tribe conquered another, the survivors were incorporated by being given wives; in time of famine, tribes sometimes exchanged their daughters for food; and some of the Mambo handed their wives to their bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but faithful service. The Rozwi appear to have maintained their dominance over subjected chiefs, not by deposing them, but by assisting in their ceremonial appointment and the superimposition of the cult of Mwari, the high god, which had its priesthood and could withhold rain. This cluster of institutions is interesting to us because the Lovedu came from these parts and have retained some of their features. Lovedu district heads give 'tributary' wives to the queen in exchange for rain and these wives are re-allocated to important men. But the form and setting of the institution has changed; the circulation of wives, drawn into the network of the political and social scheme, subserves the purposes of the Lovedu cultural configuration.

By singling out for brief consideration the complex of royal institutions and of districts, we are giving prominence to certain aspects of the political structure. That is unavoidable in a generalized account, which must largely ignore the variations among the 140 districts (of which fifty are on European-owned land). We have often referred to cultural divergences and the tolerance towards them. In the autonomous districts they are very much in evidence. You may be told over and over again there is no such thing as ancestors represented by snakes, except among the pagansed and in their cult; and the conception seems alien to a religion in which ancestors are not reincarnated in an animal, but animals may be dedicated to ancestors. Yet suddenly one day you may find that the sacred object (shapele) of a head of a district, such as Reiela, is a snake. The lack of uniformity and the tolerance of almost contradictory customs may give the impression of ineffective political institutions. Conformity there must be in the interests of economy and solidarity, but the conformity need not be that of a regimented society such as ours. As to the royal cluster of institutions, we shall consider those maintaining the confidence of the people in the powers of the queen, and those converting tributes of wives into the visible links of the social organization. The elaboration of the royal institutions must not, however, obscure the essential humanity of the queen; we do not deal with the latter, but we must remember that it is a factor of great importance in the dynamics of these institutions.

In 150 years there have been only three queens, and Mujaji III, who, having already ruled for over forty-three years, is still physically strong and is said never to have had a day's illness. The Lovedu attach little importance to the longevity of their queens, who in other tribes have been immortalized. In the north, whence the Lovedu came, kings ruled only for brief periods; they were not allowed to become old or decrepit, lest the kingdom suffer; and either they committed suicide or they were killed. Dos Santos, writing in 1597, records that the kings of

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bekhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *bataoosi* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
558 districts now held by commoners originated from *bataoosi* but since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*bataoosi*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ba loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[532] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[534] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[536] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mokale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1943 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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643 to join him in exile. The conflict was so serious that the tribe seethed
578 with disaffection, though the queen seemed to be torn between love for
687 her daughter and disapproval of the whole episode. The present conflict
644 is in many respects typical. There is, as there used to be in the past, strife between the old councillors, who lose their power when the old queen dies, and the new councillors, who side with the new queen. The latter gradually supplant the former, but regard with fear the day when the friends of the heir in turn will oust them. This struggle is very real, and seems to reflect a more fundamental conflict; for the exalted purpose of the royal institutions exacts an unnatural sacrifice by the queen in order to make way for the heir she naturally loves.

643 The whole royal complex is perfectly logical once it is granted that there
644 must be queens, that succession is uncertain, and that ritual suicide is the guarantee of the chief's divinity. In a society in which the 'sister' (*khadi*) is priestess, her great religious role, still seen to-day among neighbouring tribes where chiefs are males, falls to the queen among the Lovedu. The ideal, imperfectly actualized since queens replaced kings, still persists that the *khadi* of the chief should have power and be given a large district to rule. In theory the brother of the chief is the great councillor, general, and judge. But in practice the complications set up by having queens thrown these arrangements out of gear. True to pattern, the greatest district head is to-day a woman, who is a 'sister' to the queen and, though a 'sister' threefold (through mother, legal father, and paternal uncle), she is not the uterine or ritual 'sister'. At present the relatives through the queen's mother, not through Mujaji II her legal father, are important councillors, but it is not unlikely that in the next reign the great councillors will be the present heir's relatives through her legal father, the queen, who is also her physiological mother.

642 Owing to the inapplicability of the term 'council' to Lovedu arrange-
643 ments, we need say only a few words on this subject. There is no need
644 of a visible organization to support Lovedu court life, which is ceremonious, but not politically oriented. Power and authority derive from the queen's divine appointment, her exclusive secret of rain-making, and her strategic position in the social web. She is neither a military nor a political leader; she does not even have a priesthood organization to assist her in her functions as high-priest. There are confidential advisers, but they neither constitute the more or less definite secret council (*sephiri*) of some neighbouring tribes nor necessarily function as political councillors; on the contrary the former, having assisted in the accession of the queen, are in institutional conflict with the latter, who later gain political control. The councillors represent the assertion of power by the rising generation of men in the sphere of law and politics as against women and the older generation in ritual, religion, and the social system. They are part mainly of the court (*khoro*) and the tribal gathering (*khimiji*), two indeterminate bodies.

644 Confidential advisers are mainly important district heads; councillors
643 are always residents in the capital. Both are relatives, but, in the case of
634 the confidants, not necessarily close relatives of the queen. In the inner royal circle, the closest kin are necessarily those reckoned through the

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queen's mother—that is, either the queen's predecessor on the throne or, if she has borne no children, the queen's physiological mother. The unofficial husbands of the queens are brothers chosen from the line of Malegudu (elder brother of Mujaji I), but relationship is not reckoned through them as fathers. Closeness of relationship is important, but personality and opportunity count as much. The most influential councillor is often said to be the queen's mother's brother—in other words, the brother of the deceased queen or, if she has no issue, the brother of the wife of the queen who bore the queen. In fact, however, other relatives rise to equally influential positions. To take a concrete instance, the councillors of Mujaji III have been relatives either through Leakhali, chief wife and 'sister' of Mujaji II and physiological mother of Mujaji III, or through Mujaji II, her mother, Mujaji I, and the latter's brothers, such as Malegudu. Muneri, the chief councillor to-day, is Leakhali's uterine brother's son, and before him there were Mulogwane, uterine brother of the queen, and also Leakhali's uterine brother. Earlier still, but in the present queen's time, the greatest councillors were others tracing descent from Malegudu. There is no precise rule either as to the number or identity of the councillors. The *dume* of the queen should not be a relative; he is merely a messenger, and, unlike the *indume* elsewhere, is of no account, having no special legal or other status or function.

The *Mainja* is neither the more or less determinate body of private advisers (*kotla*), nor even the tribal gathering (*pitsho*), of the Sotho. It is mainly constituted by district heads, or their representatives, and the men of the capital, but any one attends; and it is never conceived of as a general assembly of all the initiated men of the tribe. It has little power and less initiative; it is summoned mostly to discuss European matters, and there is now a tendency to place some decisions of the men of the capital before it for confirmation; but it is hardly a means of gauging popular feeling or of expressing the royal will. The co-operation of the tribe is secured and its desires made known, not through the *Mainja*, but through other social arrangements, which we shall describe at greater length.

These arrangements run parallel with a distinctive system of wives of the queen, called *vuparwani*, a term also applied to the wives of all nobles and women other than the queen may have *vuparwani*. The majority of the queen's wives are given to her by her district heads. In a sense, these wives are tribute (*ya ha lona*), but the queen always gives some *masyusele*. She also receives wives from foreign chiefs who supplicate for rain or for peace, and from headmen who settle in her country and send their daughters or sisters; in these cases no *masyusele* is given. Finally, she is sent wives by the nobles, by those to whom she has given wives or cattle with which to secure wives, and by those who promise their little 'mud-stampers' as repayment for the assistance they ask. Sometimes also the queen takes a liking to a girl and asks her in marriage and sometimes commoners send their daughters. It will be impracticable to deal with all these cases; and, from the point of view of the political organization, we are mainly concerned with the wives sent by district heads. They send their daughters for purposes of *ha lona*, a word used in a wide

[marriage cattle, See vol. 1883 per debtl.—Analyst]

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643 commoners, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
538 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
434 District heads *lowa* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
709 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
646 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Uulovedu, her country, is the land where pirums (*i.e.* wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*ha lowa*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangano-Tonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Lovedusised to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
539 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of
[illegible] marriage and *masyunalo*; the *masyunalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
538 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
537 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own hut (and in the old days a cow into the bargain) and be allowed to co-habit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private council of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Dujawani* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *nujawani*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads.

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *nujawani* to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. Only some of the *nujawani* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *nujawani* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves Mujaji and they are described as 'the heads of Mohale', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing.

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noblemen she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *mayenale* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *mayenale* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *mayenale* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.'

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

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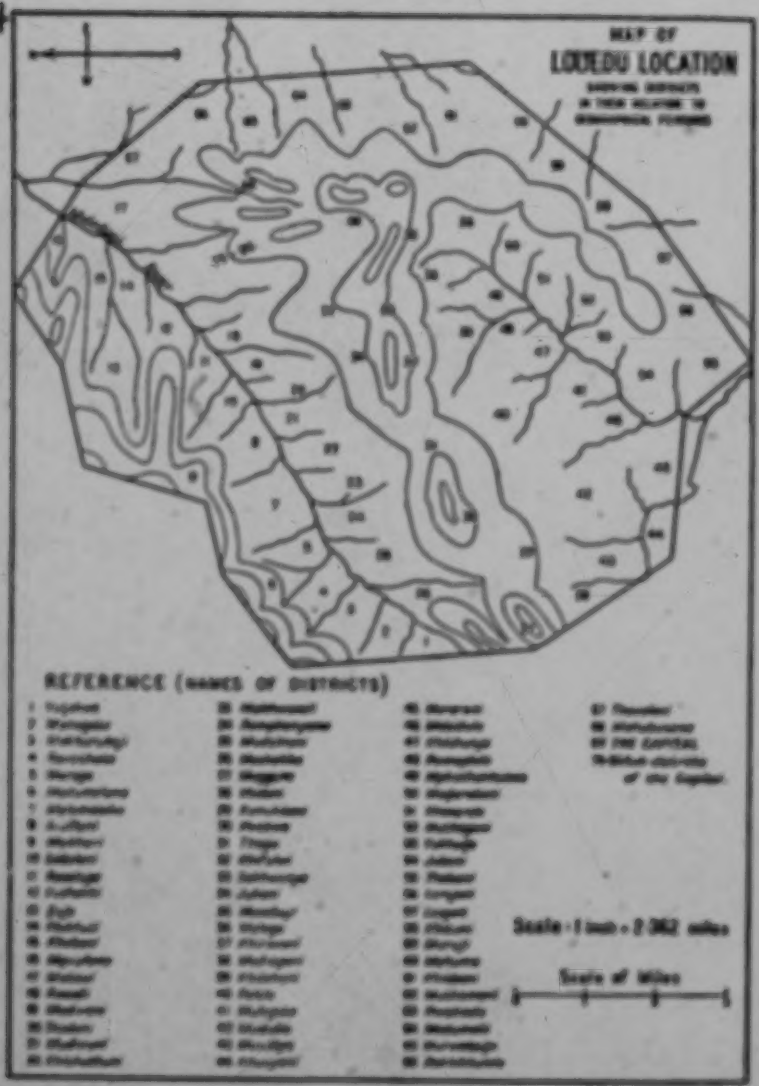

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one of presentation. Masetha, district head of Maeroni, some thirty-eight years ago gave his daughter, Muthatso, to the queen. Muthatso after a time was allotted to Khidima, the queen's maternal uncle. Later Khidima sent a daughter to be one of the wives of the queen and this girl in turn was given by the queen to Nagambi, district head of Maulwi. Meanwhile Masetha's son, Mubale, succeeded at Maeroni and sent the only issue of his wife, the daughter Makwajo, to the queen (1936). The next ruler at Maeroni will be either Makwajo or an heir raised by the wife acquired with the cattle given by the queen, as *masewale* for Makwajo. Already these arrangements link the district heads of Maeroni and of Maulwi with the queen and one of her nobles, and also with one another. The network is indefinitely continued in all directions, and though its ends appear to diverge, they centre in the queen and become interlinked at many points. For instance, to Rasodi, a younger brother of Nagambi, the queen gave Makwada, her wife, who came from Malemanaba, an important district head, and as a result Rasodi's son must marry at Malemanaba's. Once these interrelations are established, they set into motion the whole social system and the reciprocities which double the links and perpetuate the interrelations. In the district of the capital the ramifications of exchanges and re-exchanges are so complex as to defy analysis.

Broadly speaking, districts may be divided into those given to one of the old *hosvo* or royal groups (of Mubale, of Mudiga and of Mahasha), those originating from *vapanani*, and those held by heads of foreign groups. The so-called *vapanani* districts constitute a composite group, because women do not normally succeed to one another. We have already mentioned elsewhere how the district Matsui was given by Mujaji I to her wife, who, marrying a Crocodile, was succeeded by her son Matsui and his line of Crocodiles. In 34 per cent. of the 100 districts we know well enough to trace their origin, the position has not been very different. To-day sixty of these 100 districts are held by the royal groups and forty by foreign groups, and of those held by foreigners sixteen were acquired, as Matsui was, through *vapanani*. Thus 40 per cent. of the foreign and 30 per cent. of the *hosvo* districts, so far as we know, were originally bestowed on wives of the chiefs. Districts may originate in many other ways. It was customary for the kings to place their districts under sisters and brothers and temporarily also under their wives. Their wives could not so easily as among the queens consolidate their position, as they were unable to send their daughters as wives to the king, whereas now they can and do send such wives to the queens. Districts were also given to the great messengers (*dikoni*) of the chiefs; to foreigners, who, though they came with no large following, were renowned doctors of the national 'mihosle', some of which they introduced; to men who gave the queen cattle and a wife, and occasionally to those who had rendered services of value.

It does not much matter how a district originates from the point of view of the links that are gradually established with the queen and with one another. If foreigners come with a large, compact body of followers, they are often given an area and in return send their daughters as wives

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634 to the queen. A Ṭalerwa group came from the west in Khisi's reign
563 (*c.* 1740), had a *mujowani* at the capital and were given a large district.
571 Malemanshe, a son of the *mujowani*, having married a daughter of Mugedi, the next chief, was given half the district, the other half being ruled by the Ṭalerwa head. By these arrangements the Ṭalerwa line became *ramakhale* of Malemanshe, whose son succeeded to the whole area in 1895, when the Ṭalerwa ruling family left as the result of famine. The Malemanshe are *mafokolo* of the royal Lovedu. At Bagoni, which was originally given by Mujaji I to her younger brother, Murwamopa, there now rules Mukupi, daughter of Murwamopa's son. Mukupi had been the wife of Mujaji II, but, as there was no living male heir, she was released by the queen so as to enable her to rule the area. The true heir, son of the girl whom Mukupi's brother, had he lived, would have married (for the girl was the brother's cattle-linked cross-cousin), is now about forty-five years of age. It is doubtful whether he will ever succeed, for Mukupi is an ambitious and important woman, a district head who, like the queen, has no legal husband, but several wives; she is related to the queen and her councillors in a dozen ways, the most important being that she is *makhadi* of the queen and was wife of Mujaji II. Rebiki has a long history, but we need go no further back than the time when it was entrusted by Mujaji I to Mathogoni, daughter of Mugedi, the chief, and *mujowani* of Mujaji I. Mathogoni married first Rampi and, after his death, Mahoxele, Rampi's brother. Kwathi, son of the latter, who was given a *mujowani* by Mujaji II, for reasons we need not here consider, usurped the headship. Sogoto is a district given by Mujaji II to her wife Makhiwana, who was daughter of a Venda chief, and, as Makhiwane had no issue, she was succeeded by her sister's son, the sister having married a direct male descendant of the elder brother of Mujaji I. This elder brother, Malogodo, had a daughter, Magwo, who became *mujowani* of Mujaji II. Mujaji III made Magwo head of Moubwi, and Magwo's son, Mugedi, was the man who was chosen to raise the next heir to the throne. A son of Mugedi by his chief wife (not the queen) is now district head at Moubwi. These are but some of the cases, much simplified, that give us an idea of the manner in which districts originate and become linked up with the queen and the royal group.

634 The district is a political and a territorial unit, often very small in size,
571 and usually having a distinctive praise. The size varies from half a square
554 mile to nine square miles, the average in the congested reserve being under one square mile. Originally the districts were larger, but, as European occupation advanced, the old districts were divided and subdivided to make room for the heads that were created. The praises, already mentioned elsewhere, are generally praises of the group or subgroup of the head. At Maumadale, though he migrated from Naji, near Tzaneen in the south, to the tribal farm Khimbelwa to the north of Ubiwondo, they still sing, 'Crocodile of Mugoni, outcast (*marsha*) of the rain water,' because his people had no rain-making magic; when Mahubwana brings beer, the praise runs, 'At the kitchen-hut of Magwale of Khudini, where potatoes are eaten,' though Mahubwana now rules near the capital, having long ago left Khudini, to the south of Ubiwondo;

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and at Khimarela one may hear, 'You are drunk, you of Maleakhotho, you who are habitual smokers of hemp.' Not only have sub-groups and even lineages distinctive variations upon perhaps a common praise of the group, but there are different praises appropriate to different occasions.

Owing to patrilineal marriage, the patrilineal kin tend to form the core of a district. These cores were perhaps more distinct in the distant past, for it is quite clear that, for instance, the districts of the Mudiga lay towards the east, while those of the Mahasha clustered together in the north-west. But members of the Mudiga and Mahasha were always scattered throughout the tribe and never co-operated as groups in any political situation. We must not think of co-operating patrilineal groups, for 'A man has influence and fortune where he has relatives-in-law'. The core of the district may be the brothers, father's brothers, and their sons in the district, but generally the mother is a link with one outside district and sisters and daughters marry into others. There is seldom a numerical preponderance of the lineage of the district head in the territorial unit, their number and solidarity depending upon a large number of factors: length of residence or of headship, the homogeneity of diversity, size, dispersion or concentration of the group that immigrated and was given a district, agreement within the group, and so on.

We may take Matsui as an example. The head, a Crocodile, and his male forebears have ruled the area for over a century. Matsui is at one point immediately adjacent to the capital, but it is also near a whole chain of old Crocodile settlements, which 150 years ago extended from Matsaila in the north to Undapi in the south. The district is largely a valley area and thus avoided by the Lovedu royal group, but extensively occupied by the Shangane-Tonga since about 1840. The population is 22 per cent. Crocodile and 14 per cent. Lovedu; 47 per cent. of the people belong to foreign groups or sub-groups, with whom intermarriage is not wholly disapproved, and 17 per cent. Shangane-Tonga. The Crocodiles are patrilineal kin and the Lovedu are relatives-in-law of the head, but the links with the Shangane-Tonga are those of neighbourliness, some friendship, and some economic interdependence. Of the intermarriageable foreigners, 20 per cent. are related in some way to the head, being usually relatives of the line of 'messengers' (*Ndoma*) of the district head. It is generally felt that the messengers should not be patrilineally related to the head because of possible conflicts, but their alliance with the head is usually a close and long-established one. In the case of Matsui, the links are not only through the capital where the group of the 'messenger' used to be officials, but also through the district head's brother, who is the *mujalulu* (cattle-linked sister's son) of the 'messenger'. In other districts, of course, the dispositions are different: on the hills, for instance, there are no Shangane-Tonga and few of the more or less outcast *ovaha*. The diversity of the groups is very great, as we have indicated elsewhere, but the manner in which they have been interwoven into the royal group, chiefly through the districts, is even more impressive.

The patrilineal core of the district is no more important than the link through the bilateral kin, especially through mothers and sisters and daughters and the cattle-chains forged by them with other areas and with

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562

the capital. These links emphasize the part played by women in the political system. The intermediaries or registrars at the capital, through whom political and legal matters are taken from the district to the queen, are called, not fathers or councillors, as is very usual in other tribes, but 'mothers' of the district heads (*ama ovse*), a very appropriate name in the light of the fact that one usually approaches the paternal authority through one's mother. 'Mothers' of districts may be women as well as men, and quite often a male 'mother' is succeeded by his widow. The position opens large avenues of political opportunity for women. Again, at present 14 per cent. of the acting district heads are women, some holding in their own right, some on behalf of a male heir, who perhaps, as in the case of Mukupi, will never have much influence during the lifetime of the deputy. If we reckon cases in which a son is ruling in consultation with his mother, the percentage is much higher.

Let us take a few examples. Mukoko, the jester (*khidude*) at the capital, is nominally head at Raconthata; but until her death it was his mother, daughter of the brother of Mujaji II and a wife of the queen, who was in charge, and it is now his wife, also an ex-wife of the queen, who has remained behind and rules, though Mukoko has appointed a deputy. At Maduteni, the heir has quarrelled with and was expelled by the sister of his deceased father; she installed another son, Khobi, as nominal head; and when Khobi died, his sister took over control, feathering the nest of her son, against whom the chances of the rightful heir seem at present to be small. At Muthomeni the mother's influential relatives secured the succession of Mudewalo against that of his younger brother, the legal heir. Mutsere's sister's daughter is head at Khiobeni and her husband does the court work. Khimavia, an old Mudiga district, was consistently given to wives of the queen; and in its recent history, Matsaga, a wife of the queen who married a Mudiga, was head until her son, Thagu, took over. The mother of a district head at Khithunja rules because the son has paralysis. At Levejini, Bogi, who is now head, entrusted the district to his elder sister, who, in order to rule, as she did until her death, left her husband, who lived in another area. Rapedo at Mashakha had only one daughter in the great house and she was a wife of the queen when he died; his wife is now head and, if the ideal pattern is followed, she will be succeeded by the heir of the daughter-in-law, a suppositious wife of her son, who comes to cook for her; but this daughter-in-law, as experience shows, is likely to overshadow her son, the true heir. Magono, sister of Mugudu, the chief, was the first ruler at Mudzieni; as she had no issue, her sister succeeded her, the next head was daughter of the sister (because the son expelled the true heir and then died prematurely), and this daughter was followed by her own choice, the son of her brother.

Cases of this nature, where a woman plays the decisive role, may be multiplied. They may give the impression that there are no strongly institutionalized rules of succession; yet these rules exist. They are patrilineally patterned, but they recognize the claims of the sister's son (*mughalula*). The weight of the social structure, in all complicated cases, balances unevenly between the cattle-descent and the cattle-linked

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house—that is, between the heir raised in the chief house of the head 634
and the head's cattle-linked sister. The daughter of the cattle-linked 635
brother comes as daughter-in-law to the mistress of the chief house, her
cattle-linked aunt, to bear the heir, whether that house has a son or not;
and legal precedences support this arrangement and succession. This
emphasizes the power of the mother and her lineage. But the position of
the cattle-linked sister is also strong, as we have indicated elsewhere, and
in cases of succession to the headship of a district is further strengthened
if she has been a wife of the queen. Conflicts do often arise and it is not
strange that the queen usually leaves them to settle themselves. It is
seldom that she interferes or interposes her authority, though she does so
when the balance of convenience or interest strongly inclines one way.
Tenure of headship is tolerably secure. The queen would only excep-
tionally and for very good reasons favour the displacement of a district
head of one of the old groups; and in that case the district itself must
strongly desire it while, not a stranger, but the nearest acceptable relative
of the lineage will be substituted. If, however, the links with the royal
family are not close, tenure by the lineage is less secure and it occasions no
surprise that a man, coming to the queen with a few pounds, may be
given a district where there has been trouble. We have seen a few such
cases and it seemed incomprehensible to those with whom we discussed
them that we suspected bribery and corruption.

The district is singularly commonness in its political arrangements. 634
Land is allotted by the district head not, as in many neighbouring tribes, 635
by the chief. The district head, if he wishes, gives land to people living 609
in other districts; at Mawa, for instance, non-residents hold over 300 623
fields. The district head reports the settlement of a stranger from
another tribe by taking £1 to the queen, but it is to him as district owner
that landholders annually bring beer. A non-resident also nowadays
endeavours the district head with beer, clothes, and even money before
asking for land. The land given to a non-resident is not very securely
held; the tenure is so imperfectly institutionalized that practice varies
from one district to another and definite rights and obligations cannot
easily be deduced; on the whole, it is not unlike lending, though the
culture does not recognize lending of land for a consideration. A non-
resident holding land in a district, unlike a resident, cannot, generally
speaking, interchange it with or lend it to others without the consent of
the head; but at the capital he can, even without reporting to the queen;
and there also a resident may break new land without any one's per-
mission.

Land tenure is too complicated for treatment here, but we may note 634
that where a district head takes back the land of a resident, the queen's 635
court may, but does not usually, interfere in the interests not so much of 623
security of land tenure as of peace. If a resident quarrels with the district
head, he cannot beg pardon with beer, highly though that method of
reconciliation is appreciated, because he would be 'humbling himself with
the muzzle of the head' or, as it is sometimes phrased, 'paying a fine with
the calf of the cattle of the district head'. A resident migrating from the
district should bid its head farewell with 'the beer of greeting'; application

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634 for land would then be regarded more favourably should he one day
§25 return. The fruits of the soil are dealt with in much the same manner.
§23 A man may graze his cattle inside or outside the district, but the cattle posts of the old days were within the district only. We have mentioned the rivalries of herdboys of different districts; we may add that some district heads, because of traditional values and limited grazing land, object to fencing. District heads sometimes reserve valuable trees for themselves, and it is they who give permission for the cutting down of large and shady trees or indigenous fruit-trees (though they be on the landowner's land). Honey found in trees, but not that found in the ground alluvial, belongs to the district head. Some heads allow only residents to cut grass, making others pay. Hunting and water rights are not so regulated, but digging of clay is sometimes, if illegally. The
[77] preservation of large forests, a national asset, as places of the gods or of refuge in time of war is the concern of the queen, so that, for instance, Mujaji II had her cattle driven into the gardens of some people, including a district head, who had cleared part of the Letsani forest and had not begged pardon by sending a *mujamosi* to her.

634 Some distinctive cultural and administrative arrangements of the
643 districts have already been mentioned. There are many others. All
651 district heads used to have, and many still have, certain fields cultivated for them. The queen also has such fields in her districts, and since 1927 each district head has had to cultivate a field (*mawewe*) in his district for the queen, an innovation suggested by the Europeans to enable the queen to help her people during famines. The experiment has turned out very differently. These fields are badly cultivated, for years some district heads bring no mealies, the failure only sporadically leading to the penalization of the head and his district, and the mealies are always converted into beer for entertainments at the capital that benefit only the local residents. The storage of mealies is impracticable and a system of distribution is not implied in cultural arrangements. A district head unwillingly surrenders land and sometimes expropriates first one then another landowner, so that there is much dissatisfaction and even refusal to cultivate the *mawewe*.

634 In many respects district heads are like chiefs. They are often called
651 'chief' (*khosi*) and, like the queen, have medicines to safeguard them in their position of authority. A district head is not only the most important person in the district, the centre of its political and legal life, the man who is responsible for the welfare of his people, but the obligations of district residents towards him emphasize both his position and the reciprocities between ruler and subject. It is expected that his subjects shall bring him beer periodically, and sometimes it is held that he should be invited to every beer party held in his area, partly because he is responsible for order at the beer drink and partly because it is his due. All his subjects must make marula cider for him in the proper season, and similarly, when at certain ceremonies, held by him for the well-being of the district, beer is required, every resident must contribute. The most important occasion is at the harvest thanksgiving and the beer brought is regarded as being in return for the land given by the head to his people. On the persons of

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services to a chief, residents must also build his village and round his huts. These privileges and obligations are not merely theoretical; they are very much in evidence and can be observed to-day in the districts as much as, if not more than, at the capital. The first edible termites found in the district must, in the case of some of the more important heads, be brought to the district head; these ants are ritually associated with rain-making and are put into the rain pots which these heads have.

The national 'wheels' are sometimes held independently by district heads; in 'biting' the first fruits (*ho-lowa*) and in turning the first soil, the precedence of the queen is hardly recognized. The head at Duja and the senior male line of the royal family have theoretical precedence in *ho-lowa* and, in contrast to many neighbouring tribes, there is little stress upon having the queen's field hoed first; in practice to-day her field is never ploughed first. Moreover, it is said, in the old days paid an ox to anticipate the queen's hoeing and thus avoided threatening starvation; but dispensations of this nature, while recognizing a theoretical rule, throw into relief the much greater autonomy of the district here than elsewhere. The district head is solely responsible for *ho-ngw*, the rite that drives away destructive birds and monkeys when crops are ripe; to him the death of every resident is reported (the report being transmitted to the queen only when a relative of hers dies) and the resulting 'holiday' is held only in the district. Each district head has his own drums through which he controls dancing (*grabu*), religious observances, and some of the 'wheels'. The girls' puberty rite (*khobo*) is entirely district-controlled.

The individuality of some districts is seen in esoteric ritual, elsewhere by taboo, succession ceremonial, and a distinctive community life. At Khimbani people may construct on the edge of the village a rain-shelter (*lomale*) in which fire is made; in neighbouring areas this is taboo. Work on the day following the new moon is said to have been taboo in the old days at Mamai, though the rule is never observed to-day; in neighbouring areas there never was such a holiday. The Thovele in one district have a special dance with a special ritual. As regards succession, the queen usually merely confirms, though she maintains touch through an elaborate ceremony; she is notified of the death of the head, sends the 'mother' of the district to take part in the ceremony of installation and, in the case of heads of the royal group, the *mulajini* appear. The ceremonial, however, more intimately concerns the district: there is a local 'holiday' after the death, the *grabu* dance is taboo for a year, girls undergo puberty initiation elsewhere, beer is made by the district to 'open the drums', and each head of a family sends a goat or ox, 'the eye of the chief', to acknowledge their new head. The life of the district is often distinctive. Mamai is said to be wanton and, according to one of their proverbs, people there, instead of sleeping, for which they are too lazy, 'burn their finger-nails counting green months'. Everything is rather slack and happy-go-lucky, beer drinks are apt to be unruly, the district head is at loggerheads with his council, and his subjects talk disparagingly of 'this district-head business of going about and drinking beer'. Beer-drinks begin after the harvest, dark moods, and other irregularities at Mamai contrast strikingly with conditions at Bogoni, an adjacent district. At Bogoni there is a tradition

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of thrift, strict control of beer-drinks, interest in national affairs, of pride and independence. Of course, a great deal depends upon the personality of the district head, but traditions in the district are not unimportant.

Districts are not always left to go their own way. In the last resort, as in legal matters, the authority of the capital may be invoked, and it may be invoked even against a whole district. Just as a district may collectively take action against a threat to its well-being, as occurred in the small-pox epidemic in 1938, when one district assembled and collected funds to have the witch who was causing the deaths smelt out, so it may be held collectively responsible by the capital for failure to cultivate the chief's field. This is the more striking because there is no kraal responsibility and the so-called 'spoor law' (whereby a kraal head, unwilling or unable to explain why the track of stolen cattle leads to but does not leave his kraal is held responsible, whoever the thief in his kraal might be) is not known. We have seen a district fined, never a kraal. The queen has theoretically to confirm the expulsion of a subject; in cases referred to a diviner, the 'ears' or official witness should be, but is not always, appointed at the queen's court. In practice, however, the queen seldom interposes her authority. For years now no one knows who is head at Dithejine, the balance swinging unevenly between three claimants. At Mafarabani, Mutese, who persistently refused to do homage (*ku lowa*) to the queen with beer, was deposed; but that there were other considerations at issue appears from the fact that immediately afterwards he was installed at Dukhuda. When Thagu at Khimarela in 1936 expelled his paternal uncle's son for whom he was deputizing, nothing was done. At Raleshga when the head died, the messenger (*skwa*) took over, ruled for years without confirmation from the capital and in 1938 was recognised (because his son became valuable as driver of the councillor's newly acquired motor car), the real heir being quietly overlooked. Not long ago the nobles at a tribal gathering carried their point that only royal relatives should be appointed as district heads on the farms that were being purchased, but the rule remained a dead letter and of the ten heads appointed in these areas eight are foreigners.

In its visible structure, the political organisation may appear unimpressive and in its dynamics chaotic. Its efficiency certainly is and always was—for it is not culture contact that is responsible for the irregularities—of an order different from ours. Efficiency is relative to the purposes of the culture. The aim has never been power or empire, but holding subjects together on the model of the social organisation. The slight regimentation of the 'schools' subserves no political or military purpose, and court life is not concerned with displays, nor is it characterised by differentiated officials and courtiers controlling a great central organisation. Unlike the Shangana-Tonga, the Lovedu cannot deal with large gatherings of men such as collected on Coronation Day in 1937. The genius of the society is in organising relationships between people, and so long as the reciprocity and compromise and the sentiments built up by interdependencies are reasonably maintained, it does not much matter that irregularities occur here and there. The influence of the

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and of important councillors who are her closest relatives: when a chief dies the body is left for some days in the hut, so that, when it is rubbed in a certain way (*ku fwalula*), the skin easily comes away. Other ingredients are fat of the scaly ant-eater (*khuzwa*), a royal animal which, when found, has always to be brought alive to the royal village, and parts of the kudu (*tlolo*). The queen's rain-doctor told us that essential ingredients were sea-water, because it foams and froths (*ku pubula*), feathers of the lightning bird, white and black sea shells, and various roots and barks, chief among which is the stem of the *khadi* (*Adenia gummifera*), a tough forest creeper that contains much water. *Khadi* stems are also used for sprinkling 'cooling' medicines and for tying the bodies of dead people. Whether the queen uses these ingredients, we cannot say. From time to time a black sheep is killed to give strength to the queen's rain medicines; it has to be washed with water which is afterwards poured into the rain pots, but it is said that such a sheep is merely a present-day substitute for a human being, usually a child, whose brains were used. Important district heads related to the chief also have their rain-pots. Every year in about August, at the command of the queen, such a district head collects certain roots and barks, knowledge of which he has received from his father, places them in his rain-pot, mixed with water that has been drawn by girls below the age of puberty, and stirs them up so that rain may be good that year. Rain-pots are great secrets and only after years of friendship were we privileged to see one: it was well hidden in the cleft of a rock and partly buried at the foot of a tree on the upper slopes of a hill where the owner's father had dwelt. The rain-pots of the queen we have not seen, and what regular measures she takes are not known for certain; but, since it is said, when there are good rains, that the queen has firmly laid the foundations (*ku thea*) of the year, it is not unlikely that she also stirs her medicines.

Great care has to be taken lest the rain-pots 'weaken' (*ku fgchela*). They have to be given (*ku lumisa*, to cause to be bitten) the first green foods (*matshatsha*) every year, kaffir water melon (*lagwadzi*) mixed with other green foods being used for the purpose, and at the royal village no one cooks and eats the new summer relishes before this has been done. On this day possessed people or people who have epilepsy also eat medicine with the firstfruits, but ordinary people do not *lumisa*, and there are none of the public festivities of a semi-military character associated with the eating of the firstfruits among Swazi and Zulu. It is very important too that the first termites (*dimqwa*), which appear usually in December, just after the first good rains, should be given to the rain-pots. Termites are closely associated with rain: they always fly out of their nests just after the rain; in a dry year there are very few; and it is believed that sprinkling the antheap with rain medicine (*mafuga*) makes the ants come in great numbers. Termites for the rain-pots may not be gathered by married women or girls over the age of puberty, and in 1937, when some young girls carried the first termites to the queen, she gave the termites to the dogs, refusing to use ants that had been thus defiled. The giving of the first termites to the rain-pots is called *bulela*. An interesting case arose out of this practice in January, 1938, when certain people in Uuthudi

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marriage. Where the chief is a woman, her own son or daughter succeeds. The Lobedu now have a distinct preference for women rulers; the last three chiefs have been women, and the present queen succeeded in preference to her elder uterine brother. It would seem that the fashion was set by the Lobedu, for tribal genealogies show no women chiefs in the Lowveld prior to the accession of Modjadji I. Shortly after that we have the appearance of the first queen in the Khaha and Mamaila tribes, followed later by Letswalo and Mahlo. Lowveld tribes are no exception to the general tendency among Bantu for succession to the throne to be accompanied by trouble and bloodshed. They have, however, an interesting method of submitting the case of various claimants to the decision of the powers that be by the ordeal of trying the door. All claimants to the throne are brought to the closed door of the hut in which the old chief died. One by one, they step forward shouting their own name and ancestry to try the door which, while resisting all efforts of other claimants, flies open at the touch of the rightful heir.[1]

The Lowveld chief is assisted and advised in the government of his country by his relatives,[2] generally known as *bakhomana*. There are no formal councils, as among Tswana, and it is even doubtful whether the *pitjo* or meeting of all adult men in the tribe ever had power to make decisions. Certainly to-day it is called only when orders or notices from European authorities have to be transmitted. No one in the Lobedu tribe ever knows what is happening even in important matters affecting them all, and the tribe accepts with equanimity the most outrageous favouritism of the royal family.

The district, bounded by natural features such as streams or depressions down the hill-sides, is generally quite small, varying in extent from about one square mile to five, so that in a country like Modjadji's with an area of some 140 square miles there are about 100 headmen. Aggregations of districts into larger units under sub-chiefs, such as are found in Zululand, though not unknown, are not

[1] Some one is, of course, inside to hold the door against the wrong claimants and in Modjadji's tribe the chief always has one hut with two doors, said to be for this purpose.

[2] The *rangwane* (father's brother) or *rakhadi* (father's sister) are often important advisers or, especially where a woman is ruling, the *malawe* (mother's brother).

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634 624 characteristic of Lowveld political organization. Districts are still of great importance, and the district head is a busy and important man, both socially and politically. Contact with the European has resulted in two diverse tendencies observable in our area: among small tribes, 634 such as Phalaborwa and Sekhopo's Lobedu, there has been increased 624 centralization, the chief taking over functions, such as allocation of 178 land, which used to be the province of headmen; elsewhere, especially in the large kingdom of Modjadji, district headmen are in many respects becoming more independent, exacting from underlings labour to which they are not entitled and even controlling other districts to which they have no right.

624 Women may here, as among Venda, be heads of districts,[1] and, though the proportion of women to men is never high, they are often 562 the most important district heads in the tribe. Women become headmen in a variety of ways: among Lobedu a woman of the royal family may be appointed head of an area (generally, nowadays, over newly-bought tribal land) and though in practice her husband may do most of the work, she it is who is recognized and approached in the last resort. A daughter of the chief house succeeds her father even if there are sons of other houses; a woman may succeed her husband when the children are too young, and though, strictly speaking, she is only a regent in this case, she often continues to rule until her death and long after her son has attained his majority. Or a *rakhadi* may be asked to act as regent for her nephew, in which case she very often secures the succession for her own son, ousting the rightful heir.

695 Law and Justice. The Lowveld was the land of the ordeal, the only method by which witchcraft could be discovered or difficult cases of theft and adultery, where evidence was inconclusive, be decided. Boiling medicated water which scalded only the hands of the guilty might be used or a concoction be drunk which intoxicated the culprit, leaving the innocent unaffected. Except for occasional use among the Phalaborwa, however, the ordeal has been completely ousted by the Shangana-Tonga smeller-out and a modern method of dealing with witchcraft has developed over the whole of the Lowveld, which has spread not only into Vendaland but also into portions of the

[1] Except among Phalaborwa, Tsubye, and the people of Tswale and Sekhopo.

753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may wish
769 a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cognates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member of the kindred (*mulogo*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to *vafumosi* (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*mughwala*) and, by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes parent-in-law (*vamakhwala*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and relatives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiating from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies, but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The *homage* in
641 wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, convert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of subjects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
649 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
622 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
648 by royal women, *balomi* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
629 districts now held by commoners originated from *balomi* but
555 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts
these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to
them by the queen. Royal wives (*balomi*) are of various kinds.
Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the
queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage
(*ho loka*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over
districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where
there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
649 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
with money or a daughter to *loka* the queen for rain. Once a
[622] woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[634] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a
daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation
of, economic help or political favour (though these are not
always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to
be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the
political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind
to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the
important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in
marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[536] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[402] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for
helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal
lineage (*ba Mokale*) and a number of important Lobedu district
heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have,
by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status
and are more closely related to the queen than sections of
Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1943 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1959.

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *lashape*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.

The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died, the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new homestead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, a married woman who does not live in the area was made official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is somewhat different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thaga maye be dala mudzulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance of being independent are found upon investigation to be portions (a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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582 583 591 602 613 E to Z are complicated and indicate how personal and other factors may interfere with the best-laid cattle-linking arrangements. C, the cattle-linked sister of E's father, A, had no son; so C gave the bride-price of her only daughter, J, to her brother A in accordance with procedure described in the text of this essay. All but one of these cattle died shortly after and then A said he did not want the cattle. C then tried to establish a 'house' with her daughter's cattle by handing over the remaining head of cattle to a classificatory brother (her father's half-brother's son). Her husband augmented this head of cattle by others obtained with his earnings from migrant labour. Unfortunately, however, these cattle instead of being used for marriage were 'eaten' (squandered) by her 'brother' and the whole plan came to nothing. Now, because E's father A had used C's cattle to marry his first wife and then had married E's mother with the bride-price of D (a daughter of his marriage to his first wife), therefore A, repenting of his earlier treatment of C and realising he was indirectly indebted to C (and J) also for his second wife (mother of E), sent his daughter E to 'cook for J' (C's daughter) and marry her son.

(e) An example of the judicious placement of cattle for purposes of promoting marriage alliances between one's own male descendants and the daughters of a friend or relative in a preferred family is to be found in the action of P in Figure 9, who was married to R the daughter of A's half-sister F. After his son's death he gave his daughter S's, bride-price to G (a descendant of his wife's mother's brother) who acquired his third wife T with it. P has thus 'built a house' (that of T) where his son's son Y will find a wife.

589 591 (f) Three instances of the marriage of a woman to another woman are to be found in the lineage-segment of A—that of D to I; that of K to E, widow of Z; and that of A's daughter N to the queen. [594] In the first case I wished to raise an heir to her deceased brother, in whose place she was ruling a district; in the second case E had daughters but no son and she wished to have someone to 'cook for' her; in the case of N, her father A as district headman had sent his daughter to be a *matamasi* of the queen.

613 582 581 (g) That the same lineage can be both wife-receiving and wife-giving in respect of the queen is illustrated by the fact that A's father had received in marriage from the queen a wife Q but A had also sent his daughter N to marry the queen.

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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
768 a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cognates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member of the kindred (*mudzi*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to *vafumani* (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*mughulu*) and, by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes parent-in-law (*vamukhulu*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and relatives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiating from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies, but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in
641 wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, convert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of subjects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
182

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643 to join him in exile. The conflict was so serious that the tribe seethed
578 with dissatisfaction, though the queen seemed to be torn between love for
687 her daughter and disapproval of the whole episode. The present conflict
644 is in many respects typical. There is, as there used to be in the past, strife between the old councillors, who lose their power when the old queen dies, and the new councillors, who side with the new queen. The latter gradually supplant the former, but regard with fear the day when the friends of the heir in turn will oust them. This struggle is very real, and seems to reflect a more fundamental conflict; for the exalted purpose of the royal institutions exacts an unnatural sacrifice by the queen in order to make way for the heir she naturally loves.

643 The whole royal complex is perfectly logical once it is granted that there
644 must be queens, that succession is uncertain, and that ritual suicide is the guarantee of the chief's divinity. In a society in which the 'sister' (*khadi*) is priestess, her great religious role, still seen to-day among neighbouring tribes where chiefs are males, falls to the queen among the Lovedu. The ideal, imperfectly actualized since queens replaced kings, still persists that the *khadi* of the chief should have power and be given a large district to rule. In theory the brother of the chief is the great councillor, general, and judge. But in practice the complications set up by having queens throws these arrangements out of gear. True to pattern, the greatest district head is to-day a woman, who is a 'sister' to the queen and, though a 'sister' threefold (through mother, legal father, and paternal uncle), she is not the uterine or ritual 'sister'. At present the relatives through the queen's mother, not through Mujaji II her legal father, are important councillors, but it is not unlikely that in the next reign the great councillors will be the present heir's relatives through her legal father, the queen, who is also her physiological mother.

642 Owing to the inapplicability of the term 'council' to Lovedu arrange-
643 ments, we need say only a few words on this subject. There is no need
644 of a visible organization to support Lovedu court life, which is ceremonious, but not politically oriented. Power and authority derive from the queen's divine appointment, her exclusive secret of rain-making, and her strategic position in the social web. She is neither a military nor a political leader; she does not even have a priesthood organization to assist her in her function as high-priest. There are confidential advisers, but they neither constitute the more or less definite secret council (*sephiri*) of some neighbouring tribes nor necessarily function as political councillors; on the contrary the former, having assisted in the accession of the queen, are in institutional conflict with the latter, who later gain political control. The councillors represent the assertion of power by the rising generation of men in the sphere of law and politics as against women and the older generation in ritual, religion, and the social system. They are part mainly of the court (*khoro*) and the tribal gathering (*khotla*), two indeterminate bodies.

644 Confidential advisers are mainly important district heads; councillors
643 are always residents in the capital. Both are relatives, but, in the case of
634 the confidants, not necessarily close relatives of the queen. In the inner royal circle, the closest kin are necessarily those reckoned through the

639 of thrift, strict control of beer-drinks, interest in national affairs, of
184 pride and independence. Of course, a great deal depends upon the personality of the district head, but traditions in the district are not unimportant.

634 District are not always left to go their own way. In the last resort, as
643 in legal matters, the authority of the capital may be invoked, and it may be invoked even against a whole district. Just as a district may collectively take action against a threat to its well-being, as occurred in the small-pox epidemic in 1938, when one district assembled and collected funds to have the witch who was causing the deaths smelt out, so it may be held collectively responsible by the capital for failure to cultivate the chief's field. This is the more striking because there is no kraal responsibility and the so-called 'spoor law' (whereby a kraal head, unwilling or unable to explain why the track of stolen cattle leads to but does not leave his kraal is held responsible, whoever the thief in his kraal might be) is not known. We have seen a district fined, never a kraal. The queen has theoretically to confirm the expulsion of a subject; in cases referred to a diviner, the 'ears' or official witness should be, but is not always, appointed at the queen's court. In practice, however, the queen seldom interposes her authority. For years now no one knows who is head at Dithajine, the balance swinging unevenly between three claimants. At Maferabani, Mutese, who persistently refused to do homage (*ho hawa*) to the queen with beer, was deposed, but that there were other considerations at issue appears from the fact that immediately afterwards he was installed at Ukhlonde. When Thogo at Khimarele in 1936 expelled his paternal uncle's son for whom he was deputizing, nothing was done. At Raletlaga when the head died, the messenger (*dema*) took over, ruled for years without confirmation from the capital and in 1938 was recognized (because his son became valuable as driver of the councillor's newly acquired motor car), the real heir being quietly overlooked. Not long ago the nobles at a tribal gathering carried their point that only royal relatives should be appointed as district heads on the farms that were being purchased, but the rule remained a dead letter and of the ten heads appointed in these areas eight are foreigners.

642 In its visible structure, the political organisation may appear unimpressive and in its dynamics chaotic. Its efficiency certainly is and always was—for it is not culture contact that is responsible for the irregularities—of an order different from ours. Efficiency is relative to the purposes of the culture. The aim has never been power or empire, but holding subjects together on the model of the social organization. The slight regimentation of the 'schools' subserves no political or military purpose, and court life is not concerned with displays, nor is it characterized by differentiated officials and courtiers controlling a great central organization. Unlike the Shangana-Tonga, the Lovedu cannot deal with large gatherings of men such as collected on Coronation Day in 1937. The genius of the society is in organizing relationships between people, and as long as the reciprocity and compromise and the sentiments built up by interdependencies are reasonably maintained, it does not much matter that irregularities occur here and there. The influence of the

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queen, always on the side of peace and harmony, is characteristically 6/62
conceived to keep alive these relationships. Important disputes—domestic, administrative, or political—are discussed with the queen and kept out of the courts, the object being to minimize animosities and to prevent public recriminations. Not external sanctions, but values internalized by the culture, are emphasized and upheld.

In the modern world the bonds of the social organization are liable to become burdens and the absence of a differentiated centralized political system a grave defect. But the old values are still the great dynamic forces. Nowhere else have we seen court etiquette so well preserved. People still remove their shoes when they enter the capital; the queen is still relatively inaccessible and may not leave her country. Mujaji was the only chief in the Union who, because of her ritual position, could not exercise her vote on behalf of the tribe when in 1937 the Native Representative Council was elected. Chiefs still come to supplicate for rain and, such is the queen's prestige and reputation for sagacity, a few years ago she adjudicated upon a succession dispute among the Dzhwa. Yet Mujaji is accorded no precedence by the European administration, to whose eyes she is completely overshadowed by her erstwhile subject, Mukhawa of the Nkuna.

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177 665 The handling of this evidence is woefully unskilful, but important distinctions must be made. Where the writing takes the place of the notches that used to be cut on sticks to indicate the cattle that had passed, it tends to be accepted if there is other supporting evidence; statements in a letter of the amount of money sent with the letter are generally given credence; but statements expressed in letters and written accounts of the circumstances of a case are usually completely ignored or dismissed as unimportant. In one case where a husband wrote that he had definitely deserted his wife, the court ignored the letter on the ground that, unless the husband gave his evidence in person, he might well reverse his attitude and appeal to the Native Commissioner. The subject of the development in the handling of written evidence is a large one; but to what we have said we would merely add that the recording of evidence in writing has been attempted, since 1932, in only fifteen cases all told. The attempt has miserably failed. The usual record reads approximately as follows: 'Andrew Malogo v. £19. 5 Jim Malate 2/8/32', and to that cryptic statement nothing is added by way of such embellishment as the nature of the case, whether the date refers to the day of trial or retrial or payment, whether in fact there has been payment, and so on. Native Commissioners have sometimes tendered advice about how cases should be decided and recorded, but it is beyond their province, and the results have been precisely nil.

177 692 Political institutions have suffered no fundamental change. External relations are maintained through the wives the queen still receives from, and the rain she still gives to, foreign chiefs; the suppression of military exploits and cattle raids has not affected the Lovedu. Relations with European authorities have modified initiative and control over large spheres of policy, for the tribal authorities receive instructions rather than discuss suggestions, though consultation is nowadays a recognized preliminary to the introduction of an innovation. The tribal gathering (*khoro*) never was important in Lovedu; now it discusses perhaps more tribal matters than in the past, as well as European proposals and demands, but it has little power. The councillors, presenting European matters, sometimes give a distorted version, finding it difficult to justify either the measure proposed or their inability to bring about modifications or to circumvent it; and very often they do not mention important points at all. The widespread tendency to justify a desired action by saddling the European with responsibility for it reappears again and again. The people may be told by the councillors (who have a car) to mend the road, because, they say, an official who broke the spring of his car upon it has complained to the Native Commissioner; the administrative admonition to maintain better control over young boys going to work without their parents' consent was presented to the tribal meeting as a warning that boys not carrying tax receipts would be arrested if found at beer parties. (By traditional standards, now maintained with difficulty, beer parties are only for adults.) The justification or circumvention is upon the pattern that is known, and that pattern, despite the intervention of the European, remains intact.

177 231 656 Measures taken to protect national (South African) interests, such as

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241 of the agriculture of the most mountainous portions of the Lowveld is the use of terraces, or rather contour walls of stone, for there is no levelling of the ground in between, to prevent excessive washing away of soil. With the absence of men in the towns and the introduction of the plough with subsequent preference for valley cultivation, these contour walls are tending to fall into disuse.

462 Division of labour between the sexes is the same here as among
[71] Venda and the Highveld tribes of the Northern Transvaal. While care of cattle is the province of men and agricultural work is done by both sexes, cooking and housekeeping is confined to women. Men are responsible for the erection of storage receptacles, renewal of pantry and village enclosures and the lion's share in hut-building, including thatching, for women do only plastering of walls and preparation of the floor. The crafts confined to men are ironwork, work in skin, and all wood-work such as the manufacture of drums, platters, spoons, milk pails, stamping blocks, porridge twirlers, and flat winnowing baskets. Pottery is confined to women, but weaving and basketry (other than the making of winnowing baskets) is done by both sexes.

• 442 Political Organization and Position of the Chief. The most
443 outstanding features of the Lobedu culture complex, which clearly differentiate the Lowveld tribes from their neighbours to the south and west, are ritual suicide of the chief and the possibility of women ruling in their own right.[1] Among the Lobedu the chief reigns for a period of four circumcision schools, each 'school' being separated from the previous one by a period of almost ten years, and then has to drink poison and die. The institution can hardly continue when its supporting background of ritual and belief is crumbling, but it has survived to this day; the immediate predecessors of the present Lobedu and Letswalo rulers died unnatural deaths in the traditional manner, Modjadji II in 1894 and Mamathola in 1905. There is in this area no conscious belief that growth of the crops, welfare of the cattle,

[184] [1] These two features occur together in the most important tribes of the Lowveld such as the Lobedu, Khaba, Narene, Thabina. The only tribes to whom this institution is foreign are the Phalaborwa and Tsubye and the two Venda tribes of Moila and Tswale. Sekhopo and Radwadu, sections of the Balobedu, broke away when the first woman succeeded and themselves have only men rulers.

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and the regularity of the seasons are bound up with the life of the chief, but the identification of the earth with the chief in the phrase 'mabu a fesa' (the earth is hot, burning) which is used by all Lowveld tribes as a euphemism to denote the illness or death of the chief, seems to imply some connexion between the life of the chief and the fertility of the earth. Some such association seems implicit also in the feeling among the Lobedu that the chief should have no physical defect (it is thought to be impossible for the queen to be ill, and the present queen has never had a day's illness) and should lead a secluded life, being seen by and giving audience to royal relatives and the nobility only. So close is the association between the ruler and the land he rules among the Lobedu that the chief may not leave the country or cross its boundaries, a taboo which made it impossible for Modjadji to register her vote at the nearest Native Commissioner's office in the recent elections for the Native Council. 642 643

The great power of the chief in the three most important tribes of the Lowveld lies in rain-making. Here we find as in so many other aspects of their culture an intensification of a feature present in modified form in many other tribes, leading to a difference as great or greater than the complete absence of the trait. Many chiefs in South Africa are great rain-makers, and tribes of the Highveld and Sekukuniland share with those of the Lowveld the custom in time of drought of sending young men to 'beat mofoko' pegs around the country or to put out all the fires in the country and rekindle new ones in each village. But the Lowveld chiefs, especially Modjadji, are the greatest rain-makers of all, recognized in the old days as such by tribes as far south as the Swazi and Zulu, and rain ritual here has characteristic features not found elsewhere. Important among these is the custom of dancing for rain. When the rains do not come at the right time, it is usual for each headman in turn to come to the royal kraal with his followers to *lobe* rain by dancing for the chief, and when this does not help the women come as a last resort to do a special dance which is so exacting and causes so much crying on the part of small babies, who have to go hungry while their mothers dance, that it is believed the chief must be moved by it. This custom, still practised by the Lobedu, has died out elsewhere in the Lowveld, having been last performed among the Khaha in 1911. The belief that twins, mis- 643 789 643 789 766

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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THE LOVEDU OF THE TRANSVAAL

By J. D. *and* E. J. KRIGE

The World View of the Lovedu

101 THE Lovedu are a South Bantu tribe ruled by a divine queen. They live amid fertile foothills and forest-clad ravines below the Drakensberg escarpment in the north-eastern Transvaal. Their country, of which the present Mujaji Reserve is but a small portion, is situated near the frontiers of the main masses of Sotho-Tswana, Venda, Tsonga, and Nguni peoples; and it was important for the development of Lovedu institutions that the great migratory movements of these major groups skirted round this geographically insulated area.

144 Before the coming of the Lovedu the population of this area appears to
177 have been predominantly Sotho not unmixed with Karanga, Tsonga, and Nguni elements. Then, about three centuries ago, a small group of Karanga
563 immigrants from the crumbling empire of Monomatapa in Southern Rhodesia arrived and gradually incorporated the local population. From this
● 642 group the royal house of the Lovedu traces its descent, and it was these people who introduced the complex of royal institutions which eventually became crucial for the world view of the Lovedu tribe. For two centuries, the formative period of their development, they enjoyed peace during which they came to dominate the area and to establish firmly the conception of the divine kingship which they had brought from the north. The situation was complicated at first by the numerical weakness of the nuclear group and the diversity of the incorporated alien groups; and a major challenge was later presented by the influx in the first half of the nineteenth century of great numbers of refugees fleeing from the depredations of Shaka, Moselekatse, and others, and seeking sanctuary in the inviolable realm of Mujaji, the rain queen of the Lovedu. They responded to this challenge by an adaptation of the pattern of the sacred kingship that facilitated incorporation of alien elements, and the result has been a remarkably coherent and well-integrated way of life.

Some Aspects of Lovedu Social Structure

231 Despite some unique emphases, Lovedu culture is not atypical of the
241 South Bantu. They practise a mixed economy of hoe-culture and cattle-rearing with, however, less reliance upon cattle than Nguni or Tswana. They cultivate a fair variety of crops, most important of which are maize, millet, pumpkins, and groundnuts, and their exploitation of the rich, natural sub-tropical vegetation for purposes of nutrition, economic pur-
231 suits, and medico-magical practices is exceedingly thorough. The few cattle that are reared are significant, not for subsistence or as wealth, but for

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say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is 643
she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the
cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally 772
to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the 182
kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu
political pattern follows that of the centralized states of the South Bantu; [642]
yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation.

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final 773
causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some
of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated [821]
with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical.
A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and 773
man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north
when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* 776
himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, [842]
who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors.

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do 772
not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen,
whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them, 821

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
557 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
557 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[634] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1945 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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ing. It is said that this was the first miracle of that chief, for in Mashonaland his brother had produced the rainfall. 173

12. The name of the first chief who left Mashonaland is Magaphele. It was he who took possession of the country of Kheoga by fighting with fire. The second chief is Mohale. There is not much known about him. 173

13. The third chief is "Kheale kha Mmamohhale a Ledaža."[17] This is his praise-name. He produced rainfall just like his fore-fathers.

14. The fourth chief is "Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a—daža."[18] This is his praise-name. They praise them on account of the clouds, they say: "They transform the clouds so that the rain must fall." [551]

15. He—Phedola—had a son who was the first-born[19] When the king was about to die, he gave the younger son the rain-horn. But the people did not know that the chief had given him the horn of chieftainship. They thought that they would find that he who had the great name of chieftainship[20] would be he who had received the rain-horn. The name of the eldest son was "Madaže" (the Filler) that of the younger one was Makhoba (the Finisher). Therefore they said: "Chief is Madaže! He will fill the rivers with rain-water. As to Makhoba that means he will empty the rivers, so that we shall have no water." Therefore they proclaimed Madaže their chief. 173 643

16. They drove the younger brother away so that he had to leave the Lovedu-country. He left together with the troop which trusted in him. He went upwards and came to "Nareni"[21] and settled on the mountain of Khevela.[22] 173

17. Now in Loveduland Madaže was not able to produce rainfall. That country was a country of sunshine and hunger without intermission. There at Khevela rain was falling continuously every year; it was a country of corn, for the rain was falling.

18. Then the head-men of Loveduland began to cry and to complain that they did not know that it was Makhoba who had been given the rain-

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[17] Unknown names

[18] "Transformer—clouds are filled."

[19] —and therefore heir to the Crown according to the law.

[20] See [19]

[21] "At the Buffalo" name of the country in the South of Loveduland from the name of the tribes living there. They praise the buffalo.

[22] Near the confluence of the Selati-and Olifant-river.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930) 1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

horn. And they planned to call him to return home and to become chief. 173
So they sent some of them to ask him to return to Loveduland, to come and to be chief.

19. He refused and said: "You have driven me away, I can never return." Then they urged him. But he said: "How can I go? My elder brother will kill me." They said: "We shall make plans to drive him away." Then he agreed and left with them. When they came to "Nareni ha Lezwalô"[23] they left him there.

20. They however—for they wanted to hide the facts to chief Maḏaže—when they arrived in the village of Loveduland, went to the chief and said: "Know! your brother Makhoba left with warriors, he wants to kill you, he is on the road, he is coming! Flee! Go away that he may not find you." Chief Maḏaže said: "How can I go away? The young men will fight for me, I shall defeat them." They however pressed him. They said: "He comes with many spears, we shall fail. Go away, Chief, hide yourself, that, when we are fighting with them, even if they beat us, they cannot kill you." But the chief refused.

21. Then some of the head-men went back, they called chief Makhoba that he might approach. When he was near, they returned again to chief Maḏaže and informed him that he was coming to-day, that he was near: "Go away, hide yourself that, when we are fighting with them, they may not kill you." Then chief Maḏaže agreed. He left his village and abode in a thicket. During the night chief Makhoba entered the village. The head-men went to tell their chief: "Your younger brother entered the village with an army. He will seek you with rage, rise! we shall lead you away thither to the mountain of Levaga.[24]

22. Then the chief moved off and went to that mountain. On the 173
road to go to Levaga there was a river called Moḏazwi.[25] It was not 643
allowed for the chiefs to cross that river. Whenever a chief crossed it, he was no longer able to rule over the tribe. He will be ruined by crossing that river. Now it happened when he just had crossed, that they said: "Know! as you have crossed the river which may not be crossed by the chief, you cannot be our chief anymore.

23. They left him there and went home; they were governed by 173
chief Makhoba. They gave him the name of his ancestor "Phedola-

[23] A "buffalo"-tribe living near the Letaba-river.
[24] In the North of Loveduland.
[25] In the North of Loveduland.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɖaża." He ruled the country, he made the rain fall like his father. The people loved him much on account of the rain. 173

24. Towards the end of his rule he had a son. This son—he made him live just as an orphan, he hated him and treated him as a thief. He did so especially for the reason that the people should not perceive that the chief wanted to give him his chieftainship. That child had a house erected far from the village, he dwelt there. When he wanted to go home, he did not enter by the main-entrance. His father had made a small path for him unknown to every body; furthermore when the child happened to come amidst other people on that road, the chief prevented him from entering. The name of that child was "Mogôdô, the cast-out, Mogôdô the neck with fat-wrinkles, or the resting-place for property and men,[26] or Mogôdô-Mme-a Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a-ɖaża."

25. These praises were widely spread during his chieftainship. He was a powerful chief of severe government, for he used to kill people. He killed sorcerers and adulterers and people who were found telling lies, When judging he liked to pass sentences of death. Some were strangled. others were ordered to be burdened with stones and drowned in a deep place in the river.

26. Furthermore Mogôdô was a clever man in his undertakings. That what still to-day is to be seen of his clever undertakings is the stone-work which he erected with great skill. In the country there are no buildings which are similar to his. Among these buildings there is to be found a stone-seat which is beautifully carved. It was the seat of chief Mogôdô, when he was basking in the sun. It surprises really, it was hewn out with great skill. On that place there was the chief-kraal, its name is Levyeni.[27] (Others say that those buildings have been erected by Kheale, the ancestor of Mogôdô). 173 643 324

27. In the days of chief Mogôdô two of his head-men quarrelled about their territories. Therefore the chief sent his young men to stop the quarrel; they however found that war had broken out. So they returned home to inform the chief. Now the chief set out himself. When he arrived at the mountain of Mmanopi[28] he divided his army into two divisions to surround the villages of those head-men. When they saw that the chief had come to fight with them they were afraid that they would be killed. So they submitted to their lord. They offered two 173 643

[26] Property and men have space in the wrinkles of his neck.

[27] "At the rock."

[28] In the East.

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girls and asked that the chief might pardon them this trespass. Then the chief sounded the horn to assemble his troups. When the troups had assembled on one place, they were told that it was finished. Now the chief seized his war-horn, blew it and jumped about. Ali the troups intonated praise-songs to praise the chief; they said: "Mogôdô, the neck with fat-wrinkles, Mogôdô, he rules with the rain-horn." It is 'Mogôdô-Mme-a—Phedola," he says: 'I kill a person'—he kills; he says; 'I make live'—he makes live." 173 643

28. Then the chief took his spear, danced, pushed it into the ground and pointed to the East. He said to his warriors: "From the East there are coming black ants. You will fight with them, and you will defeat them." Then he pushed down again, pointed to the West and said: "From the West there will come red ants, these will defeat you over and over again."[29] 173

29. Chief Mogôdô fought also with Khašane, the son of his father. But Khašane fled into the country called Tshale.[30] Then the people called him to come and stay in another country called Moduveni,[31] where a certain man namely Mamadêba, a son of Khašane grew up, who found the Word of God at Port Elizabeth, who was found fighting against the darkness in the days of Rev. Knothe and Reuter.[32] He was killed by the second female chief Masalanavô for the sake of the Gospel. [787]

30. Mogôdô had two sons. When they quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father, the chieftainship was given his daughter who became the first female chief Možaži. The brothers were driven out of the country by the magic power of the little calabash[33] and the fire-stick[34] which had been strengthened with medicines of driving people out of the country. 173 643 [789]

31. So Možaži became chief, she was a good ruler over the country Lovedu like her father. She also killed the wrong-doers namely the soccerers and thieves and liars. She produced rainfall like her father, she received homages of chiefs who came from far with treasures of different kinds and elephant-tusks—coming from Zululand, Sekhukhuni, Ramabulana[35] and *Ñguñgunyane*.[36]

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[29] A prophecy attributed also to the chief Sekhukhuni.
[30] In the West.
[31] In the West.
[32] Missionaries among the *Golovê*.
[33] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[34] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[35] In Vendaland.
[36] In Thongaland.

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32. Therefore the praise-song of chief Možaži says: "Možaži—when the sun sets—trader in the hut;[37] I sleep on the road,[38] I am a widow,[39] I have no one who watches me. I am the elephant-knife on the hip in the sheath;[40] she eats meat,[41] the trader in the house." 173 643

33. The second chief was Masala-Navô. She was given this name by the dead (queen), when she was raised to the throne. She governed also like the other chiefs. Her praise-song says: "Mmasala-Navô,[42] speak good (words). When you are speaking bad (words), the tribe will split. It was the chief Khethubudi of Mashonaland who said: "I do not like the people.—Finally I got an ulcer on my back and said: 'People, scratch me."[43]—The hawk, at which they look with fear, they look at me with hearts full of hatred."[44]

34. This queen had milk-cows. They were called "the selected" of the chief-kraal. They were milked by a head-man who had been chosen to milk them. When they were milked, and the carrier of the milk was carrying it to bring it home—when it happened that he met people, they had to kneel down until he had passed. This was a custom to honour the food of the chief. When a person was standing when the milk passed near him, it was a great crime. These cows were not kept in one kraal together with the cattle of the village, but they remained separated. 173 234 643

35. Furthermore chief Mmasala-Navô hated the believers (in Christ). A Christian was not allowed to enter the chief's kraal. When a Christian had a case to be settled in the chief's Court, he had to sit outside the village under a tree; he sent his words through the messenger of the chief. 173 797

36. Chief Khesêthwane who governs to-day, and who is also called Možaži, is the third female chief. She produces rainfall. She allows the Christians to enter the official meeting-place and her village. She is fond of education. A church has been built near the meeting-place of 175 797

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[37] It is not necessary that she goes round to "sell" the rain. People are coming to her to buy in her hut.

[38] Like a prostitute (?)—she was not married but is said to have had many lovers.

[39] Because she had no husband.

[40] Praise of her blood-thirstiness.

[41] She killed her chief counsellor always after a short service.

[42] "She who remains with them."

[43] That chief thought that he was able to live without needing other people, until he became ill and was unable to help himself. Then he was obliged to call for assistance.

[44] Praise of the cruelty of the Queen.

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the royal kraal. The children of the chief's kraal are attending school at her command. 175 797

37. Chief Khesêthwane does not allow that a person enters her kraal with shoes on his feet. When somebody approaches the main entrance, he must take off the shoes and leave them outside the main-entrance that he may be allowed to enter the meeting-place. 643 576

The beginning of the government of female chiefs in Loveduland

1. The last male chief is Mogôdô. He had two sons : Malegudu and Kheêbe. These young men quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father when he was still alive. Now they had a sister who was called Možaži. So the chieftainship was given her that she might be the ruler of the tribe. The brothers were driven away. 173 643

2. When a person is made chief in Loveduland, he must be given the fire-stick and the water-calabash. Now they gave the sister the fire-stick and the calabash that she might bring it to Malegudu, the elder brother. But it is said that they had been strengthened by magic charms which make a person mad who looks at them with his eyes. He will behave like a mad person, he will leave his home, go away and move to another country and dwell there. 643 789

3. They say when Malegudu had looked at the fire-stick and the calabash, he left the land of his father, went to Vendaland and died there. Kheêbe the younger son who had quarrelled with him about the chieftainship was treated in the same way as the elder one. He left the country went to Thôvôlô[45] and died there. 173 643

4. So the chieftainship was given the daughter of Mogôdô namely Možaži I. She had a daughter called Masala-Navô. She followed her mother in the chieftainship.

5. Masala-Navô had no child until her old age. But she had a younger sister. She had two children. The first child was a boy, the second one a girl. The girl-child called Khesêthwane was chosen to be chief. She is Možaži who governs still to-day.

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[45] In Portuguese-East-Africa.

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FOREWORD

I AM interested in this book for two reasons. The first is that the 114
authors are my nephew and his wife—both devoted anthropologists, to whom this painstaking research into the least known of our South African native tribes has been a real labour of love. While earth's foundations were shaking in the convulsion of our times they were absorbedly probing into the mysteries of the Rain-Queen and her 'timeless' society. To me this seemed an almost unnatural devotion to science—until I came to read the MS. of this book and found it a fascinating distraction to the war problems which form my daily life. Perhaps the curious reader may find it no less entertaining.

The second reason is that for at least half a century the Rain-Queen 643
and her people and the curious stories about them have interested me. She was said to be very light coloured: was she a descendant of one of a couple of Boer girls who were said to have been spared by those natives, when early in the nineteenth century they massacred the Van Rensburg party without leaving a trace behind? What was the mystery about her which made it almost impossible for Europeans to catch a glimpse of her? Had the Natives adopted a white queen as something divine? Even if these were mere baseless fancies, other points of personal interest attracted me to the subject of the queen. Long ago one of my daughters, when a college girl, visited the country of the queen with a company of friends in the hope that they might be able to see her. In that mountainous, almost roadless country the party was overtaken by a violent rainstorm and late at night arrived at her headquarters drenched, exhausted, and more dead than alive. The queen ordered a hut to be cleaned and prepared for them where they stayed the night; and next day, having probably heard that she was the Prime Minister's daughter, gave a personal audience to her. Imagine the thrill! That established a personal bond between the queen and my wife, suitably recognized in the customary South African way. Then many years after, my nephew and his wife were staying at the headquarters of the queen in order to gather the material for this book. From time to time they informed me of the most interesting anthropological finds they were making. I also learnt that near her headquarters was a forest of cycads (*Encephalartos transvenosus Burtt-Davy*), one of the most unique botanical features in South Africa. [137]
This decided me at last to spend a holiday in the queen's country, and, with my relatives as guides, I had a most interesting experience. I saw how they had, through simple humanness, overcome the fears and the shyness of the people and were on most familiar terms both with the queen and her subjects. I saw my cycad forest. Best of all, I saw that wonderful woman, well over sixty, but strong in body and character—every inch a queen. We exchanged information and gifts in the traditional style, and I could thank her for her kindness to my daughter in the distant past. She was much taken up with all the useful domestic articles my wife had sent her. A couple of years afterwards I was once

1 [i.e. J.C. Smuts--Analyst]

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643 more Prime Minister, and I received a most charming letter from her, expressing her pleasure that she had met and personally knew the man who was 'wearing the crown of South Africa'. Accepting the complimentary expression so kindly meant, I was equally pleased to have met a woman who so impressed me with her force of character and intangible air of authority—a woman who really was a queen. No wonder her subjects look upon her as the embodiment of their divine order. And yet that woman is the centre—in the ritual of her tribe—of a great tragedy which awaits her, as it has awaited her predecessors. That ritual carries us back to the most dim and distant past of the human race, and the interested reader will find it in this book. Mujaji is one of the high lights of anthropology, and, looking at her calm, strong face, I wondered what she thought of the fate in store for her. Here are the tears in things mortal.

114 This book is interesting from another point of view. It paints the picture of a Native society in which the pattern or plan of the whole determines the character of all the main lines of detail. Religion, law, ethics, social institutions, all fit naturally and almost logically into the scheme as a whole—they appear to be products of the central pattern which has stamped its character on all the details. The social sanctions in law, religion, ethics, &c., are not external and superimposed on the social practice, but flow from the fundamental social system itself as its natural outcome. All are in one degree or another internal to the system. The writers of this study have succeeded in penetrating to this inner core of this particular type of Native society, and in showing the balance and harmony of the system as a whole. This gives, in my opinion, a very special anthropological value to this study.

They have no doubt been able to probe thus deeply into this Native society because of the sympathetic relations they have been able to establish with the Natives. The first task of the anthropological field-worker, that of gaining the confidence of the Native, is more difficult than is generally supposed. As those who know the Native mind realize, it requires qualities of tact, patience, and sympathy of the highest order. This task presents unusual difficulties among the people of Mujaji, whose suave and accommodating manners can be most effectively used to frustrate the quest of the field-worker. And if there is one thing about which they are persistent, it is the safeguarding of their secrets. The tenacity with which they keep these secrets is intelligible, for they attach as great importance to the mystery supporting the powers of their queen as an army commander to the strategy which will ensure the success of his campaign. The queen is rain-maker *par excellence* of South Africa, and to maintain that position her secret weapon must never be divulged. Moreover, intimately linked with the preservation of her powers are many of the constituent parts of the whole tribal structure. All the major institutional arrangements in some way subserve the grand purpose of making her the divine 'transformer of the clouds'. Since the foundations as well as the superstructure of the culture are interlocked with this purpose and are psychologically necessary, as the authors show, for sustaining men's faith in the Rain-Queen's role, investigations even into

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PREFACE

121 ●643 THIS book presents the life and culture of the Lovedu, a Bantu tribe in South Africa. Its central figure is a sacred queen. Against the background of our world, she no doubt appears unreal in some respects, like the baseless fabric of a dream, but in others she is real enough. We can, for instance, readily visualize her, without official husband to cramp her authority, bearing her successor by a secret consort; or maintaining her strategic position at the centre of the tribe by re-distributing as favours the wives she receives as tribute. But it is a different and far more difficult matter to depict as real what we regard as mysterious; for, hallowed by a heritage of incest, she is chosen for her role by the ghost of her predecessor, and her destined end is death by her own hands, in order that she may rule by divine right. We have tried to show that these mysteries become realities when we see them as means to the supreme end of consecrating her power to make rain, and when we realize that this power implies control of half the cosmic forces and gives men faith to do their daily tasks.

121 182 Our main object has been to describe the culture of the Lovedu. We have set ourselves the task of showing the nature of its parts and their relation to one another. Some space is devoted to the royal institutions; the network of links woven by kinship, marriage and marriage cattle; the legal procedure of compromise and appeasement; and various aspects of magic, witchcraft, and religion. Considered as a whole, the culture emerges as a structure supporting and in turn supported by the Rain-Queen. We may think of the royal institutions as the foundations upon which men build for safety against famines and foes; the culture dispenses with reliance upon garden magic for success of the crops and upon a military system for national defence. Marriage cattle and the kin can be regarded as forging a frame which firmly holds the society together, binding its families, foreign groups and territorial units to one another and to the queen. Stresses and strains are taken by flexible devices for adjusting disputes by conciliation. A cult of masks and man-made mysteries appears to surmount the edifice like spires and pinnacles; we may envisage it as the cultural handling of those enigmas of nature, the exalted themes of growth and fertility.

Next, we have tried to outline the attitudes and interests of the people. They appear as carriers of the culture oriented toward the central figure and helping one another to bear the burden of a timeless society. Our chief concern has been to show how their ideals and motives have been moulded by the culture; why, for instance, they frown upon competition and appraise moderation, and how it is that they are not troubled by sex-guilt or inferiority complexes. We have finally turned to consider some aspects of culture contact, such as the fear and distrust of the agents of an acquisitive society against whom the carriers of the culture have no weapons save secrecy and deception.

In describing these lineaments of Lovedu society, as its stands facing the onslaught of Western civilization, we have set forth the general

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CHAPTER I

PAGEANTS OF THE PAST

Fame of Mujaji transformer of the clouds—the cycle of the kings—the cycle of the queens—from the pageants to the people.

FAME OF MUJAJI, TRANSFORMER OF THE CLOUDS

THE Lovedu are not numerous and, from a military point of view, they are insignificant. Yet among their neighbours and among tribes as far away as the Zulu they have a great reputation. The fame of their queen, Mujaji, is spoken of even by white men as if it were the fame of the monarch of a mighty empire. That is doubly curious. For, on the one hand, the nineteenth century in the southern sub-continent of Africa opens with the Napoleonic career of Chaka, king of the Zulu, whose exploits, followed by great displacements of peoples and spectacular reconstructions of tribes, overshadow everything else. On the other hand, the Lovedu, at the end of the century, ignominously surrendered to the European without a shot being fired.

Upon what basis has Mujaji, queen of an obscure tribe in the far north-eastern corner of the Transvaal, built her fame? By 1800 the kingdom of the Lovedu had already existed for two centuries in the seclusion of the sheltering foothills of the Drakensberg. It was undistinguished among its far mightier neighbours, the Venda, the Pedi, and even the Ḍokwa. A mere glance at the map shows their insignificance beside the overwhelming masses of Shangana-Ṭonga, now almost completely encircling them. They were too microscopic even to be seen on the stage of the sub-continent, when mighty empires succumbed and new nations were born. Nevertheless, it was amid these convulsions, even as a challenge to them, that the kingdom of the Mujajis arose to prominence. The Lovedu kings had always been sacred kings; they had a reputation for rain-making, but it was no unique reputation, shared as it was by several of their neighbours. Among the Lilliputian tribes who had penetrated the geographical barriers isolating the Lovedu lowveld—the tsetse-fly belt east and north along the enveloping curve of the Limpopo, the Drakensberg on the south and the escarpment on the west—the Lovedu could claim precedence and ascendancy. But if the Zulu legions or any one of the pillaging hordes which their ravages had set into motion had violated the sanctuary of Ṵulovedu, little would have survived of the Mujajis.

To the Zulu, so we are told by Bryant, their historian, Mujaji was the greatest magician of the north. Queen of locusts and of drought, a four-breasted marvel, her name struck terror in the hearts of would-be enemies, and her fame surpassed that even of Mantatisi, the ferocious female tyrant who was leading the Kololo (Tḅkwa) and laid the foundations of the Rotse empire. Mujaji also it was who magically smote to death dread Zwide, fleeing from Chaka, when he came too near Ṵulovedu, even though it was appeasement, not conquest, that he sought. According to

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Bryant, Mujaji was conceived to be immortal, inaccessible, mysterious. That is a fair reflection of the opinion held both by her neighbours and by peoples living far from her domain. Even to her own people she was practically inaccessible, appearing but seldom before them; but she was not immortal, and her mystery, if what is natural and inevitable be mysterious, was the mystic power of transforming the clouds into rain. To this central conception the name Vulovedu (or Lovedu) bears witness. It is interpreted to mean the country where the cattle and the wealth, even the sisters and the daughters, of foreign chiefs are utterly lost (*hu lova*); they are the offerings for rain which, by accruing to Mujaji, 'waste' the substance of the suppliants. That is the simple secret, out of which the colourful phantasy of the mystery of Mujaji has been elaborated. But it is more than a simple matter. The ancestors of Mujaji also were rain-makers; but they were kings, not queens. If it was the feminine attributes of the ruler which made Mujaji famous among her neighbours, it was, however, the fairness of her skin which captured the imagination of the early European pioneers.

There was enough in the environment itself to lend colour to the picture. The mist-covered mountains are an appropriate setting for the mysterious Mujaji, 'Transformer of the Clouds' (*Khifidula-maru-a-Ḓaja*), for such is her great praise. You can watch from afar how those vapour-laden clouds roll over the hills, constrained, as it were, to pour out their life-giving rain. You can easily imagine the 'huckster in her hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) where it nestles, secreted in the bush, on the edge of a precipice, and from which she sells her rain-making magic. It is well known that there are others who claim the power to constrain the heavens, and it is curious that the greatest among them are or have been women; but by comparison with Mujaji they are mere amateurs, even dabblers and quacks, trespassing upon her prerogative. They can raise storms and send hurricanes, but they do not have the power to withhold rain from the undeserving or to drop it gently upon the deserving with mathematical precision.

If these things appealed to the Native mind, the European was not unimpressed by the babbling of the streams mingling with the sounding of the drums, by the forest-clad ravines that are sanctuaries of ancestral spirits, and by the grotesque kopjes standing out as sentinels guarding the seclusion of savage men. The gateway to Vulovedu is the Valley of the Devils (Duivelskloof), a name which reflects the reaction of the pioneers to what was regarded as uncanny. But it was particularly the observances and ceremonial requiring the seclusion of the queen, thereby shielding her from the public eye, restraining her movements and preserving unsullied the secrets of her power, which fired the imagination. No European had seen the predecessor of the present queen; and the fairness of her complexion easily became the subject of rumour and phantasy.

That Mujaji II, who died in 1894, was fair cannot be disputed. Fairness is a feature of many Lovedu; it is a highly prized quality. There are tales among Europeans of the adventures of a Portuguese Don Juan in the bad old days; and undoubtedly, by Lovedu legend, a Portuguese trader visited the royal court. But if he had designs upon the queen, as

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is alleged, they were frustrated by the beer which was pressed upon him and rendered him powerless. We cannot attribute the sagacity of the queens, as did Rider Haggard, in his story of *She-who-must-be-obeyed*, to her pure Arabian ancestry. There may be Arab blood in her veins, as there probably is in the veins of all her people; certainly it was not by virtue of any foreign blood that 'She' ruled the tribe, and there is nothing that suggests that the Lovedu owe their organization of culture to an alien conqueror. They are among the politically weakly organized rather than highly centralized Bantu. Haggard's book, which appeared in 1886, correctly emphasizes the high status of women, the pride in female ancestry, the inaccessibility of the queen; and it is upon her immortality that the plot turns. There are also mysterious caves, but people never lived in them.

A more recent picture of the Rain-Queen, based upon local rumour, has been given by Dicke in his *The Bush Speaks* (1936). There she is represented as a crafty woman of mixed white extraction who came with her people from West Africa, and with diabolic cunning induced among her people the belief that she was endowed with the supernatural power that created the clouds so often resting upon her mountains. The rain-priestess soon acquired fame, which she used to found a great kingdom, without, however, relying upon force of arms. To account more adequately for her Machiavellian intrigues, he supposes that her female ancestors were white women, sold to the Arabs on the slave markets of West Africa, who enchanted their masters with their sexual attractions; hence the device of ruling her councillors by remaining unmarried; hence also the many girls, wives of the queen, whose duty was to captivate foreign chiefs, to spy, 'to induce their new masters to attend the festivities, dances, beer drinks, orgies, licentious debaucheries continuously held at the rain-priestess' capital'. Thus we get from Dicke's book a picture of intrigue and debauchery at the capital, supported by assassinations and poisonings, of a kingdom 'built up on immorality, deceit and crime, with no effective striking force to support it'. Her councillors preferred to be ruled by a woman, so that sons of the queen always died before reaching maturity.

There is much else that may be gleaned from local gossip. People are incredulous if one says that one has seen the queen. They remember how Mujaji II deceived Joubert, the Boer general, who, after subjugating the tribe in 1894, was shown, not the true Mujaji, but some one who impersonated her. Forgetting the signal service of the missionary, the Rev. F. Reuter, who intervened on her behalf, they attribute to the cunning of the queen her acquittal of complicity in the rebellion which brought Joubert upon the scene and which led to the defeat and wholesale deportation of several tribes in the lowveld. The diplomacy of the queen had overcome the white man. These are the beliefs that have contributed to the fame of the Lovedu. Whatever basis in reality there may be for them, there is one thing we must note. Mujaji lives no more than twenty-one miles from Duivelskloof. There are flourishing European farms, particularly all along the west and south of her country. Yet the Lovedu have maintained intact their culture and their institutions,

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643 even the royal constellation of institutions, curious and incongruous with modern conditions though they might be.

000 And it is to a brief history of the royal institutions, as providing the key to an understanding of the Lovedu, that we shall now proceed. But let us say this: truth is ever stranger than fiction, yet it is also more complex and elusive. The truth that obtains in a strange world, made up of beliefs and values very different from our own, is not easy to recapture; there is no basis, no framework, in our lives for it. We are continuously confounded by inconsistencies and paradoxes, try as we would to turn our conceptions and theories this way and that and even upside down to fit the facts into them. What we shall try to do is to give a visual representation of a few historical events, by way of a series of pageants passing in review. A complete account of the background of the past is far beyond our purpose. It will be sufficient to represent the spirit of these events, leaving for another occasion the question of how far they have a true basis in fact.

173 The pageants are not arranged into groups by the tribal historian, but we may present them as if they were colossal cycles, the cycle of the kings and the cycle of the queens. Each cycle opens in mystery, the mystery of an incestuous conception that, instead of corrupting the world, crowns the sinner; it is the ritual vindication of revolutionary change. In the first cycle, which starts just before 1600 and ends two centuries later, the change signalizes the birth of the tribe; then follow wanderings and the settlement of an infant community, which slowly develops to the splendid stature of manhood; and, finally, corruption and dissensions lead to a downfall. But in the midst of the ruins of the catastrophic civil war, which ends the first cycle, a new conception is born and we are at the beginning of the second cycle. The first cycle is handled with simple power; but no single doctrine in it runs its full course. Yet it cannot be mere coincidence that the mystery which marks the birth of the tribe should also be invoked to account for the momentous change from kings to queens.

The cycle of the queens has not yet been completed; it began about 1800 and rapidly ran to the height of its splendour; and its crisis, prematurely brought to a head, has also been indefinitely lengthened by the intervention of a new order of things, ushered in by the advent of the European. We cannot predict when the crisis will end or what the outcome of so prolonged a suspense will be, for the response to the challenge of this new order is now only taking shape and direction. But of this we can be certain, that in a world ordained by the white man there is less room for the vast sweep of the legendary mysteries. The tribal historian is unequal to the task of harmonizing the play of new, intractable forces with the theme of his exalted design.

The history of Lovedu kings and queens is not unlike the legends of the saints. The tribal historian is, of course, not troubled by a sacred theme, by the eternal struggle between Good and Evil; but he must justify historical events, he must bring them into relation with the grand purposes of the tribe. He never consciously tampers with essential facts; he uncritically accepts tradition that has been handed down to him.

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There is no direct falsification, but the way in which all distinctions of place and time are ignored leads to strange distortions. The tribal historian pictures man and events, not in the shape of their setting in the past, but in the colours of the values of the present. This involves inevitable selection and rearrangement. Again, legend without dramatic appeal is liable to be lost in oblivion; and so the historian, telling his story by the fireside, must be a dramatist. He groups his material, centres them upon important events and colours them to harmonize with the total picture of the society he has in mind. It is not always easy to reproduce either the whole picture or that touch here and those lines there, which give it its distinctive character and meaning. There are delineations of what in the society are regarded as we regard original sin, but they effect the salvation, not the damnation of man. A treacherous deed assumes the form of a glorious achievement. A usurper is turned into a hero. Royal incest, instead of threatening the security of the society, strengthens the divine right to rule. These are some of the critical moments in the history of Lovedu kings and queens that we wish to present by a series of pageants.

THE CYCLE OF THE KINGS

The First Pageant (*c.* 1500). The sons of Monomotapa, mighty monarch of the Uakaranga, quarrel and each sets himself up as an independent *mambo*, or chief, dividing Uukhalaga, the empire of their father, among themselves. One of these chiefs has his capital at the mountain of Maulwi, somewhere in Rhodesia. His people, prostrating themselves in his presence, call him *muloxwi* or *muroxwi*, but he has merely taken that name as a praise title to mark the link between him and the king of the Rozwi. Perhaps it is only a political link, not implying kinship of any kind. We do not know. Mambo rules his people, not by force, but through his supernatural prerogatives, for he is a sacred king. Tradition dictates that he should end his reign by ritual suicide. He is appointed, not in accordance with man-made rules, but by the spirit of his predecessor, who holds the door of the hut in which he died against all but the true heir; and it is only through that doorway that his successor can ascend the throne.

This *mambo* has a daughter, Dzugudini, and, though she is unmarried, she has an infant son, Makaphimo. Mambo wishes to punish the seducer of his daughter, but Dzugudini and her mother refuse to disclose the identity of the culprit, saying, 'The father of the child of a king's daughter is not to be known.' Mambo becomes more and more suspicious. Dzugudini's mother steals the rain charms and the sacred beads, and feverishly teaches her daughter their virtues and their use; and before Mambo can take action, Dzugudini and her infant son flee to the south.

After a long and eventful journey, the fugitives, accompanied by a handful of followers, arrive in Uulovedu, where they settle and found the tribe of the Lovedu. We do not know whether Mambo ever discovered who had seduced his daughter; but Lovedu tradition records that Makaphimo was the issue of the incestuous union of uterine brother

173 and sister. The brother remains as *mambo*, successor to his father; the 173 sister, Dzugudini, by virtue of her incest, justifies the creation of a new people.

The Second Pageant (*c.* 1650). Both Dzugudini and Makaphimo have died, the first in Nareni, the second at Khumeloni. One of the nobles, remaining on the highveld, is moving southwards from near Munnik, later to establish the chiefdom of Mamaoolo; two brothers of Makaphimo tarry on the way down the escarpment, and we see the one, Mahasha, sowing his seeds (*hu hasha*) to test the agricultural possibilities, the other, Mudiga, struggling to drive off the lions which surround (*hu diga*) his settlement. Muhale, son of Makaphimo, is ruling at Khumeloni. He is the acknowledged founder of the greatness of the Lovedu during the cycle. He successfully appeals to Mahasha and Mudiga to rejoin him; they give him their daughters as wives and he makes them his great headmen.

But Muhale's reign stands out boldly because of his subjugation of the Khiɔga, primitive denizens of the forest of Ḍaja. They have no fire, and live like wild animals, eating raw meat; their huts are badly constructed and dirty; they till the soil with sharpened sticks instead of hoes; and they have neither chief nor any visible form of government. The fair-skinned, cultured Lovedu set about educating these Calibans of savage humanity, teaching them the uses of fire. The Khiɔga find a new contentment in the sweetness of cooked food and in warming themselves by the hearth fires. Savage pupil and cultured tutor become close friends, so close that the savage unsuspectingly shows his benefactor the qualities of 'the place of the gods' (*vadimoni*) in the forest at Ḍaja. They envisage a brave new world, but they do not know that they are being deceived For in reality the Lovedu, coveting 'the place of the gods', are planning their destruction. They do not disclose the knowledge that fire can burn the veld; for they intend that 'their spears shall be fire'. And presently they set the grass alight and the fire scatters some Khiɔga, but burns most of them to death.

A moment later we see the Lovedu praying at the shrines at Ḍaja. When Muhale dies they bury him there; the Lovedu no longer fear the ancestral spirits of the Khiɔga. (For the fire, we may suppose, is here, as in the great transition ceremonies, a sacred rite. It effects the transition from danger to safety, from defilement to sanctity; the power for evil of foreign spirits it converts to a power for good in the service of the usurper; it cleanses the alien past and welds it firmly into the present.) As the pageant passes we see the ruins of another strange people, the Dɔɔna. The Lovedu dread these ruins; they build far from them; avenging spirits, who have never been assimilated, contaminate the soil; the fire which purified and aggregated the sacred places of the Khiɔga was not used against them.

The Third Pageant (*c.* 1700). At Ḍaja, beside the grave of Muhale, we see another, that of Malaji. 'He who makes the country sleep', for that is what his name means, has left behind him peace and plenty. The

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little colony, sheltered in the fastnesses of its seclusion, is busy working 173
out its salvation. The Lovedu have ample living space, for the lowveld 643
is still almost devoid of inhabitants. Beyond it there are great nations, kept at a distance by geographical obstacles. The Lovedu are not only secure in their mountain fastnesses, but also protected by those far-off barriers—the massive mountains towering over the Olifants River in the south, stretching forth a gigantic limb to the north, and the deep, tsetse-fly infested Limpopo Valley circling the west as a moat defensive of their home.

Men are discussing to whom Malaji has entrusted the rain charms, to Pheduli, 'the Drainer of the Rivers,' or to his eldest son, Maḍaji, whose nickname, 'the Filler of the Rivers,' is much more auspicious. Maḍaji settles their doubts by driving off Pheduli and seizing the throne. But in the sequel we see drought and famine in Vulovedu, while at Khivela, where Pheduli rules, copious rains bring plenteous crops. Year after year Maḍaji's magic sweeps up gales that scatter the clouds hanging over Ḍaja, whereas Pheduli constrains them to drop their gentle rain at Khivela.

The contrast is especially evident to the headmen living near Tzaneen. They secretly ally themselves with Pheduli; they spread rumours of a mighty army marching upon the capital. At length their strategy succeeds. Maḍaji flees to the forest, unsuspectingly entrusting his defence to the traitors; and when they report defeat and persuade him to rally his forces in the north, he is trapped into crossing the Maḍazwi River. It is a river which, even to-day, kings cross at the price of their crown; it drains the source of their power to rule. Maḍaji thus forfeits his right to the throne, and Pheduli, safely installed, becomes the mighty Transformer of the Clouds.

Faith in the sanctity of a system which may exclude the elder in favour of the younger son is restored; man-made rules, which usurp the function of the spirit presiding over the choice of a successor, are discredited. There is no room in this pageant (nor is there in tradition) for the defection, probably at this time, of a considerable section of the tribe, who later become the people of Mamaila.

The Fourth Pageant (*c.* 1750–1800). Pheduli's grave stands beside those of his forefathers. The scene discloses Khiali, the fair-faced king, reclining in a seat hewn out of the rock on the summit of a mountain amid immense walls of stone. In the spirit in which the scene is portrayed, with its mounds of masonry and its structures of stone, the impression conveyed is one of Zimbabwic splendour. (The ruins are still there, phallic stones projecting from rough stone walls some 8 ft. high, [172] and the sculptured seat is merely two rocks in their natural position. But it is with the spirit, not the reality of the scene that we are concerned.)

Khiali does not notice those faint figures of foreigners crowding into the background. They are the Sotho invaders of the lowveld, pressing over the mountains in the south, clambering down the escarpment in the west, and in far-off Phalaborwa settling in an unfavourable environment, whence some would soon leave to encroach upon Vulovedu. On

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173 his magnificent material foundations Khiali is concerned to build a
143 strong spiritual edifice. His predecessors were content to entrust the welfare of the divine prince, he who should ascend the throne, to the care of the gods. But he, Khiali, by strengthening the hands of the gods, would secure for ever the succession of the sacred heir.

As Khiali sits there, a youth, obviously concerned to avoid detection, appears in the shadows of an opening in the fence. He slinks away when he sees others beside Khiali in the courtyard. A moment later he reappears, only to be driven back by Khiali, showering curses upon his head. But later we see Khiali and the youth whispering together in the king's private hut; the king is secretly teaching him the use of the rain charms. The youth is Mugɔdɔ the Outcast, youngest son of Khiali His father stints him of everything, makes him dwell far from the capital, treats him like a thief, and refuses him entry into his village except when he comes alone and unobserved by a secret pathway through the undergrowth. These things he does to deceive the people and safeguard Mugɔdɔ's title to the throne. But they also develop a supersensitiveness in the Outcast.

Thwarted in his youth, Mugɔdɔ suffers irreparable damage to his self-respect; he is obsessed by suspicions; he imagines that every man's hand is against him. His councillors are adulterers and sorcerers, corrupting his wives, plotting to usurp his position. Scandal and dissension sap the strength of the kingdom. His elder brother, Khashani, rises against him; he is driven off, but the tribe splits into two; and more than a century later, in the second cycle, a descendant of Khashani challenges Mujaji with a foreign creed. Mugɔdɔ answers his detractors with wholesale executions, but he is concerned to vindicate himself rather than to regain order in the land. In a civil strife between two of his headmen, he makes no move until he feels himself insulted by 'the rusty arrows fit for the rubbish heap' that cause the blood of a kinsman to flow. The crowning catastrophe that embitters his soul is the conduct of his wayward sons. They enter the huts of his younger wives; they slaughter his cattle to gain popularity at their father's expense; they send him the dregs after draining the tributary beer.

And Mugɔdɔ's reign ends in chaos and confusion. Royal kinsmen massacre one another; internecine strife is followed by unparalleled famine; ravenous wild beasts terrorize the villages; Malegudu, one of Mugɔdɔ's sons, gains control for a time, but he has eventually to flee before Mujaji, his sister, and is assassinated in Vendaland; Khirbe, another son, seeks refuge in Thɔvɔlɔland, where he dies an unnatural death; Sephumulo, a powerful noble, unable to stomach subjection to Mujaji, who is gaining the ascendancy, severs his allegiance and establishes the twin tribes of Rakwadu and Sekhɔpɔ. And as these disasters befall the tribe, the first cycle completes its course.

THE CYCLE OF THE QUEENS

The Fifth Pageant (*c.* 1800). As the second cycle opens, the disasters which appear to be the Nemesis upon the vice of an uncertain succession

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(for it was Khiali's attempt to readjust the machinery of succession which maladjusted Mugɔdɔ for the task of a king) are reconstructed to form a chain of triumph for Mujaji. The most dramatic moments are not the disasters, but two interconnected events: Mugɔdɔ's prophecy and Mugɔdɔ's sin. 173 643

At the end of the civil strife, into which the insult of the rusty arrows goads Mugɔdɔ to throw his decisive weight, he orders the war horns to be sounded; and as he begins a solitary, spectacular dance (*hu pɛbɛla*), his people, prostrating themselves, solemnly intone his praises: 'Mugɔdɔ of the neck-with-great-folds-of-fat, wherein do rest both goods and men, who hurls his challenge with the rain-horn; Mugɔdɔ of Pheduli, Transformer of the Clouds, he kills as he lists and spares whom he likes.' Pointing in the four directions, he raises his voice in prophecy: 'I am going away to creep into the horn of a cow (i.e. to die). I do not like to sleep in the open, vainly counting the stars. I go to unloose the black ants in the east. They will bite you and kill you, but in the end you will overcome them. Thereafter I shall unleash the red ants in the west; you will fight them, but you will fight them in vain. Further, I say this country will be ruled by a frontal skirt.'

It is Mugɔdɔ's farewell message just before he dies. But the prophecy epitomizes the three great moments in the cycle of queens: the accession of a woman, the raids of Ɗguni hordes (black ants), and the conquest by the European (red ants).

The Sixth Pageant (*c.* 1800). Mugɔdɔ is the instrument of an inexorable fate. His faith in his fellow men, in his councillors, even in his sons, has been shattered. He muses that women also are faithless. But their faith, however unfaithful, keeps them falsely true; they intrigue against him as their husband, but they are loyal to him as their king. Above all, their mystery is allied to a power, not to blast the tribe to fragments, but to subdue men and turn their passions to the service of the state. That is the vision given to Mugɔdɔ, and the guarantee of its divine origin is the far-off past in which Dzugudini originated the tribe. That past also suggests how the vision can be realized. And in the scene before us these mighty issues are handled with a simplicity and a directness which it is impossible to reproduce.

Mugɔdɔ betakes himself to his favourite daughter at Maulwi, sacred reminder of the mountain in Rhodesia. Simply he tells her of his purpose, but she doubts its divine source: 'It cannot be, my father,' she says; 'these things are too difficult.' Mugɔdɔ goes again to her, but she remains mystified that a sin that defiles can be a rite that sanctifies.

Then Mugɔdɔ goes to Lekhwareni, the despised place of stones and of slothful people (for, according to their praise song, they burn their nails roasting the maize that they should have stamped). There lives Mujaji, daughter of his wife, Mamujaji. To her also he confides his vision; he tells her she will be queen if, though celibate, she will bear the heir to the throne. He is not speaking of a virgin birth, for she understands that he, her father, will be the father of her issue. 'You are all-wise, O father,' she replies. 'I am the servant of your will.' A secret hut

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is built; an inquisitive intruder, the favourite wife of Mugɔdɔ, suffers the extreme penalty; and in due course a son, not a daughter, is born.

But Fate tricks Mugɔdɔ in vain. The son is strangled and a little later there is a daughter. She is to become Mujaji II.

The Seventh Pageant (*c.* 1850). Mujaji I has already been on her resplendent throne for half a century; she has turned the chaos of her predecessor's reign to peace and prosperity; and, surrounded by restrictions which forced her into seclusion and fostered the idea of her sagacity and immortality, she has won the fame and attraction which drew so many foreigners to her capital. She is 'the white-faced Mankhadeni, radiant as the setting sun'. 'Huckster in her hut', perched like an eagle's eyrie on the fringe of a forest, she dispenses as she wishes the life-giving rain. 'She casts away some; others she shares with the vultures.'

Hosts of foreign ambassadors and potentates gather at her court. Some bring cattle, others their daughters or sisters; these are the gifts with which they show their homage or supplicate for rain. In the company we see messengers from Manukuza, dread monarch of Gasaland, supplicating with mighty gifts from their master; ambassadors of Zwide, challenger of Chaka himself, seeking to ward off the chastisement of locusts and drought, but smitten to death for his presumption in coming so near Ʊulovedu; and also an envoy from Moshesh in far-off Basutoland. Less pretentious are the men from Malevɔxɔ, whose Lovedu wife had taught him the elements of the magic of rain-making; from Vendaland, where they call Mujaji 'the wife who brings them water to wash their face'; from Phalavorwa, upon whose internal struggles Mujaji arbitrates. From Chopiland and Ʊunyai, from the Ʊirwa and Tswana, from the very ends of the world, there are suppliants. Sekwati, the great Pedi king, is seeking a matrimonial alliance, hence that herd of cattle in the courtyard; Mali of the Khaha and Magaepia of the Letswalo, queens crowned in their own countries in imitation of the immortal Mujaji, come to be strengthened and fitted for their task. But the mightiest tribute of all is the gift from the Zulu king, who, disappointed by the failure of his mission to the great Swazi rain-maker, supplicates the rain-maker of rain-makers.[1]

The pageant is incomplete without its background, the armed hordes of Chaka and Moselekatse, of Soshangane and Mantatisi, of Thulare and Mafefe, laying waste and massacring, and in the wake of the trail of desolation, the smaller tribes and those miserable remnants, the guerrilla bands of cannibals, completing the destruction. They all are mightier than Mujaji, who is unarmed yet invincible. And, as the pageant passes by, we see innumerable refugees flocking from all points of the compass to seek sanctuary in the inviolable land.

The Eighth Pageant (1894). The sceptre, secretly entrusted to Mujaji II on her accession forty years and more before this pageant passes, is

[1] A Zulu author, M. J. Mpanza, in his *UGuqabadele* (1930), p. 53, confirms this. He says that if there was excessive drought, the Zulu king would send black cattle to the Swazi king with a request for rain; and, if there was still no rain, he would send to Mujaji.

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the symbol of forces that swayed a bygone world. People are uncertain of their bearings in the new world, their sense of security has been shaken. The black ants from Swaziland have left a scar, though they were chastened when the legions of Ludongo were defeated. Now the red ants are brought upon the scene as the aftermath of the exploits of Albasini, self-appointed chief of the Magwamba (Shangana-Tonga) and Native Commissioner of the Boer Republic. The sceptre only weakly shows the force of spiritual power. The tribute Mujaji sends to Albasini, it is true, smites him with drought; upon General Joubert, curious to behold the royal majesty, a far-off sister of the queen, who was also her 'wife', is palmed off as the mysterious 'She-who-must-be-obeyed'; the Transformer of the Clouds still is the 'huckster in her hut'.

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But to the workers and warriors of the 'red ants', the sceptre is like a broken reed rather than a magic wand. Some of them with impunity appropriate the country, enlisting in their service the denizens of the soil; others are collecting taxes, exacting tribute and redrawing age-old boundary lines; still others invade the sacred places, even desecrating the drums at Maulwi. The princes still come, but they supplicate surreptitiously.

The temporary triumphs cannot offset the disastrous defeats, and Mujaji, bewildered by the turn of events, does not know how to adjust her weapons and her diplomacy to the needs of the new situation. She circumvents the curiosity of Joubert, but she fails to save her subjects from serfdom. When the grave of Khashani, the Christian kinsman whom she martyred, becomes the rallying point of a disloyal creed, when the conspiracy to expel the European intruder ends in the disaster of the deportation of her neighbours, she loses her faith in the gods of her ancestors and adjures her followers to trust the apostle of a creed that was uprooting these gods. Pathetically she presses the poison cup to her lips, conforming to the letter, not to the spirit, of the ritual end ordained by her ancestors. In a world indifferent to the eternal verities, that cup is like an empty sham and that end like a vain sacrifice.

The pageant passes on. A cheerless panorama unfolds before us as Mujaji III ascends the throne. To submission is added humiliation. When the white man, coming to arrange for the recognition of the new queen, sees old Mathogani, who had impersonated Mujaji II, the proceedings are stopped. The Lovedu are made to pay for their presumption by being denied a ruler until the old woman dies. They retaliate by dubbing her the 'Chief of the white men' and by accelerating her end.

But it is a fruitless revenge. They are faced with the problem of reconciling the claims of two incongruous worlds: is the authority of the queen to be derived from the alien conqueror and his ceremonies or from the spirit of the deceased and the rite of the door? The reality of the old rite is the sham of the new order; it is a mere coincidence upon which no title can be based. But also in all spheres of culture and of life these dualistic forces clash with one another; they are in a death grapple which lasts throughout the reign of Mujaji III.

The conflict is epitomized in the conflict between Shalala and the royal house. The commoner, using the weapons of the European lawyer,

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173 ranges himself against royalty, who invoke the powers of their ancestors
●613 When Magoma, daughter of the queen, illicitly allies herself to the commoner and anarchy threatens disruption of the tribe, the royal house reluctantly invites intervention of the white man, submitting, however, only the superficial issues. Ostensibly Shalala suffers defeat, but in reality the struggle continues; and in this conflict, as in the wider conflict of the warring worlds, we are left in doubt where the victory lies.

FROM THE PAGEANTS TO THE PEOPLE

173 Only a few of the great figures of the royal family paraded before us in these pageants. We must regard them as expressions of some of the themes which the outlook of the society has emphasized. The twice-invoked incest theme is brought into relation with revolutionary national changes, like a transition rite in the life of an individual. Incest precedes and validates first the birth of the tribe, then the accession of a woman and her elevation to a mystical pedestal. Is it a case of the greater the sin the greater the saint, of the polluted and the sacred converging at infinity? We cannot say for certain. We saw the Lovedu pictured as a Prospero teaching the Calibans of Khiɔga. But primitive and unorganized though these Khiɔga were, they undoubtedly knew fire, and the use of fire against a fireless foe who has become a friend is unnecessarily treacherous, though it is, for the end in view, dramatically and, we may suppose, ritually effective. When internal dissension arises, the conflict is posed as one between the chief son and the 'chosen' son. The victory of the 'chosen' son vindicates the divine right of the rain-priest against mere legal precedence. This theme is once more dramatically thrown into relief by the device of naming the chief son 'the Filler' and the 'chosen' son 'the Drainer of the Rivers'. The contrasts are handled with consummate skill. Notice also the psychological insight that marks the manner in which we are led up to the climax of the change from kings to queens. The Outcast thwarted in his youth is over-sensitive and suspicious; he seeks compensation in revenge; and he is the paranoic who utters the fatal prophecy. The prophecy is not merely a vain delusion; it has a purpose and was put into the mouth of the Outcast after the event; and as such it is a magnificent piece of stagecraft. Yet it is not considered to be equal to the task of sufficiently magnifying the mysticism of Mujaji I; that task is finally achieved by a repetition of the incest theme. Those were dangerous times; drastic handling of their dramatic moments was called for. The culminating point of Mujaji's power stands out prominently amid the surrounding turmoil. It also challenges it. The drama suddenly ends; it has run its course. In the sequel, the problem of the death-grapple of dualistic worlds has developed too suddenly, too disturbingly, for the powers of the tribal historian.

These are some of the conceptions handled in the pageants. They reflect ultimate values, the philosophy of the society. They are on a different plane from the ordinary lives and interests of the people. To re-orientate ourselves, we must bear in mind three things: firstly, the royal pageants are but one of a large series, for besides the nuclear ruling

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736 and the universal approval of these efforts, to be kind to orphans. The chief trouble, it would appear, comes from the other children, who tend to lay the blame for all their wrongdoings on the orphan, who has no mother to champion him; they will quarrel with and tease him, goading him into fighting till even a well-disposed mother finds him a source of trouble in her home. It is significant that in a story much liked by children it is an orphan boy who succeeds in making rain when the rest of the country has dried up, and who receives many hundreds of cattle as a reward.

The concepts associated with orphans, the sad intonation that creeps into the very pronunciation of the word *tsiwana*, indicate that, though there may be little basis in fact for the ill-treatment associated with them, just as in our own society few stepmothers really ill-treat their step-children, on the whole the Lovedu feel as we do that not even the best treatment at the hands of relatives can make up for the loss of father or mother. We well remember how, one day at a strange village, a small boy burst into tears because we asked him which of the men of the village was his father. He was an orphan.

736 That on the whole it is only the closest relatives who are willing to
● 643 undertake kinship obligations which offer no reciprocal advantages is shown by the fact that it is looked upon as the duty of the queen to look after orphans who have no near relations. They are brought to the royal village (as they were to a far greater extent in the last reign), where they are looked after and, in the case of boys, given cattle to obtain a bride. Similarly, when an old man or woman without near kin dies it is the queen who undertakes the responsibility and defilement of burial.

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CHAPTER X

COGS IN THE POLITICAL MACHINERY

Ritual suicide, divine selection, the fire rite, and celibacy as aspects of the royal complex of institutions—links in the political system forged by the wives of the queen—the part women play in politics—structure and individuality of the districts.

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THE political system is not a thing apart, standing aloof from marriage and social structure. These and other institutions are closely interwoven. The political scheme is effective largely because it is patterned upon the arrangements and relies upon the genius of the social system. Its most emphasized aspects are the elaboration of institutions which centre in the queen and the highly developed local administration in the hands of the district heads. The districts form a federation rather than a union, but their autonomy is counterbalanced by subtle devices holding them closely together in the meshes of a web radiating from the capital. The district and the tribe itself may, from certain points of view, be regarded as the village writ large, but the village is not a political unit, and the approach from its organization is not comprehensive enough for fruitful examination.

The district, with its distinctive community life, is linked to the capital upon the pattern of reciprocities created by marriage and *munywalo*,[1] the system thus harmonizing with the most powerfully supported institutions. The reliance upon the queen as a rain-making divinity further stimulates the growth of a common tribal consciousness. Elsewhere chiefs are also rain magicians, but failure to produce rain is not a fatal defect. The Lovedu queen, however, suffers deposition if she fails, and it is upon her rain-making divinity that are based the structure of the royal institutions and much of the political system. And the two systems, centring apparently poles apart, the one in marriage and *munywalo*,[1] and the other in rain-making, have been interlocked as skilfully as the most intricate piece of machinery.

The complexity of the tribe as regards constituent groups, and the submergence of the royal group amid the other groups create a problem which, from the point of view of tribal solidarity, could conceivably be solved in many ways. The Lovedu solution stresses local autonomy side by side with social links. Many functions elsewhere reserved to chiefs are exercised by district heads, and the theoretical authority of the queen is seldom interposed in practice. Yet they are powers of persuasion, not of coercion. Her authority is congruent with the main emphases of the society: the reliance on compromise, the aversion from military institutions, and the subtlety of feminine persuasion. These characteristics promoted the willing allegiance of the many foreigners drawn to the sanctuary of Vuulovedu, where they were safeguarded, not only against their foes, but also against the uncertainties of nature. In return for protection and security, they sent their daughters and sisters to be the wives of the

[1] [See categories 582 and 583 164 Analyst]

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queen. And in the system these wives, after a period of training at the royal court, were re-allocated to district heads and royal relatives.

The system is not unknown elsewhere. Among the Shona, so we are told by Bullock, when one tribe conquered another, the survivors were incorporated by being given wives; in time of famine, tribes sometimes exchanged their daughters for food; and some of the Mambo handed their wives to their bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but faithful service. The Rozwi appear to have maintained their dominance over subjected chiefs, not by deposing them, but by assisting in their ceremonial appointment and the superimposition of the cult of Mwari, the high god, which had its priesthood and could withhold rain. This cluster of institutions is interesting to us because the Lovedu came from those parts and have retained some of their features. Lovedu district heads give 'tributary' wives to the queen in exchange for rain and these wives are re-allocated to important men. But the form and setting of the institution has changed; the circulation of wives, drawn into the network of the political and social scheme, subserves the purposes of the Lovedu cultural configuration.

By singling out for brief consideration the complex of royal institutions and of districts, we are giving prominence to certain aspects of the political structure. That is unavoidable in a generalized account, which must largely ignore the variations among the 140 districts (of which fifty are on European-owned land). We have often referred to cultural divergences and the tolerance towards them. In the autonomous districts they are very much in evidence. You may be told over and over again there is no such thing as ancestors represented by snakes, except among the possessed and in their cult; and the conception seems alien to a religion in which ancestors are not reincarnated in an animal, but animals may be dedicated to ancestors. Yet suddenly one day you may find that the sacred object (*thugula*) of a head of a district, such as Relela, is a snake. The lack of uniformity and the tolerance of almost contradictory customs may give the impression of ineffective political institutions. Conformity there must be in the interests of economy and solidarity, but the conformity need not be that of a regimented society such as ours. As to the royal cluster of institutions, we shall consider those maintaining the confidence of the people in the powers of the queen, and those converting tribute of wives into the visible links of the social organization. The elaboration of the royal institutions must not, however, obscure the essential humanity of the queen; we do not deal with the latter, but we must remember that it is a factor of great importance in the dynamics of these institutions.

In 140 years there have been only three queens, and Mujaji III, after having already ruled for over forty-three years, is still physically strong and is said never to have had a day's illness. The Lovedu attach little importance to the longevity of their queens, who in other tribes have been immortalized. In the north, whence the Lovedu came, kings ruled only for brief periods; they were not allowed to become old or decrepit, lest the kingdom suffer; and either they committed suicide or they were killed. Don Santos, writing in 1607, records that the kings of

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643 Sofala had formerly to take poison when disaster or a natural defect fell
171 upon them. Among the Lovedu, tradition decrees that the queen shall have no physical defect and must poison herself, not when she is old, but at the end of the fourth initiation (*vudiga*) of her reign. The emergence of physical imperfections and the holding of the fourth *vudiga* cannot both determine the date of suicide. In fact, no reign has been cut short because of bodily defects, though the conception of the relation survives. The queen is believed to be immune from disease and it is thought that her first will be her last illness; it is even said that Mujaji III's elder uterine brother was excluded from the throne because of his weak ankles. At the same time, not kings, but queens are wanted, there are no tests of physical fitness as are recorded for tribes in the north, and in the legends
[173] of the Lovedu and of tribes which, following the Lovedu, have ritual suicide, physical defects do not figure as a theme. In this complex, heirs to the throne have been disqualified or chiefs have been deposed because of inability to make rain, disobedience to their sovereign, or adultery with his wives. Among the Mamaila, a branch of the Lovedu, one chief is said to have become a cripple because he forced open the door which magically yields to the touch of the true heir, and the Nemesis that overtook him is attributed to his sin, not to his defect. Impotence disqualifies in the north, but Mujaji II was barren and, in the pattern as adopted in some tribes, such as the Khaha of Maake, barrenness of the queen is expected; for, as the queen may have no official husband, it is a virtue to have no children. That conception is not accepted by the Lovedu, for Mujaji II's barrenness was a source of sadness and strife and every effort was made to cure her. Physical fitness is an aspect of the perfection and divinity of the queen, but it has no practical relation to the right of succession.

643 The relation between the length of a reign and the initiations is far
778 more obscure. In many tribes where ritual suicide is enjoined (Thavina,
171 Khaha, Ubirwa), the number of 'schools' is said to be seven. The 'schools' are there held more frequently, and possibly there is some connexion
177 with the number of sacred drums (*digɔma*), for the Khaha have seven and the Lovedu four. The chief's life, as we have seen, is intimately bound up with the drums; both drums and 'schools' are great *dogɔma*, objects or activities in which power is concentrated. Power is also concentrated in *dithugula*, a category of objects chiefly associated with the gods. The distinction is not that between magic and religion; the *digɔma* and *dithugula* appear to belong to different cultural complexes. The one was characterized, we may suppose, by 'schools', drums, and cults linked up with national calendric observances, dramatization of the crises in life, and the sanctity and power of the chief; the other, by sacred beads, shrines, reincarnation of ancestors in dedicated animals, and ritual suicide of the chief. In the process of merging, the great *digɔma* were, we suggest, grafted on to the royal institutions and brought into relation with the life as well as the death of the chief. This is little more than speculation, for it is difficult to isolate the oldest cultural substrata and their distinctive patterns.

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly,

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly, 643
ritual suicide is not conceived to have any relation to the welfare of the 762
country. People do not say that the country will suffer if the physical 731
powers of the queen fail. But ritual suicide does elevate the queen to a divinity; only by her act, not because of susceptibility to the weaknesses of man, can she die. Age neither increases nor decreases her powers. She is the 'soil'; her death 'heals' or 'dries up' the soil in the double sense of defiling it (as twins do) and scorching it (as the sun does); and as they phrase it, the 'country dies with its owner'. Consequently, after the queen's death, famines come, cattle and people succumb, and many flee the country. When Mujaji II committed suicide in 1894, there followed the *matshɔna*, the three years of unprecedented drought and pests, during which, according to contemporary European observers, practically all the cattle and a third of the population died. After the death of Mugɔdɔ, likewise, there was a great famine. The only other famine vividly recorded by tradition was during the reign of a chief who, being a usurper, was unable to make rain. Though the death of a chief presages death of the country, there is no great hurry to appoint a new queen. To the unfolding of a plan that guarantees abundance, immediate needs, even the need for the life-giving rain, must be subordinated.

For an account of succession to the throne we have to rely upon the 643
memories of men who were adults forty-five years ago. The practical 762
and the ideal are confused in their minds. The generalized account we give is thus not specifically related to the death of Mujaji II unless otherwise indicated. Shortly before her death, the queen calls together her great men, sits silently looking at them for a while, and then retires to her hut. She will not see again the young boys who have gone to the *vudiga*. Long before this, Mujaji II and her inner 'council' had named the daughter of Leakhali, who was her 'sister' and great wife, as successor; she had driven both mother and daughter with their brothers from the country, but was secretly receiving and instructing the daughter. None but a small circle of close relatives knew of these arrangements; and a little later she took poison (*khitaba*) [778] in which the fatal ingredients are said to be the brain and spinal cord of the crocodile. There is a rule that the killer of a crocodile is for ever debarred from entering the capital, a prohibition patterned [784] upon the taboos against bringing into a village the wood of trees with which shrines and protective charms (*dithugula*) are made, for these trees 'reveal', and so render useless, what they create. The poison is not conceived to kill instantaneously; the queen dies in the presence of those who know the secrets, but the death is not made public. Those who pass the royal hut still greet her; even cases are still submitted as if for her final decision. Deception of the people is the aim emphasized in descriptions and in phraseology. In the old days many cattle were killed 'to deceive the people', but neither this killing, which provided at least for the funeral feast and the skin for the dead body, nor the other arrangements, had this function only. The spirit of the deceased continues, as it were, to preside over the country and no one could take over the reins 643
of government. 766

The body decomposes, it is ritually rubbed (*hu fɔrɔla*) to remove skin 789

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and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mufugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mufugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khɔrɔ* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mufugo* (*hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite.

Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khɔba*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*vudiga*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*washe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *vyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu swa*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mufugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mufugo* is used before the accession of a new queen.

Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, i.e. firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mufugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital.

Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *gɔma* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*diphaba*) in which the products of the sea are the most powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mufugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler.

Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly reasserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be auspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite.

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643 578 After the fire rite there follows the rite of opening the door, which will determine the identity of the heir. No one knows for certain who will succeed. Some nobles, availing themselves of the interregnum, mobilize their supporters, and all come fully armed, for there is sure to be some display of hostility. Even in 1896, at the accession of Mujaji III, a son of a wife of Mujaji II and great councillor marched upon the capital supported by the Mahasha, but there was no strife, as Mujaji III's followers were prepared. The rival claimants, in the presence of the [342] assembled people, go one by one to the hut in which the queen died and which (like one of the queen's huts even to-day) has two doors. They approach the door one by one, address the spirit of the deceased, saying who they are, and lightly touch the door. It is arranged that the most ambitious claimants go first, and those who are indifferent as regards their prospects last, the true heir to whom the door will open taking his place between them.

The spirit of the deceased, by opening the door, chooses the successor. The new queen, taking the axe, spear, and shield of her royal predecessors, escapes by the other door. She may have to flee, if the party of a rival is too strong, but in time she will be formally presented by a great councillor to the people. There is doubt as to the fate of the person who held the door from within: some say he must die, others that he is given a wife and sent out of the country. There is much uncertainty and secrecy about what happened in 1896; it is even doubted whether the door was opened. The reason lay in the fear of European intervention, for just previously the Boer General had been deceived and the lowveld tribes conquered, as described in Chapter I. Cowed by disaster, the Lovedu wisely decided to emphasize, not their own ritual, but the formal confirmation of the accession by the European.

643 578 173 The opening of the door, as known among neighbouring tribes, serves chiefly to resolve conflicts between rivals to the throne. It sometimes co-exists with institutional predetermination of the heir—for instance, where he must be the chief son of a wife married with special ceremonies and with cattle contributed by the whole tribe, the issue of a house in which the tribesmen all have a stake. In such circumstances conflicts arise, and European authority throws its weight on the side of 'constitutional arrangements' rather than 'coincidence'. In some tribes the opening of the door serves to strengthen the claim of the institutional heir; that is the case where there is no great massing of institutions behind the chief heir and conflicts are liable to break out if there are several claimants of standing. Among the Lovedu, succession was quite uncertain, the personal choice of the chief, not primogeniture, being stressed. The great son seldom succeeded, it is said, because the second child was favoured; and that is one explanation of the origin of the Mamaila, Sekhɔpɔ, and Rakhwadu tribes, for the great son was driven out of the country. In traditional history the 'Filler of the Rivers', who was chief son and seized the throne, had to make way for the 'Drainer of the Rivers', who proved to be the choice of his father and to whom the rain secrets had been imparted. Khashani, the great son, was expelled by Mugɔdɔ, his younger brother (we do not know whether he was the second son), of whom it is

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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the 643
people. Khashani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as 578
well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugɔdɔ, 173
which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugɔdɔ was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwareni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by 643
them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by 644
an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong [847] social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much 643
stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in 578
doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and 687
her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely 644
expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled

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643 to join him in exile. The conflict was so serious that the tribe seethed
578 with disaffection, though the queen seemed to be torn between love for
687 her daughter and disapproval of the whole episode. The present conflict
644 is in many respects typical. There is, as there used to be in the past, strife between the old councillors, who lose their power when the old queen dies, and the new councillors, who side with the new queen. The latter gradually supplant the former, but regard with fear the day when the friends of the heir in turn will oust them. This struggle is very real, and seems to reflect a more fundamental conflict; for the exalted purpose of the royal institutions exacts an unnatural sacrifice by the queen in order to make way for the heir she naturally loves.

643 The whole royal complex is perfectly logical once it is granted that there
644 must be queens, that succession is uncertain, and that ritual suicide is the guarantee of the chief's divinity. In a society in which the 'sister' (*khadi*) is priestess, her great religious role, still seen to-day among neighbouring tribes where chiefs are males, falls to the queen among the Lovedu. The ideal, imperfectly actualized since queens replaced kings, still persists that the *khadi* of the chief should have power and be given a large district to rule. In theory the brother of the chief is the great councillor, general, and judge. But in practice the complications set up by having queens throws these arrangements out of gear. True to pattern, the greatest district head is to-day a woman, who is a 'sister' to the queen and, though a 'sister' threefold (through mother, legal father, and paternal uncle), she is not the uterine or ritual 'sister'. At present the relatives through the queen's mother, not through Mujaji II her legal father, are important councillors, but it is not unlikely that in the next reign the great councillors will be the present heir's relatives through her legal father, the queen, who is also her physiological mother.

642 Owing to the inapplicability of the term 'council' to Lovedu arrange-
643 ments, we need say only a few words on this subject. There is no need
644 of a visible organization to support Lovedu court life, which is ceremonious, but not politically oriented. Power and authority derive from the queen's divine appointment, her exclusive secret of rain-making, and her strategic position in the social web. She is neither a military nor a political leader; she does not even have a priesthood organization to assist her in her function as high-priest. There are confidential advisers, but they neither constitute the more or less definite secret council (*sephiri*) of some neighbouring tribes nor necessarily function as political councillors; on the contrary the former, having assisted in the accession of the queen; are in institutional conflict with the latter, who later gain political control. The councillors represent the assertion of power by the rising generation of men in the sphere of law and politics as against women and the older generation in ritual, religion, and the social system. They are part mainly of the court (*khɔrɔ*) and the tribal gathering (*khivijɔ*), two indeterminate bodies.

644 Confidential advisers are mainly important district heads; councillors
643 are always residents in the capital. Both are relatives, but, in the case of
634 the confidants, not necessarily close relatives of the queen. In the inner royal circle, the closest kin are necessarily those reckoned through the

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queen's mother—that is, either the queen's predecessor on the throne or, if she has borne no children, the queen's physiological mother. The unofficial husbands of the queens are brothers chosen from the line of Malegudu (elder brother of Mujaji I), but relationship is not reckoned through them as fathers. Closeness of relationship is important, but personality and opportunity count as much. The most influential councillor is often said to be the queen's mother's brother—in other words, the brother of the deceased queen or, if she has no issue, the brother of the wife of the queen who bore the queen. In fact, however, other relatives rise to equally influential positions. To take a concrete instance, the councillors of Mujaji III have been relatives either through Leakhali, chief wife and 'sister' of Mujaji II and physiological mother of Mujaji III, or through Mujaji II, her mother, Mujaji I, and the latter's brothers, such as Malegudu. Muneri, the chief councillor to-day, is Leakhali's uterine brother's son, and before him there were Mulogwane, uterine brother of the queen, and also Leakhali's uterine brother. Earlier still, but in the present queen's time, the greatest councillors were others tracing descent from Malegudu. There is no precise rule either as to the number or identity of the councillors. The *duna* of the queen should not be a relative; he is merely a messenger, and, unlike the *induna* elsewhere, is of no account, having no special legal or other status or function. 644 643 634

The *khivijɔ* is neither the more or less determinate body of private advisers (*kxotla*), nor even the tribal gathering (*pitshɔ*), of the Sotho. It is mainly constituted by district heads, or their representatives, and the men of the capital, but any one attends; and it is never conceived of as a general assembly of all the initiated men of the tribe. It has little power and less initiative; it is summoned mostly to discuss European matters, and there is now a tendency to place some decisions of the men of the capital before it for confirmation; but it is hardly a means of gauging popular feeling or of expressing the royal will. The co-operation of the tribe is secured and its desires made known, not through the *khivijɔ*, but through other social arrangements, which we shall describe at greater length.

These arrangements run parallel with a distinctive system of wives of the queen, called *vaṭaxoni*, a term also applied to the wives of all nobles and women other than the queen may have *vaṭanoni*. The majority of the queen's wives are given to her by her district heads. In a sense, these wives are tribute (*va hu lova*), but the queen always gives some *munywalo*. She also receives wives from foreign chiefs who supplicate for rain or for peace, and from headmen who settle in her country and send their daughters or sisters; in these cases no *munywalo* is given. Finally, she is sent wives by the nobles, by those to whom she has given wives or cattle with which to secure wives, and by those who promise their little 'mud-stampers' as repayment for the assistance they ask. Sometimes also the queen takes a liking to a girl and asks her in marriage and sometimes commoners send their daughters. It will be impracticable to deal with all these cases; and, from the point of view of the political organization, we are mainly concerned with the wives sent by district heads. They send their daughters for purposes of *hu lova*, a word used in a wide 643 588 634 789 648

[marriage cattle, See cat. 583 for detail.--Analyst]

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643 connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
588 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
634 District heads *lova* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
789 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
648 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Uulovedu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*hu lova*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Tonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
588 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of [831] marriage and *munywalo*; the *munywalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
588 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
837 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own hut (and in the old days a cow into the bargain) and be allowed to co-habit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private councils of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Vaṭanoni* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *vaṭanoni*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads.

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *muṭanoni* to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. Only some of the *vaṭanoni* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *vaṭanoni* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves Mujaji and they are described as 'the heads of Muhale', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing.

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noblemen she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *munywalo* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *munywalo* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *munywalo* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.'

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

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ease of presentation. Mavetha, district head of Mareroni, some thirty-eight years ago gave his daughter, Muthatso, to the queen. Muthatso after a time was allotted to Khidima, the queen's maternal uncle.* Later Khidima sent a daughter to be one of the wives of the queen and this girl in turn was given by the queen to Nagambi, district head of Maulwi. Meanwhile Mavetha's son, Muhale, succeeded at Mareroni and sent the only issue of his wife, the daughter Makwajo, to the queen (1936). The next ruler at Mareroni will be either Makwajo or an heir raised by the wife acquired with the cattle given by the queen as *munywalo* for Mukwajo. Already these arrangements link the district heads of Mareroni and of Maulwi with the queen and one of her nobles, and also with one another. The network is indefinitely continued in all directions, and though its ends appear to diverge, they centre in the queen and become interlinked at many points. For instance, to Rasodi, a younger brother of Nagambi, the queen gave Makwada, her wife, who came from Malematsha, an important district head, and as a result Rasodi's son must marry at Malematsha's. Once these interrelations are established, they set into motion the whole social system and the reciprocities which double the links and perpetuate the interrelations. In the district of the capital the ramifications of exchanges and re-exchanges are so complex as to defy analysis.

Broadly speaking, districts may be divided into those given to one of the old *kwevo* or royal groups (of Muhale, of Mudiga and of Mahasha), those originating from *vafanoni*, and those held by heads of foreign groups. The so-called *vafanoni* districts constitute a composite group, because women do not normally succeed to one another. We have already mentioned elsewhere how the district Matsui was given by Mujaji I to her wife, who, marrying a Crocodile, was succeeded by her son Matsui and his line of Crocodiles. In 34 per cent. of the 100 districts we know well enough to trace their origin, the position has not been very different. To-day sixty of these 100 districts are held by the royal groups and forty by foreign groups, and of those held by foreigners sixteen were acquired, as Matsui was, through *vafanoni*. Thus 40 per cent. of the foreign and 30 per cent. of the *kwevo* districts, as far as we know, were originally handed to wives of the chiefs. Districts may originate in many other ways. It was customary for the kings to place their districts under sisters and brothers and temporarily also under their wives. Their wives could not as easily as among the queens consolidate their position, as they were unable to send their daughters as wives to the king, whereas now they can and do send such wives to the queens. Districts were also given to the great messengers (*didima*) of the chiefs; to foreigners, who, though they came with no large following, were renowned doctors of the national 'schools', some of which they introduced; to men who gave the queen cattle and a wife, and occasionally to those who had rendered services of value.

It does not much matter how a district originates from the point of view of the links that are gradually established with the queen and with one another. If foreigners come with a large, compact body of followers, they are often given an area and in return send their daughters as wives

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634 for land would then be regarded more favourably should he one day
425 return. The fruits of the soil are dealt with in much the same manner.
423 A man may graze his cattle inside or outside the district, but the cattle posts of the old days were within the district only. We have mentioned the rivalries of herdboys of different districts; we may add that some district heads, because of traditional values and limited grazing land, object to fencing. District heads sometimes reserve valuable trees for themselves, and it is they who give permission for the cutting down of large and shady trees or indigenous fruit-trees (though they be on the landowner's land). Honey found in trees, but not that found in the ground allotted, belongs to the district head. Some heads allow only residents to cut grass, making others pay. Hunting and water rights are not so regulated, but digging of clay is sometimes, if illegally. The
[778] preservation of large forests, a national asset, as places of the gods or of refuge in time of war is the concern of the queen, so that, for instance, Mujaji II had her cattle driven into the gardens of some people, including a district head, who had cleared part of the Levyeni forest and had not begged pardon by sending a *mujanoni* to her.

634 Some distinctive cultural and administrative arrangements of the
643 districts have already been mentioned. There are many others. All
651 district heads used to have, and many still have, certain fields cultivated for them. The queen also has such fields in her districts, and since 1927 each district head has had to cultivate a field (*muremo*) in his district for the queen, an innovation suggested by the European to enable the queen to help her people during famines. The experiment has turned out very differently. These fields are badly cultivated, for years some district heads bring no mealies, the failure only sporadically leading to the penalization of the head and his district, and the mealies are always converted into beer for entertainments at the capital that benefit only the local residents. The storage of mealies is impracticable and a system of distribution is not implied in cultural arrangements. A district head unwillingly surrenders land and sometimes expropriates first one then another landowner, so that there is much dissatisfaction and even refusal to cultivate the *muremo*.

634 In many respects district heads are like chiefs. They are often called
651 'chief' (*khosi*) and, like the queen, have medicines to safeguard them in their position of authority. A district head is not only the most important person in the district, the centre of its political and legal life, the man who is responsible for the welfare of his people, but the obligations of district residents towards him emphasise both his position and the reciprocities between ruler and subject. It is expected that his subjects shall bring him beer periodically, and sometimes it is held that he should be invited to every beer party held in his area, partly because he is responsible for order at the beer drink and partly because it is his due. All his subjects must make *morula* cider for him in the proper season, and similarly, when at certain ceremonies, held by him for the well-being of the district, beer is required, every resident must contribute. The most im[illegible] is at the harvest thanksgiving and the beer brought is [illegible] as being in return for the land given by the head to his people. On the pattern of

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634 of thrift, strict control of beer-drinks, interest in national affairs, of
184 pride and independence. Of course, a great deal depends upon the personality of the district head, but traditions in the district are not unimportant.

634 Districts are not always left to go their own way. In the last resort, as
643 in legal matters, the authority of the capital may be invoked, and it may be invoked even against a whole district. Just as a district may collectively take action against a threat to its well-being, as occurred in the small-pox epidemic in 1938, when one district assembled and collected funds to have the witch who was causing the deaths smelt out, so it may be held collectively responsible by the capital for failure to cultivate the chief's field. This is the more striking because there is no kraal responsibility and the so-called 'spoor law' (whereby a kraal head, unwilling or unable to explain why the track of stolen cattle leads to but does not leave his kraal is held responsible, whoever the thief in his kraal might be) is not known. We have seen a district fined, never a kraal. The queen has theoretically to confirm the expulsion of a subject: in cases referred to a diviner, the 'ears' or official witness should be, but is not always, appointed at the queen's court. In practice, however, the queen seldom interposes her authority. For years now no one knows who is head at Dithejine, the balance swinging unevenly between three claimants. At Madarabani, Muteze, who persistently refused to do homage (*hu lova*) to the queen with beer, was deposed; but that there were other considerations at issue appears from the fact that immediately afterwards he was installed at Uukhuda. When Thagu at Khimarela in 1936 expelled his paternal uncle's son for whom he was deputizing, nothing was done. At Ralselaga when the head died, the messenger (*duna*) took over, ruled for years without confirmation from the capital and in 1938 was recognized (because his son became valuable as driver of the councillor's newly acquired motor car), the real heir being quietly overlooked. Not long ago the nobles at a tribal gathering carried their point that only royal relatives should be appointed as district heads on the farms that were being purchased, but the rule remained a dead letter and of the ten heads appointed in these areas eight are foreigners.

642 In its visible structure, the political organization may appear unimpressive and in its dynamics chaotic. Its efficiency certainly is and always was—for it is not culture contact that is responsible for the irregularities—of an order different from ours. Efficiency is relative to the purposes of the culture. The aim has never been power or empire, but holding subjects together on the model of the social organization. The slight regimentation of the 'schools' subserves no political or military purpose, and court life is not concerned with displays, nor is it characterized by differentiated officials and courtiers controlling a great central organization. Unlike the Shangana-Tonga, the Lovedu cannot deal with large gatherings of men such as collected on Coronation Day in 1937. The genius of the society is in organizing relationships between people, and as long as the reciprocity and compromise and the sentiments built up by interdependencies are reasonably maintained, it does not much matter that irregularities occur here and there. The influence of the

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CHAPTER XI

THE GENIUS OF JURIDICAL ADJUSTMENTS

Conciliation machinery at the capital—quasi-judicial systems of appeasement—reliance in full-dress trials and sanctions upon agreement and compromise—procedure in 'blood' cases—appeals to ordeals and diviners.

692 671 THE genius of the Lovedu political system is its network of reciprocities; the genius of the legal system is its procedure of reconciliations and compromises; and both the political and legal systems reflect the main emphases and purposes of the culture. *Khoro* proceedings, the full-dress trials of the Lovedu, stand out conspicuously amid the various judicial arrangements, some of which we may be inclined to call quasi-judicial, but in reality none of our legal terms are appropriate. Their *khoro* is court-like, but it is not a court in our sense of the term; their law is law-like, not the equivalent of our law. All the procedures aim, not at settling legal issues, but at effecting compromises and reconciliations. The *khoro* itself, the most imposing feature of public life and the pinnacle of the cultural edifice, relies, not on force, but on friendly adjustments. It is the courtyard of compromises, not the arena of casuistic contests. It disposes of no sanction of execution: coercion is incongruous with its purposes. Culture contact has weakened the effectiveness of compromise and thereby has rendered necessary what it denies to the *khoro*—namely, the sanction of force.

692 In this chapter we deal briefly with the organization of the *khoro* and then touch lightly upon certain quasi-judical processes. These lead us to cast a passing glance first at *khoro* procedure and thereafter at various other types of procedure which centre, not in the *khoro*, but in other arrangements such as those involved in settling 'blood' cases and in dealing with the deeds of darkness by divination and the ordeal. All these procedures are part of the legal machinery, but they can be understood only as part also of the whole social structure. A comprehensive account of them is out of the question; we have no time even for a glimpse at substantive law.

692 643 The queen is at the head of the *khoro* organization. She never sits in the *khoro*, for it is the courtyard of the men. But she is always in the background, and in theory all decisions at the capital should be reported to, and confirmed by her. Five years ago, when the queen's uterine brother still lived and was a councillor, this was no formality, but to-day only very serious cases or decisions are submitted for her verdict or confirmation. This divergence from the ideal is due to conflicts, fear of involving the queen with European authorities, and a growing desire to reserve *khoro* affairs to the men. The queen's approval is still sought, always when the dispute involves the position or status of a royal relative, often when a district head expels a subject, and sometimes when a recalcitrant party is to be sent to the Native Commissioner or when one

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of the parties objects to the decision of the *khoro*. It is the queen's prerogative to settle disputes between royal relatives, but she also privately settles differences which, for reasons of public policy or of the prestige of the parties, should not be publicly discussed, and sometimes, to avoid the hardening of transient differences into permanent hostility, even withdraws cases, especially witchcraft cases, from the jurisdiction of the *khoro*. The queen has an unshakable reputation for integrity, and acts independently, if she likes, though often she consults trusted advisers, some of whom at present are not her councillors. 692 643

The role of the queen is not unconnected with the institution of 'mothers' of districts. 'Mothers' are appointed by the queen or with her approval, and are usually her relatives, living at the capital and having direct access to her. Generally they report in the first instance to the councillors, especially to the son of the queen's mother's brother, who is the greatest councillor. The office of 'mothers', though hereditary, often changes hands because of its responsibilities and inadequate rewards, the opportunities of favourably placed persons and the requirement of residence at or near the capital. Often a widow, familiar with her husband's arrangements, takes over the position, enlisting the help of a relative, who at her death naturally steps into her shoes. Since the fees received cannot meet the needs of taxpayers, usually only old people are 'mothers', but inability to cope with long journeys forces them to entrust some of their work to available sons or relatives, who in turn may succeed to the position. 'Mothers' are often related to, but may be only fortuitously linked with, the heads of districts under their charge. A foreign chief or headman may be introduced at the capital by a friend or relative or stranger, who thereupon becomes his 'mother'. In 1912, when a colony of settlers from Basutoland came, Mashaveli, who had no previous association with them, took the message of their arrival to the queen and henceforth acted as their 'mother'. Independent foreign chiefs also have their 'mothers', who sometimes live far from the capital. 673 [167]

'Mothers' have politico-legal and other functions. They receive their 'children', the district heads or foreign chiefs, and act as intermediaries whenever formal relations with the queen or great councillors are involved. When it is impracticable for a district head to bring beer to the queen, he may send mealies, which are deposited at the 'mother's' and there converted into the tributary beer. The arrival of beer from a district is always reported to the 'mother', who receives one calabash. 'Mothers' are the messengers or ambassadors of the queen sent to settle disputes among their 'children' or to represent her, for instance, at the formal installation of a district head. Important links in politics, they are the master links in the legal system. Some 'mothers' supervise the legal interrelations of many districts with the capital. As some districts are far off, eight to ten miles, they may delegate the work, in respect of some districts or of some of its aspects, to others, such as sons, wives, sister's sons, or wife's brothers. Thus Khidima, 'mother' of Mavulana, Maraga, Madumani, Gabiani, Musugududzi, and a European-owned farm, sometimes puts cases coming from the first three districts in the hands of his sister's son, but, since Khidima's own son has reached years

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CHAPTER XV

THE RAIN CULT

The rain-queen in her sphere of safeguarding the seasons—technique of transforming the clouds—evils that cause 'heat' and act as impediments to rain—'cooling' rites counteracting the 'heat' of the earth.

As the centre of the agricultural cycle, rain is the focus of many human interests; as the elixir of life, it is one of the ultimate bases of man's sense of security; and as a manifestation of celestial grace, it is the supreme justification of the divine right of the queen to rule. The queen is primarily not a ruler, but a rain-maker, and men rely for their security, not on regimentation, armies, and organization, but on the queen's power to make rain for the tribe and to withhold rain from its enemies. All ultimate reliances are based upon the magico-religious world, and rain-making and its cult are an important part of that world. The rain cult is not composed of a few magical passes made by the queen; it is a whole complex of institutions with ramifications through many aspects of tribal life. The cult is not confined to measures taken to secure rain in times of drought; its observances must be kept at all times and a good year involves as much care on the part of the queen as a bad one.

The chief actor in the rain cult is the queen. During life, she is not merely the Transformer of the Clouds, but she is regarded as the changer of the seasons and guarantor of their cyclic regularity; when she dies, the seasons are out of joint and drought is inevitable. Her very emotions affect the rain: if she is dissatisfied, angry, or sad, she cannot work well, and in 1934–5, when the first rains did not come till December, the drought was attributed to her being upset at her daughter's liaison with a commoner. Her rain-making is not confined to dramatic ceremonies in time of severe drought; it is conceived of as continuous care throughout the summer. Furthermore, the Lovedu do not attribute every fall of rain to some special activity or volition on the part of their queen, but rather believe that the queen exercises some general control or care which ensures a good season.

Such being the powers of the queen, she is the person to be approached when there is no rain, not only at the beginning of the season, but any time during the summer in a country in which three weeks' drought might ruin the maize crop. There are various ways of doing this. Great councillors or important relatives may approach the queen in person, saying, 'The people are crying,' and asking her to help them. When there was no rain, Mugwena, related to the queen through his mother, used to walk near the queen's hut complaining, in a voice calculated to reach the royal ears, that it was a bad thing for the chief to kill his people by withholding rain. When the first summer storm of 1937 opened with much lightning and thunder, the two chief councillors mentioned informally to the queen at beer that they hoped she would ward off wind and thunder and give them a good year. Heads of districts approach the queen (*hu lova*) with a gift, usually nowadays of £1 or £1 10*s*., and very often

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643 789 535 821 bring with them in addition dancing performers (*gɔsha*) to please her and to evoke her pity at the sorrowful sight of people dancing in summer when they ought to be ploughing. The movements of this dancing do not differ from those of ordinary dancing, but the music consists of *lesugu* songs sung also at the annual harvest ceremony, on the death of important royal people, and at the girls' initiation 'school'.

643 789 535 533 821 The most renowned of all dancing for rain is the *legɔbathɛle*, a special kind of *gɔsha*, the mourning dance of a section of Thɔvolo people living under one of the district heads, Mavulana. It is more dignified, its movements slower and more stately, and its drumming more subdued than in an ordinary *gɔsha*. So lightly are the drums struck that the clear, silvery, varied tones of the reed pipes ring out like the peal of bells. Only two drums are used, and none but those who have lost at least one parent may perform, and it is begun in the dim light of the dawn before sunrise, when, after a short spell, it stops and is resumed later in the day. When some one person has greatly angered the queen, and drought is believed to be due to her displeasure on this account, the married women from all the villages in the royal neighbourhood assemble every morning after cooking to dance, singing, 'We are being killed on account of a bogyman in skins' (*re vulaiwa gi Madikadyana di vɛlɛvɛdana*). Grandmothers nurse the babies and encourage the younger women with their trillings and dancing movements. The dust rises high and by sunset they are black with dirt and sweat; but next day and the next they come again, sometimes for as long as a week, till rain falls or continued drought makes it clear that some other cause is operating as well. The great hardship this dancing entails (for nursing mothers who perform have no time to feed their babies) is thought to melt the heart of the queen. Too much rain, as well as too little, is laid at the door of the queen. On one occasion, when it had rained almost incessantly for six weeks, the chief councillor said in the presence of the queen, 'Fat does not fill the pot' (*makhura a a ḍale bija*), meaning that there can be too much of a good thing—a hint to the queen to regulate things better.

643 789 821 There is no belief that is stronger in the tribe even to-day than that in the power of the queen to transform the clouds. This does not, however, mean that they do not recognize the regularity of the seasons. People know that the month of February is generally the rainiest in the year; that the month *Morenane* (October), when the Southern Cross sets just before bedtime, is the time when the first rains are approaching, and no one would *lova* rain in winter any more than Europeans would organize a day of prayer for rain in that season. Yet if rain does not come at its proper time or the season is generally bad, it may be said, 'The queen has not changed the hoeing season [i.e. the year] nicely' (*a va fedula ledzema ha vutse*); for if the cycle of seasons is considered inevitable, whether the new year is brought in propitiously or otherwise is in the hands of the queen.

643 791 Though renowned as the greatest rain-maker in South Africa, Mujaji never works alone. She always has a rain-doctor, of whom there are many in the tribe, to work with her. She chooses any renowned doctor, but may change him for another if people complain that the rain is bad—

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that is, insufficient or accompanied by too many thunderstorms. For 643
these deficiencies, the queen herself is never blamed. The chief function 791
of the doctor is to co-operate with the queen in some of the things she cannot do: he divines the causes of drought and discovers which forces are hindering the queen's power from taking effect; and, using his own medicines, he aids her in removing these causes and setting right what is wrong. The relation between rain-doctors and the queen is interesting. They are specialists in their art, which they have inherited from their fathers, and are even consulted independently by outside tribes. Khishidwa, the queen's own rain-doctor, is often called by Nwamitwa, the Shangana-Tonga chief, in time of drought, and Tshivulane, a Venda chief, comes, not to *lova* Mujaji, but to call Levea, a rain-doctor on a farm within her jurisdiction. Any payments they receive are their own. Yet these doctors themselves unreservedly state that in the last resort they are dependent on the queen: if she stays their hands, their powers will avail them nothing. It is said, 'If the chief holds the rain from falling, the doctor cannot cause rain' (*hc khosi a ga tswara bula hore e khi ne, Daga e ga se nese*). A rain-doctor sent by the queen to make rain for a Venda chief who came to *lova* once in our presence urged the chief councillor, 'Tell the queen not to hold my hands.' In addition to the chief's right-hand man in rain activities, there are certain lesser rain-doctors whom she employs as her messengers when outside tribes *lova* rain, for she would never dream of giving a suppliant medicine to take back with him. These messengers, though sent by the queen, are, strange as it seems to us, not given any medicine or charm to use in their rain-making. It is considered enough that they come from her, and their payment is the entertainment they receive at the foreign court.

What the queen does to transform the clouds and the exact nature of 643
the objects and medicines associated with her work are enshrouded in the 789
greatest secrecy. It is doubtful whether any one other than the queen herself is in possession of this secret, for it is bound up with the title and power to succeed to the throne. The secrets are always imparted to the successor just prior to the death of the chief, and on occasion in Lovedu traditional history the would-be usurper, to whom the secrets had not been entrusted, has been deposed in favour of the 'chosen' heir. The queen's rain medicines are kept in rough earthen pots (*mehago*) in a part of the village to which few have access. Some of their power is said to derive from a human skull in the rain-pot, and there are horns which are kept in a hut. When these rain-horns (*dinaga ja bula*) are placed on the ground, rain falls; when they are hung up, it clears up and is dry. The medicine in the rain-horns is said, when burnt, to produce smoke which rises up in the air to draw and to produce the clouds. The technique is not unlike *leshwava*, luck medicine, which when burnt draws customers to traders and touts. Associated with the rain cult are the *gomana* drums the beating of which in former times was believed to bring rain, but the true *gomana* ceremonies have not been held for about thirty years. The rain cult to-day is largely confined to observances connected with the queen and her medicines or charms (*dithugula*).

The chief ingredient of the rain-pots is the skin of the deceased chief

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643 and of important councillors who are her closest relatives: when a chief
789 dies the body is left for some days in the hut, so that, when it is rubbed in a certain way (*hu fɔrɔlwa*), the skin easily comes away. Other ingredients are fat of the scaly ant-eater (*khwara*), a royal animal which, when found, has always to be brought alive to the royal village, and parts of the kudu (*thɔlɔ*). The queen's rain-doctor told us that essential ingredients were sea-water, because it foams and froths (*hu pukula*), feathers of the lightning bird, white and black sea shells, and various roots and
[824] barks, chief among which is the stem of the *khadi* (*Adenia gumnifera*), a tough forest creeper that contains much water. *Khadi* stems are also used for sprinkling 'cooling' medicines and for tying the bodies of dead people. Whether the queen uses these ingredients, we cannot say. From time to time a black sheep is killed to give strength to the queen's rain medicines; it has to be washed with water which is afterwards poured into the rain pots, but it is said that such a sheep is merely a present-day substitute for a human being, usually a child, whose brains were used. Important district
[634] heads related to the chief also have their rain-pots. Every year in about August, at the command of the queen, such a district head collects certain roots and barks, knowledge of which he has received from his father, places them in his rain-pot, mixed with water that has been drawn by girls below the age of puberty, and stirs them up so that rain may be good that year. Rain-pots are great secrets and only after years of friendship were we privileged to see one: it was well hidden in the cleft of a rock and partly buried at the foot of a tree on the upper slopes of a hill where the owner's father had dwelt. The rain-pots of the queen we have not seen, and what regular measures she takes are not known for certain; but, since it is said, when there are good rains, that the queen has firmly laid the foundations (*hu thea*) of the year, it is not unlikely that she also stirs her medicines.

789 Great care has to be taken lest the rain-pots 'weaken' (*hu figchela*).
261 They have to be given (*hu lumiswa*, to cause to be bitten) the first green foods (*mutshatsha*) every year, kaffir water melon (*legwadzi*) mixed with other green foods being used for the purpose, and at the royal village no one cooks and eats the new summer relishes before this has been done. On this day possessed people or people who have epilepsy also eat medicine with the firstfruits, but ordinary people do not *luma*, and there are none of the public festivities of a semi-military character associated with the eating of the firstfruits among Swazi and Zulu. It is very important too that the first termites (*dinnṭwa*), which appear usually in December, just after the first good rains, should be given to the rain-pots. Termites are closely associated with rain: they always fly out of their nests just after the rain; in a dry year there are very few; and it is believed that sprinkling the antheap with rain medicine (*mufugo*) makes the ants come in great numbers. Termites for the rain-pots may not be gathered by married women or girls over the age of puberty, and in 1937, when some young girls carried the first termites to the queen, she gave the termites to the dogs, refusing to use ants that had been thus defiled. The giving of the first termites to the rain-pots is called *bulane*. An interesting case arose out of this practice in January, 1938, when certain people in Vuthudi

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by 789
the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told 261
that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen 643
can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if 789
they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of 766
rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figchela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 821
'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, 754
spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering 766
(*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why [824]
witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *ḍere* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *hu pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts 821
of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, 527
after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khumela*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which 789
the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, 372
when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of *mufugo* and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gummifera*) to every village [824]
in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used [842]
that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or groundnuts, which they eat in the *khɔrɔ*. Each married man in turn must give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s*. or a fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khɛthe*), anything may be given. Each boy must give 1*s*. or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine, took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water, which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps 821
have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the 769
close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the 782
queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khaḍa; sometimes it is Mugɔdɔ's sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery, instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lova* the queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lova*, 787
but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 643
'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the 789
queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case, no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but they have "weakened" (*hu figthɛla*) it. They want me to be troubled.' She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people themselves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft, had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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787 pleading, she relented and said, 'Find me a black sheep without blemish
643 [colour].' The first messenger they sent returned without success, but
789 two others were dispatched to scour the country and on the seventeenth one was found. Kheshidwa, the rain-doctor, was now called. Four days passed, but he did not come. Then the queen, angry at the delay, suggested that she should proceed with the ceremony alone. But this the councillors would not hear of; 'You might deviate from the procedure the bones indicate to be essential,' they said. On the fifth day, however, Kheshidwa arrived, explaining his delay as due to the number of medicines he had to find, and at dawn on February 23rd the ceremony took place.

643 A calabash containing *mufugo* was placed in a basket for the chief wife
789 of the queen's brother to carry, and a procession of most of the inmates of the royal village set out with the sheep. They stopped first at a clump of trees near the village, where lies Moyacudupi, a female relative by marriage to the queen on the mother's brother's side. When the queen ordered her chief councillor, as direct representative of the mother's brother's side, to begin, he uncorked the calabash and poured some of its contents over the grave, saying, 'Stop for us these winds and tribulations, that it may rain nicely. They say it is you people whose murmurings are impeding the rain.' His younger sister next took the calabash, praying in almost identical words, followed by the queen herself, who said, 'Aye, we say, stop for us all these *pukudi* [winds from wrong burials] that rain may fall and people find corn.' The people now respectfully greeted (*hu lɔsha*), repeating the praise of Muhale, the king of old, and, during the trillings that followed, the rain-doctor said, 'The frogs do not cry, sire. I do not hear them'; he may have meant that it was so dry that even the frogs were silent, but we do not know for certain.

The procession now proceeded to Maulwi, the sacred grove where are buried members of the royal family and the two last queens. At the grave of Mathakha, mother's brother to the queen and father of the chief councillor, they all sat down while the same procedure was gone through as at the other grave. When it was the queen's turn to pray, she took a small horn wrapped up in rags and placed it on the grave. Then, pouring from the calabash, she prayed, 'Do not continue to hold my arms; leave me to do my things, that rain may fall and people have corn. Tell one another, tell every single one, also the old woman [meaning Leakhali, her mother] and Mujaji, "huckster in the hut", who "casts away some and shares others with the vultures" [Mujaji I]. Do not continue leaving us to be burnt by the sun. As for our health, we are reasonably well; we are merely troubled by the poverty you have left us.' She poured out all the *mufugo*, turning the calabash upside down beside the horn, while the assembled company did obeisance and ululated. The sheep was slaughtered and skinned and small pieces, cut from various parts of the body, were placed in an earthen bowl while the doctor, sitting some distance away, began squeezing the stomach contents to separate the liquid from the more solid part. When he had finished, the chief councillor, his sister, and the queen placed the meat on the grave, telling the gods, 'We approach (*hu suma*) you with this sheep.' The solid stomach contents

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were placed on the grave, the assembled people greeted and trilled as before, the queen took away her little horn from the grave, and they all departed, carrying the sheep to an open spot some distance from the grave. Here they kindled a large fire and began cooking the meat in two large pots, one containing the internal organs (*mala*) and head, which, on this occasion, are not to be eaten by women of child-bearing age. Normally *mala* of a slaughtered animal are the portion *par excellence* of the women. While the meat was cooking, the doctor took a potsherd containing the 'water' of the stomach contents, his medicine bags and a stick of *khadi* creeper, and proceeded alone to the grave. It is surmised that he must have made a hole in the grave to pour down the water and medicine.

Meanwhile the clouds which had been in the sky at dawn had thickened and, while the pots were still cooking, rain fell and extinguished the fires, which had to be rekindled. The meat was eaten on the spot by all present and just before they all departed the bones were collected, wrapped in the skin, and placed on the grave. Prior to this, however, the doctor had spoken seriously to the councillors to approach the chief about the *pukudi* in the valley below, where a woman who had died in childbirth had been buried 'in the open' without *mufugo*. Ten days later the doctor was called to set the matter right.

This sacrifice is exceedingly rare, but it illustrates well the significant and usual intermingling of religious with what we should call purely magical rites. Thus, as the prayer is offered, it is rain medicine, which works by magic, not beer, the food of the gods, that is poured. The royal grave is treated, not to propitiate the gods, but to constrain them, to keep them cool, so that they will be unable to stop the rain. The sheep is an offering to the gods, a tangible indication that men still 'care for' their ancestors, but the use of the stomach contents on the grave falls into the magical pattern. Another point worth mentioning is that the queen was only one of several officiators: even her divinity does not give her precedence over the nearest living descendants in approaching the complaining spirits.

It has been shown that a great variety of steps can be taken to procure rain, their nature depending upon what is believed to be causing the drought. If the queen herself is thought responsible, and this is usually believed to be the case in the first instance, then her subjects will *lova* her with gifts or dances to excite her pity and to please her. If there have been wrong burials and rain taboos have been broken, these must be righted, while if the trouble comes from the ancestors, they must be placated. Sometimes one finds a combination of causes, but always it is the divining bones which decide what steps are to be taken. There are rain rites throughout the season, for not only may there be good rain in one area and not in another, but an inopportune period of drought in the best of seasons may have drastic effects on the crops. As an indication of the type of action taken in connexion with the rain cult in any one season, the following has been taken from our diary for the season 1937–8, by no means a very bad year, but one in which the rainfall was below the average:

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as if it were a foreign conception, that no *njugo* beans should be planted during the year following the death of a chief. The association of rain and *njugo* beans seem to belong to a culture complex coming from the south. 241 821

The insistence nowadays is upon studying culture change as if it were a phenomenon important only in its relation to European contacts, but there has always been and there still is culture change of a different and, as far as the Lovedu are concerned, more vital nature. Even in the rain cult there have been changes. In the reign of Mujaji II, when the father of Kheshidwa succeeded Ramafalo as rain-maker, he instituted *hu runa*, a new ceremony of medicating all hoes with *mufugo* before the hoeing of the queen's field of eleusine, a practice which has fallen into disuse with the recent abandonment of the queen's hillside field for one in the valley which can be ploughed. The breaking of taboos is not necessarily a reflection of the breakdown and decay of custom. Indeed, the technique of the rain cult was based on the assumption that taboos were broken. Breaches account for drought and the countervailing efficacy of the queen's measures explains her reputation and the confidence people have in her. Wrong burials are known to prevent rain, but, since people try to avoid the unpleasant publicity involved in getting *mufugo* for the burial of, say, an abortion or in burying it in a wet place, these wrong burials are always taking place. 789 821

Neither European contact nor Christianity has succeeded in breaking down the implicit belief of every member of the tribe in the power of the queen to make rain. True, no Christians take part in ceremonies for rain and some do not believe that such things as wrong burials affect rainfall; but they harmonize the new with the old faith by the rationalization that the queen makes rain with the help of God, for they have all seen and can cite corroborative evidence for the powers of the queen. That the queen herself is honest and genuinely believes not only in her own powers, but also in the outside influences that prevent her from achieving success, can be seen in the reply she gave to the messengers who came on February 19th, 1938, with £1 10*s*. from a one-time district head in her kingdom to beg for rain. 'Go,' she said, 'and tell the master of Muduveni that we are trying, but things will just not come right' (arrangements were being made for a sacrifice to the ancestors for rain). The money, however, was kept. 643 789

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other way of life can oust it from its general pre-eminent position. The 241
man or woman who is in need of a pot or other article in the busy agricultural season vainly places an order with a craftsman, and 'He who takes a journey in spring must transact all his affairs' (i.e. not only where he goes, but also on the way), for he will not be able to pass by again during that season.

Agriculture provides the immediate security of the people, but in turn 241
it relies upon the life-giving rain, the power to make which has been 643
projected upon the queen. The queen is thus the foundation stone of the 182
security of the cultural structure. Her rain-making powers safeguard not only agriculture against the caprices of nature, but the whole country against the attacks of its enemies. The queen is more than that: the method of supplicating for rain has merged with the mechanisms of the social structure and has constructed the bonds with the districts, thus, despite political decentralization, securing the unity of the tribe. And, finally, the elevation of a woman to this exalted position has strengthened the status of women and their important role in the society and has emphasized the virtue of feminine qualities. But the queen is not conceived to be intimately linked with everything in the culture: her position in the *khɔrɔ* of the men is weakly institutionalized, she has no immediate contact with the European administration to the interferences of which her powers are doubly vulnerable, and the welfare of the cattle elsewhere, as among the Maḍala and Xananwa, ritually brought into relation with the chief, is outside her province.

As rain-maker, the queen controls half the great cosmic forces. Magic 643
may be invoked, the gods propitiated, in the interests and for the ends of 789
individuals, but ultimately these interests and ends and the destiny of the society depend upon the mediation and will of the queen. Man's sense of security in the face of personal misfortunes can be re-established by magic or religion, but the orderliness of cosmic laws is guaranteed only by the relationship of the queen with the supernatural. These laws are inscrutable, but the procedures for arousing pity in the heart of a human queen or for appeasing her anger are intelligible; and thus man can have confidence in undertaking his tasks. Moreover, he need not and must not resort to magic in his major economic activities, for he can and must rely upon the queen. Since the final justification of the pivotal position of the queen is her divinity, garden magic is conceived to be disruptive, like witchcraft: it competes with the power of the queen. One consequence of this conception is that success or failure in subsistence activities is regarded as immediately dependent upon industry, the application of practical knowledge and suitable materials, and that he who uses garden magic is a thief or a witch.

In most neighbouring tribes there is some public treatment of the 241
seeds before they are sown, or the hoes and ploughs are smeared with 789
medicine obtained from the chief: among highveld Sotho such as the Xananwa and Moletshe, there is even a special hut for storing the sacred seed, a few grains of which are handed to each householder at sowing time, and in this hut, which is associated with the *gɔma* drums and with fertility in man, girls reaching puberty are isolated and newly married

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241 couples sleep for the first few nights. Among the Lovedu these practices
789 have no counterpart. Given rain, what is necessary to make the crops prosper is work and good soil, not medicine, and as a result one receives the impression of a practical attitude, not only to agriculture, but, by extension, also to most economic activities. But success both in hunting and in pastoral activities to some extent depends upon the use of magic, although by comparison with the Nguni and Tswana the cattle cult is very much attenuated.

461 Thrift and industry are regarded as virtues. It is the hard-working bride who is sought after, while the most eligible bridegrooms are the *dibuḓu*, those who by industry have filled their grain pits. But what is valued is not just work; it is work to attain self-sufficiency, that will make one independent, rather than work which places one in a subservient position. Even, as they phrase it, 'In work for the chief, it is only the fool who kills himself'. Hard work must not be thought of in terms of our conceptions, for the outlook of the Lovedu is far less dominated by intensive striving and deep concentration and more by care-free, easy-going standards than ours. Work has dignity, for the maxim, 'It is not the gift-pumpkin [but the produce of one's own garden] that is juicy', is meant, not to deprecate the gift, but to foster pride in the products of one's labour; it is a tenet appropriately urged when the clothes which a youth displays have been acquired, not by his own efforts, but as a present from his parents. Work is accorded recognition: the child who begins herding is said also to begin to deserve the food he gets. Work excuses failures and losses, for as they say, 'The one who loses cattle is the one who herds them', or, more generally, 'The one who breaks is the one who works'. On the other hand, there is scorn of indolence in the proverb, 'The sluggard has no locusts even if they sleep in his courtyard', and a warning in 'He who sits with staring eye-balls [idly] will die, but he who scratches for food [cultivates assiduously] will live'. Considering the craving for beer, it is almost heroic for a man, when refused this elixir of life, to console himself with the thought that 'He who stints me is he who helps me' [because I shall better be able to attend to my work]. But the work that is honoured and considered most congenial is work in situations in which, as in the work party, the reciprocities are fundamental.

● 643 The weakness of the queen as a woman is also her strength and the
648 source of the prestige of the tribe. Her foreign policy is appeasement, not war; for, as they phrase it, 'The queen does not fight'. Reciprocity is the basis of her relations with her district heads, reconciliation the method of settling difficulties. Appeasement, one of the great values in the society, harmonizes with, supports, and is in turn supported by the reliance of the whole social structure upon compromise. This value and the traits corresponding to it interpenetrate every aspect of culture and of life. The hard régime of the initiation 'school' has been softened: there is no need to direct its procedures towards hardening the youth or instilling manly courage, and military discipline and regimentation are of little or no importance. Diplomacy works hand in hand with the
157 methods of the *khɔrɔ* and of reconciliation (*hu khumtlwa*), but it also

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have broken away from Lovedu overlordship since the beginning of the twentieth century, Vulovedu has been crowded and its borders surrounded by Shangana-Tonga. 174

It is manifestly impossible to examine in detail the nature and magnitude of the changes in Lovedu culture that may be attributed to the Sotho substratum, Venda, Laudi, Shangana-Tonga, and other tribes. We may, however, as an illustration, cursorily trace the evolution, under these influences, of the Lovedu royal complex of institutions. The germs of this complex come from the ancestors of the royal group. The Portuguese record that only a man without physical imperfections could become chief and that the Mambo handed his daughters to his bodyguard, who gave in return, not bride-price, but faithful service. According to Dos Santos,[1] writing in 1601, it was formerly the custom of the kings of Sofala to commit suicide by poisoning when any disaster fell upon them or they were disfigured by a physical defect, and, further, though it was incest outside the royal circle, kings married their own sisters or daughters. Even to-day there is evidence among some Shona of the rite of the door, of women rulers, and of celibate female rain-makers. 174 643 177

This is the nucleus around which the Lovedu have elaborated their royal institutions. Its primary elements did not come in the post-migratory period, for they are, except for the vaguest indications, absent among the Venda, who have always constituted the buffer between Lovedu and Karanga; and their presence among Nareni and Khaha to the south is not a feature of the Laudi or Eastern Sotho, but can be historically traced to the Lovedu. Among the Virwa an attenuated form of this complex may be attributed to Karanga influences. The accretions to and fallings away from the old nucleus were inevitable in the new setting of the Lovedu. The powers of the Karanga high god, who made rain and supported the sacred king, became projected upon the Lovedu queen; a mere vestige is left of the saturnalian licence accompanying the accession of a Karanga chief; and unsuccessful Lovedu claimants to the throne, who generally flee the country after the interregnum, are still referred to as *mambo* (sing. *lembo*). But there is among the Lovedu no sign of the resuscitation of the spirit of the deceased Karanga king in the maggots emerging from the decaying body as it lies sealed in a special hut before burial.

It is curious that among the Mamavolo, after 250 years of subjection to influences of the Sotho substratum and the Western and Central Sotho, this complex has been obliterated, while among the Lovedu it has been elaborated. The varying response is, however, intelligible in the light of their different histories. The Mamavolo, hiving off from the main body, were overwhelmed by the Sotho; even a cursory study shows how they lost their bearings and abandoned their faith in their heritage and, for security, remodelled their institutions upon those of their powerful neighbours. But the Lovedu maintained their dominance in their lowveld environment; they dealt with the challenges of invaders by elaborating the royal pattern so as to absorb them; and they responded to the prevailing belief that, not a priesthood, but the chief himself must

[1] Quoted in Theal, *Records of S.E. Africa*, vii. 191, 194.

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mediate for rain by a new conception both of the high god and of the divinity of the queen.

The forces refashioning the old nucleus are the result of composite internal reactions to external influences. In Chapter I ('Pageants of the Past') we saw how, in the face of a feeling of insecurity, Khiali tried to safeguard the succession by casting out the heir, and how the innovation set into motion forces that precipitated the change from kings to queens. Simultaneously came the elevation of the queens to veritable rain-gods. The Lovedu rain-making technique is Sotho and constrains the forces of nature by magic; it is a fundamental departure from the Karanga technique, which uses an appeal to the high god through his priests on the mountain, where he manifests himself in clamour and flame. But there is still a faint connexion, for foreigners allege that Mujaji herself originally obtained her power from Levibi, where Mwari appeared in thunder and lightning to a chief of the Ṭavatsinde, a group among the Venda. *Vuuga ya uuga bula e a na*, thundering [on the mountain of] Vuuga [is followed by] pattering rain, is still the praise-title of the Levibi of Vulovedu. The Lovedu, we surmise, have replaced Mwari by Kuzwane, creator-god, divested of his rain-making and celestial powers, and the word 'Mwari' (or 'Mwali') suggests, even to the Lovedu mind, Muhale, the Lovedu chief who is founder of the tribe, the only semi-hero of legend, and is associated with ritual, as, for instance, the Bird of Muhale in the *vyali* initiation, which is also associated with rain.

But if this is conjecture, it is significant that power to effect the great change from kings to queens was sought in father-daughter incest, a pattern enjoined by the Karanga and considered as the source of fertility among the Shona. Not only did the traditional model sanctify the change, but the success of the experiment was guaranteed by the elaboration of values already existing in the society. Indeed, the change is represented merely as a reassertion of an ancient but fictitious cycle of kings and queens. The accession of a woman, in spite of the high position of women, was obviously a difficulty; but the rationalization provided by a supposed cycle satisfied misgivings, and the change lent itself to transforming the danger of foreign encirclement into an instrument for extending the network of political institutions. The complicated exchanges of the queen's wives constitute only an extension of the old pattern of the house of Mambo, who received daughters from his sub-chiefs in return for protection or food or as a result of conquest, and who handed out his daughters to his personal bodyguard.

In the elaboration of the Lovedu royal complex, the model and justification came from their Karanga ancestors, but the vital addition of a new association of the chief with rain, which is neither Karanga nor Venda, was inspired by Sotho culture. But, in the Sotho substratum, rain, agricultural rites, and the drum cult were inextricably merged and, in the context of the Lovedu pattern, they did not all find an equally firm place. We shall touch lightly upon this complex, noting here merely the extraordinary fact that, despite the long-continued pressure of Venda influences, the Venda contribution to the Lovedu royal pattern is to-day hardly perceptible. The reason lies partly in its incongruity with the

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conception of a female ruler who is also a divine rain-maker, but partly also in the obscuring of the borrowed elements by readjustments since the accession of a queen.

For a time the Lovedu kings followed the custom of the solitary dance (*u pembela*) of the Venda. It was under the inspiration of such a dance just before his death that Mugodo (*c.* 1790) made his famous prophecy. Venda chiefs perform this dance either shortly after accession, when it firmly establishes against all claims their divine title to the throne, or towards the end of their reign, when it symbolizes abjuration of earthly things and elevation to godhead. These conceptions are inconsistent with the Lovedu pattern, which prescribes the rite of the door as the title to succession, and safeguards the queen's inscrutability by making her the inaccessible 'huckster in her hut'.

The special Venda disposition of forces and persons in the organization of the royal court has left numerous marks in Lovedu culture and its reception facilitated the transition from kings to queens. The *khadi* (father's sister or the sister), as priestess, is in a favourable position to assume control during the minority of the heir, as is the case to-day among the Sekhopo and in many districts in Vulovedu. There is also the critical instance of the Mamaila, where between 1825 and 1895 sometimes men and sometimes women ascended the throne, and where the interaction of the two patterns may be closely observed. The Venda emphasis on the virginity, for a time, of the chief's wives has had widespread repercussions even as far as the Nareni; and among the Lovedu it has become interlocked with the cogs of the political machinery, so that, while the permanently chaste are rewarded, the unchaste go out as wives of great men to strengthen their loyalty to the royal house. Nowhere else has such an ingenious solution or reinterpretation been evolved, though the differing readjustments among the various tribes show amazing inventiveness and resourcefulness.

The patterns and culture elements of the royal complex among the surrounding tribes, which have found no place in the Lovedu complex, are too numerous to mention; but what is rejected is just as important as what is adopted in the evaluation and interpretation of the forces determining change. Least has been taken from the modern Shangana-Tonga, but there are similarities in detail, though not in pattern, which may be ascribed to a common heritage of the distant past. It is, for instance, only the Tonga in these parts who have to any extent elaborated the idea of placing chiefs' wives as rulers in the provinces, a practice known among the Lovedu kings long before the arrival of the Shangana-Tonga. Among the Shangana-Tonga the accession of a brother to the throne admits of the progressive realization of aspirations fostered by a culture in which at one and the same time the hierarchy of age and the coincidence of maturity with the peak of life as well as display and competition are more emphasized than among the Lovedu. This pattern is quite unacceptable among the Lovedu.

There are many other suggestive contrasts, but what must surprise the observer is the small contribution (apart from the rain-making technique) of the Sotho from the south and west. The distribution of medicated

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seeds by the chief, as among the highveld Sotho, is thought to savour of witchcraft, as only witches use medicine to make the crops grow. The Pedi pattern of the 'tribal candle', the chief wife whose first son succeeds and whose bride-price is contributed by the tribe (who thereby obtain a stake in the succession) has penetrated far. It has been partially accepted by the Laudi as well as the Sekhɔpɔ; but the Lovedu have not been influenced. Of absorbing interest and immense interpretative value has been the conflict of Lovedu and Pedi patterns where their incongruity precipitated a crisis among the Nareni and Khaha.

Everywhere in the lowveld the transition from kings to queens caused disturbances, and the form of justification invariably reflects values in the cultures concerned. Among the Mamaila the change is justified by the sin of the male heir. When the change first occurred, the male heir was ousted because he had cohabited with his father's wives, which is a disqualification by Venda standards. Thereafter males again ruled. When the change occurred a second time, the male heir was driven off because he had broken open the door, which is a sin by Lovedu standards.

Among the Khaha of Maake and the Nareni, both Mahlo and Letswalo, the position is different and may be considered less cursorily, though unfortunately only in very broad outline. The Khaha, greatly disturbed by invasions from the south, sought stability by trying to imitate Mujaji I, the security of whose tribe they attributed to her feminine powers and longevity. In those days (1827) the Mafefe, following the Pedi pattern of royal marriage, politically dominated the Khaha as well as many other tribes. Nevertheless, among the Khaha, Mali, a woman, succeeded as chief against her brothers and was 'placed' by Mujaji. She was the first Khaha female ruler, modelled her court upon the Lovedu pattern, and even adopted ritual suicide as a means to power. The whole Lovedu pattern was not incorporated, for the traditional basis was lacking, especially as regards the ascendancy of women, the unquestioned acceptance of the caprices of the door, and the conception of receiving tributary wives and redistributing them. Thus men were not excluded from the throne. Mali herself, having failed to prevent the flight into exile of her people, was succeeded by a male chief; but in 1928 a woman, Mali II (or Maake, as she is sometimes called), was called upon to rule. Mali II was married, was asked to renounce her husband, as queens could have no official husbands, and when she refused she had to abdicate and now reigns merely as regent during the minority of her brother. The task of integrating the Lovedu with the Khaha pattern was never completed: the door is invoked to decide only between rivals with plausible claims, and no adequate solution has been found to harmonize the Pedi and Lovedu patterns of royal marriage. The chief wife even of the queen among the Khaha is the mother's brother's daughter, and it is for her marriage that in theory each district head must contribute cattle 'to seek their mother' (*hu nyagela mma vɔna*).

Among the Mahlo Nareni, sporadically dominated by the Mafefe until as late as 1901, the change came under conditions of European control (1923). The door entrusted the rain charms and chieftainship to Manjana, wife of the deceased chief, Segɔrɔrɔ. But when strife occurred, the

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European intervened, construed the opening of the door as coincidence, and recognized a son of Segɔrɔrɔ's first wife. (Incidentally, the Pedi conception of the 'tribal candle', though accepted for a time, by 1923 was again receding before the old Laudi insistence that the mother's brother's daughter required no additional support to be chief wife.) To-day the tribe is split: Manjana's magic has power to call up the clouds, but the quackery of the recognized chief sweeps up gales which scatter the rain.

Among the Letswalo the change, motivated by a desire for security, aggravated a crisis which continued into the European period and was ended by the drastic intervention of the European. Ramɔdau, son of chief Bodile, defied his father by refusing to espouse his one-eyed cross-cousin, whom Bodile himself then married. But this wife turned out to be a witch who expiated her offence of stealing the rain charms by being mauled to death by a lion. Angered by his son's disobedience and his wife's treachery, Bodile then (*c.* 1850) prophesied the coming of the ants and the accession of a woman; but in the total setting of the drama the son's disobedience is condoned by representing his cross-cousin as a deformed witch and the treachery that threatens the welfare of the tribe is made the occasion for the accession of Magaepia, daughter of Bodile The whole theme is handled less skilfully than among the Lovedu and indicates the existence of many conflicting motives. Before Magaepia succeeded there were wholesale assassinations of successive heirs; Magaepia, having replaced the lost rain charms, became, first, rain-maker to Ramadau and, after his death at the hands of the Swazi invaders, queen, but only of a portion of the tribe. The strife continued, the European intervened, and, when the tribes of the lowveld rose against the encroaching settlers (1894), the Letswalo joined them, but suffered a devastating defeat.

Changes can be traced in all aspects of Lovedu culture, some greater, some smaller than those in their royal institutions. It will take us too far afield to deal with these changes, but a few remarks may be of interest. Almost nothing of the *gomana-vyali-vuhwera-vudiga* complex came with the royal group. Some of it can be attributed to the Sotho substratum: it is the *ɖou* of Ravothata who make the *gomana* drums and close the *vyali* with their weirdly costumed dancers, the *magɔgɔbya*; the Kwena likewise claim always to have had the *gomana*; and Lovedu boys are allowed to become initiated at the *gomana* lodges of the *ɖou* of Khaɖa and of the Kwena of Maunadala, who also may accept royal boys to 'cross rapidly' (*hu ɖubunya*), or become initiated in a few days, at his *vuhwera*. The *magɔgɔbya* are unique, but are found also among the *ɖou* of Masoma and it is from Tsubye (the country of present-day Shai) that these costumes came over a century ago, having been brought by two men named Maschiss and Dinawe. The evidence may be indefinitely multiplied, but it is more interesting to examine for a moment the different manifestations of the complex over the Northern Transvaal, because what has been emphasized in it or muted or rejected illuminates the character of the incorporating culture.

We have no evidence of the occurrence beyond the Northern Transvaal of the sacred drums, considered as shrines consecrated by human sacrifice

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174 and as the focus of a 'school' for revealing the secrets of the whistling
643 ancestors (*zwidajani*). Some Venda north of the Limpopo have drums of
177 the *mondoro* (spirits of the chiefs) and *zwidajani* (familiars of Mnisi, the rain-god), and there is some evidence of drum ritual among Pedi, Venda, and even Tonga; but the elaborated drum cult belongs to the Northern Sotho. It has three characteristic elements: the supreme moments of the agricultural year are signalized by the sounding of the drums and the cult is intimately linked with rain or fertility; these calendric observances, as well as other great national occasions, are, by the interposition of the drums, brought under the surveillance of the tribal gods, represented by men masquerading as spirits who have come to earth; and in a special initiation novices are inducted into the secrets of the cult.

This constellation is most emphasized in three tribal groups: Laudi (especially Phalaborwa), Maḍala, and Xananwa-Ḍokwa-Moletshe. Among the Phalaborwa the striking emphasis is upon the link with rain-making, upon the *lengu* or women's counterpart, and upon the exulting display before the drums which is permitted to those who have military and hunting exploits to their credit. These features become progressively attenuated westwards towards Ulovedu. The stress upon display reappears among the Maḍala, though in a different form, for there we find the esoteric *khidinkhi*, which is at once a dramatic dance inspired by the sacred drums glorifying the prowess of the chief and of warriors, and a rain and fertility rite, blessing cattle and crops and safeguarding the people against disease. In drawing into the complex the welfare of the cattle and in the absence of the *lengu*, the Maḍala pattern differs from that of the Laudi, but approximates that of the Xananwa-Ḍokwa-Moletshe. These differences coincide with the emphases of the different cultures. The Laudi have an attenuated cattle-cult, though it is better developed than among the Lovedu; whereas the highveld Sotho, influenced from the west and south-west, have a fuller cattle-cult, though by no means as elaborate as that of the west (Tswana) with its seasonal migratory life, conditioned partly by pastoralism and partly by a desire for security in a difficult environment. Among the Laudi men's and women's initiations are often combined, but on the highveld they are markedly separated, for the *vyali* and *vuhwera* exist as distinct institutions and the Bird, guiding spirit of the *vyali*, is usually absent. In the third area, that of the Xananwa-Ḍokwa-Moletshe, the dispositions are in many respects quite distinctive. The drums become the focus of an elaborate fertility cult, rain-making stands outside the complex, and the chief *motif* is not display, but dramatization of obedience to the gods and loyalty to the chief. The supreme moment is when the manhood of the tribe, collected in the cattle kraal, receive the command of the gods communicated, under inspiration of the drums, by the *zwidajani*.

There is every possible variation in the patterns among the intervening tribes. In some, such as Tswale, Moila, Dikxale, Mamaxolo, and Urwa of Makhatho, the cult is often structurally unintegrated, standing outside the province of the chief and consisting merely of 'schools' managed by outsiders who have their own drums. The cult in these cases is practised merely for revenue purposes; it is a 'business' as the

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Natives say; the alien drums are pierced and rendered useless at the 174
death, not of the chief, but of their owners; and the *zwidajani* are often 43
visitors from tribes where the cult is better developed. Among the 177
Lovedu the cult has been only partially accepted; the pattern is the pattern of the focal area in the east. The features that have been attenuated or elaborated can be explained in the light of the emphasis of Lovedu culture: there is no display, no stress upon fertility, no linking with the welfare of the cattle, no elaboration in connexion with agricultural ritual, but the *zwidajani* command peace and agreement among men.

Elsewhere in this book we have given slight indications that the Lovedu 177
interlocking *mayasalo* exchanges and social structure can be traced to Karanga models; that the Lovedu have rejected the pattern of the wedding feast and wedding gifts which comes from the west; that Lovedu legal arrangements are the resultant of composite forces; that the smeller-out and the cult of spirit possession come from the Shangana-Tonga and Thovela. These and many other borrowed culture elements may be followed up with advantage, and indicate the magnitude of culture change. But for our purposes, before proceeding to discuss the nature and effect of the impact of Western culture, a brief reference to Shangana-Tonga influences will suffice. Despite similarities in detail—an attenuated boys' puberty rite, the conception of *makhuma* (ritual defilement), the indirect warning to the witch by *ku thela*, to mention a few features—and despite the extensive reception by the Lovedu of Shangana-Tonga elements of material culture—fowls, various crops, and methods of storing and threshing and stamping—the striking feature remains the great gulf between the two cultural configurations. They have, for instance, different views as regards sex morality, different marriage patterns, different conceptions of the hierarchy of age and the position of women; they deal differently with the situation of death, with rain-making, display, and regimentation, and, whereas the social groupings are totemic among the Lovedu, they are non-totemic among the Shangana-Tonga.

There are many other divergences, but one difference that calls for comment is the attitude to and reception of European culture. More adaptable, if brazen, than the Lovedu, at least in their new environment, the Shangana-Tonga have, as fugitives under Sotho domination, more complacently submitted themselves to European conquest. Disciplined by the military heritage of the Zulu, they made efficient police and soldiers, especially against their Sotho overlords. Their training in competition, trade, and display enabled them to respond better than the Lovedu to the stimuli of Western culture. Above all, European penetration benefited them, while it dispossessed the Sotho. The history of the contacts and reactions is the history of a century, which is far too complicated for treatment here. But this can be said: the Shangana-Tonga gained land and the right to be ruled by their own chiefs; the Lovedu lost land which was given to their erstwhile subjects; the prestige of Mujaji in the eyes of the white man waned while that of Shangana-Tonga chiefs waxed; and the Shangana-Tonga subservience

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of the white man, some of their headmen were granted independent locations which have served as nuclei for the building up of more united tribal groups. (See accompanying map.)

The most important Sotho tribes of this area are the Lobedu, the Narene and the Khaha who together comprise about three-quarters of the total Sotho population.[1] The outstanding demographical feature is, however, the numerical predominance of the Lobedu who, with a population of well over 40,000, are not only the greatest tribe, but outnumber all the other Sotho-speaking tribes put together.[2] The pre-eminence and cultural influence of the Lobedu in this area does not rest solely upon their numerical preponderance. It is based largely upon the fame of their queen, Modjadji, who, as the greatest rain-maker in the Northern Transvaal, is not only regularly approached with gifts by other chiefs but also sometimes places them on the throne (*ho bea bohosi*) and is appealed to in cases of disputed succession.

This area, though forming part of a greater cultural whole including the Northern Transvaal Highveld and probably Pediland to the south, is, however, sharply characterized by distinctive features, such as ritual suicide of the chief and recognition of women as rulers in their own right, that are not found elsewhere. These are sufficient to form a fairly well-defined culture pattern, which, owing to the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the Lobedu, if for no other reason,

[1] The Sotho population of our area is made up as follows, according to van Warmelo:

Lobedu	8257 taxpayers.		
Narene	2521	"	(Mahlo 1332, Letswalo 1189).
Khaha	1608	"	
Thabina (Monoboya)	1088	"	
Phalaborwa	332	"	
Makzobe	300	"	
Baba Maxidja	413	"	
Shai or Tsubye	236	"	
Tswale	337	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.
Molla	260	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.

The only large tribal groups among Shangaan-Tonga are

Mohlaba	2918 taxpayers.	
Nwamkwa	1347	"

[2] The population is Lobedu 8257 taxpayers.

1888	7535	"

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241 of the agriculture of the more mountainous portions of the Lowveld is the use of terraces, or rather contour walls of stone, for there is no levelling of the ground in between, to prevent excessive washing away of soil. With the absence of men in the towns and the introduction of the plough with subsequent preference for valley cultivation, these contour walls are tending to fall into disuse.

462 Division of labour between the sexes is the same here as among
[71] Venda and the Highveld tribes of the Northern Transvaal. While care of cattle is the province of men and agricultural work is done by both sexes, cooking and housekeeping is confined to women. Men are responsible for the erection of storage receptacles, renewal of pantry and village enclosures and the lion's share in hut-building, including thatching, for women do only plastering of walls and preparation of the floor. The crafts confined to men are ironwork, work in skin, and all wood-work such as the manufacture of drums, platters, spoons, milk pails, stamping blocks, porridge twirlers, and flat winnowing baskets. Pottery is confined to women, but weaving and basketry (other than the making of winnowing baskets) is done by both sexes.

642 Political Organization and Position of the Chief. The most
643 outstanding features of the Lobedu culture complex, which clearly differentiate the Lowveld tribes from their neighbours to the south and west, are ritual suicide of the chief and the possibility of women ruling in their own right.[1] Among the Lobedu the chief reigns for a period of four circumcision schools, each 'school' being separated from the previous one by a period of almost ten years, and then has to drink poison and die. The institution can hardly continue when its supporting background of ritual and belief is crumbling, but it has survived to this day; the immediate predecessors of the present Lobedu and Letswalo rulers died unnatural deaths in the traditional manner, Modjadji II in 1894 and Mamathola in 1905. There is in this area no conscious belief that growth of the crops, welfare of the cattle,

[184] [1] These two features occur together in the most important tribes of the Lowveld such as the Lobedu, Khalla, Narene, Thabina. The only tribes to whom this institution is foreign are the Phalaborwa and Tsubye and the two Venda tribes of Molla and Tswale. Sekhopo and Radwadu, sections of the Balobedu, broke away when the first woman succeeded and themselves have only men rulers.

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and the regularity of the seasons are bound up with the life of the chief, but the identification of the earth with the chief in the phrase 'mabu a fesa' (the earth is hot, burning) which is used by all Lowveld tribes as a euphemism to denote the illness or death of the chief, seems to imply some connexion between the life of the chief and the fertility of the earth. Some such association seems implicit also in the feeling among the Lobedu that the chief should have no physical defect (it is thought to be impossible for the queen to be ill, and the present queen has never had a day's illness) and should lead a secluded life, being seen by and giving audience to royal relatives and the nobility only. So close is the association between the ruler and the land he rules among the Lobedu that the chief may not leave the country or cross its boundaries, a taboo which made it impossible for Modjadji to register her vote at the nearest Native Commissioner's office in the recent elections for the Native Council.

The great power of the chief in the three most important tribes of the Lowveld lies in rain-making. Here we find as in so many other aspects of their culture an intensification of a feature present in modified form in many other tribes, leading to a difference as great or greater than the complete absence of the trait. Many chiefs in South Africa are great rain-makers, and tribes of the Highveld and Sekukuniland share with those of the Lowveld the custom in time of drought of sending young men to 'beat mofoko' pegs around the country or to put out all the fires in the country and rekindle new ones in each village. But the Lowveld chiefs, especially Modjadji, are the greatest rain-makers of all, recognized in the old days as such by tribes as far south as the Swazi and Zulu, and rain ritual here has characteristic features not found elsewhere. Important among these is the custom of dancing for rain. When the rains do not come at the right time, it is usual for each headman in turn to come to the royal kraal with his followers to *loba* rain by dancing for the chief, and when this does not help the women come as a last resort to do a special dance which is so exacting and causes so much crying on the part of small babies, who have to go hungry while their mothers dance, that it is believed the chief must be moved by it. This custom, still practised by the Lobedu, has died out elsewhere in the Lowveld, having been last performed among the Khaha in 1911. The belief that twins, mis-

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643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men, and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
588 or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to
644 be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the
[565] village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's
[171] mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage,

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

marriage. Where the chief is a woman, her own son or daughter 643
succeeds. The Lobedu now have a distinct preference for women rulers; the last three chiefs have been women, and the present queen succeeded in preference to her elder uterine brother. It would seem that the fashion was set by the Lobedu, for tribal genealogies show no women chiefs in the Lowveld prior to the accession of Modjadji I. Shortly after that we have the appearance of the first queen in the Khaha and Mamaila tribes, followed later by Letswalo and Mahlo. Lowveld tribes are no exception to the general tendency among Bantu for succession to the throne to be accompanied by trouble and bloodshed. They have, however, an interesting method of submitting the case of various claimants to the decision of the powers that be by the ordeal of trying the door. All claimants to the throne are brought to the closed door of the hut in which the old chief died. One by one, they step forward shouting their own name and ancestry to try the door which, while resisting all efforts of other claimants, flies open at the touch of the rightful heir.[1]

The Lowveld chief is assisted and advised in the government of 644
his country by his relatives,[2] generally known as *bakhomana*. There are no formal councils, as among Tswana, and it is even doubtful whether the *pitjo* or meeting of all adult men in the tribe ever had power to make decisions. Certainly to-day it is called only when orders or notices from European authorities have to be transmitted. No one in the Lobedu tribe ever knows what is happening even in important matters affecting them all, and the tribe accepts with equanimity the most outrageous favouritism of the royal family.

The district, bounded by natural features such as streams or de- 634
pressions down the hill-sides, is generally quite small, varying in 624
extent from about one square mile to five, so that in a country like Modjadji's with an area of some 140 square miles there are about 100 headmen. Aggregations of districts into larger units under sub-chiefs, such as are found in Zululand, though not unknown, are not

[1] Some one is, of course, inside to hold the door against the wrong claimants and in Modjadji's tribe the chief always has one hut with two doors, said to be for this purpose.

[2] The *rangwane* (father's brother) or *rakhadi* (father's sister) are often important advisers or, especially where a woman is ruling, the *malume* (mother's brother).

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her
769 honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cognates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member of the kindred (*mulɔgɔ*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
●643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to *vaṭanoni* (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*muḓuhulu*) and, by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes parent-in-law (*vamakhulu*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and relatives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiating from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies, but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked
with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in
641 wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, convert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of subjects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
182

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say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu political pattern follows that of the centralized states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation.

643 772 182 [642]

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical. A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors.

773 [821] 773 776 [842]

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them,

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But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasizes in very general terms the importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials. 773

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formulations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going its ordained way is implicitly rejected in their conceptions. The assumption is that cosmic forces are controllable and, in fact, controlled at every turn by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *vuŋaga* (the evil aspect of which is *vulɔi*), i.e. by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digɔma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail.

821 772 643 [71] [769]

Vuŋaga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these attributes or powers (*maaḍa*) reside are mainly *melimo* (medicines) or *mere* (plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct

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and the use of *dithugula*, objects such as beads which have once been in their possession; but they can also be constrained by medicine or the properties of matter. 769 777

Ancestors are capricious: their complaints as seen in the divining bones are usually about being neglected; but they may cause illness to those they love most in order to receive recognition, have their name perpetuated, or their beads worn. They are said to 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult labour, to afflict children with sore eyes, and even to prevent the queen from making rain. Their complaints need imply no omission or neglect on the part of the afflicted descendant, but merely some special desire that could not have been anticipated. The degree of either neglect or tendance bears no relation to their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, since the ascription of misfortune to the ancestors is always *ex post facto*: hence the paradox that a family that is assiduous in its tendance of the ancestors may suffer more ill health and misfortune than one that has neglected the ancestors for a long time. 753

Dithugula are instrumental in controlling nature not only indirectly through the ancestors but also directly by virtue of the substances used in them. A *thugula* may be a shrine to an ancestor (male or female), an animal dedicated to him, old beads or objects of iron to which, owing to their having once been in his possession, power to influence him is attributed. But a *thugula* may also be any charm of herbs concocted by a doctor and worn for protective purposes. The queen's rain-medicines are *dithugula*. The most important religious ceremony of the year, the annual offering of beer to ancestors as thanksgiving for the harvest, is also called *thugula*. *Dithugula* thus constitute a category of objects, usually closely associated with the ancestors (though they may be made by a doctor), through which they may be approached, and which have special virtue particularly to give health and protection against ills and epidemics. 778

Dithugula are found in every lineage which, through its shrines, dedicated animals, and charms, secures the general welfare of its members. The queen's *dithugula*, her rain-medicines, sacred objects, and shrines through which she intercedes with the royal ancestors, are the ultimate symbols of her power and the safeguards of the welfare of the country; and just as certain medicines (*diphaba*), which are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget their complaints, are pegged round the village by the paternal aunt or sister of its head to protect it against witches, so also the queen may *thugula* the whole country by sending boys to peg medicated sticks on its boundaries as a protection against evil, particularly epidemics that might threaten it from outside. [769]

The queen's control

The basis of the queen's control over nature is her divinity. So bound up is she with nature that her very emotions affect the rain. The complex of royal institutions includes the conceptions that she must be without 643

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physical imperfections, not susceptible to the ills that befall ordinary men; that she cannot die a natural death but departs only by her own volition; that succession to the throne is uncertain since the choice of a ruler must in the last resort be made by the spirits of the tribe; that though she may not have a husband, lest political control become concentrated in him, yet she must bear the heir by a secret consort (a royal classificatory brother) specially chosen to maintain untarnished the purity of the royal blood; that she ensures the regularity of nature and the changing of the seasons; and, more particularly, that her death dislocates the rhythm of nature, bringing drought and famine, the abrogation of law and order. People today still speak with horror and fear of the years (1894–6) following the death of the previous queen, Majuji II. They were years, as we know from documentary sources, when drought, locusts, rinderpest and, in their wake, unprecedented famine and desolation, wiped out practically all the cattle and perhaps a third of the human population.

The preservation of the queen's sanctity requires that her life be subject to observances which shield her from the public eye and restrain her movements. She is 'the huckster in the hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) who sells her rain-medicines from the seclusion of her abode, and may not move about freely or leave the district of the capital. She was the only chief in the Union who, a few years ago, could not go to the Native Commissioners' Office to exercise the vote of her people in the election of a representative to the Native Representative Council. She cannot attend large assemblies of men, and is generally inaccessible except to her close relatives and great councillors. But otherwise her activities are not restricted, nor is her life a continuous ritual and, unlike other Divine Kings, there are no elaborate safeguards surrounding her every movement.

Tradition decrees that chiefs may have no physical defect, but not that they must die while still young and strong. Ritual suicide of the queen is by Lovedu conceptions not a means of guaranteeing a timely death lest failure of physical powers should upset the regularity of nature, but rather a symbol of her divinity, for it proves that she is not heir to the weaknesses of ordinary man. It is mystically connected with the fourth circumcision school in her reign: she must see the boys going in but not coming back. The Lovedu queen is believed to be immune from disease, but age does not diminish—it even increases—her mystical powers over nature. The only disqualification to rule is inability to make rain in the early period of her reign. Once she has demonstrated, by her ability to make rain, that the rain-charms have been entrusted to her and that she has been divinely chosen, irregularities in the seasons are attributed not to weakness of her powers but to some extraneous factor, such as contraventions of rules associated with keeping the country cool, disobedience to the chief, and the anger of the ancestor spirits.

Arrangements connected with succession of a new queen also emphasize her mystical relations with the cosmic order. The death of her predecessor

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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugɔ*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*figɛhɛla*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *ḍerɛ*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

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cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season propitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gɔmana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time, people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*hu lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle, or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lesugu*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially when a gale disperses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digɔma

The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests of man consists of *digɔma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *gɔma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-vuhwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *gɔma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *gɔma* which is said to 'bite'

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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *gɔma*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794

With the *vyali-vuhwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*vyali*) and for boys (*vuhwera*), are associated many *digɔma*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khiudogane*, Bird of Muhale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *vyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *gɔma* and a symbol of the royal ancestors. 881

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *vyali-vuhwera* with its great *digɔma* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digɔma*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalavorwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir sits on the smallest drum while being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vadimo* (gods) as well as *digɔma*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gɔmana* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [794 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digɔma* are the *zwidajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thugula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gɔmana*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *lesugu* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
559 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[634] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1945 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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421 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship
571 and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable
[476] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily
[273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintain-
[177] ing social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes
571 the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new
431 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small
571 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the
602 same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even
421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and
571 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples.
431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went
731 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour
643 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies.
571 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a *thari* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl,
[588] Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge loda dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga mesadi a de a nthidela*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom she is now living at the Capital.

Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were to) large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new home- 634
stead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, 562
a married woman who does not live in the area was made 729
official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from 604
the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting 592
cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable 604
as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's 634
brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to 643
succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The 634
position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is some- 602
what different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thoga monye bo dula mudubulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging 592
to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance 592
of being independent are found upon investigation to be portions 571
(a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become 571
separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels 571
between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the 643
people. Khabani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as 578
well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugɔdɔ, 173
which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugɔdɔ was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwaxni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by 643
them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by 644
an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong [847] social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much 643
stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in 578
doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and 687
her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely 644
expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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643 to join him in exile. The conflict was so serious that the tribe seethed
578 with disaffection, though the queen seemed to be torn between love for
687 her daughter and disapproval of the whole episode. The present conflict
644 is in many respects typical. There is, as there used to be in the past, strife between the old councillors, who lose their power when the old queen dies, and the new councillors, who side with the new queen. The latter gradually supplant the former, but regard with fear the day when the friends of the heir in turn will oust them. This struggle is very real, and seems to reflect a more fundamental conflict; for the exalted purpose of the royal institutions exacts an unnatural sacrifice by the queen in order to make way for the heir she naturally loves.

643 The whole royal complex is perfectly logical once it is granted that there
644 must be queens, that succession is uncertain, and that ritual suicide is the guarantee of the chief's divinity. In a society in which the 'sister' (*khadi*) is priestess, her great religious role, still seen to-day among neighbouring tribes where chiefs are males, falls to the queen among the Lovedu. The ideal, imperfectly actualized since queens replaced kings, still persists that the *khadi* of the chief should have power and be given a large district to rule. In theory the brother of the chief is the great councillor, general, and judge. But in practice the complications set up by having queens throws these arrangements out of gear. True to pattern, the greatest district head is to-day a woman, who is a 'sister' to the queen and, though a 'sister' threefold (through mother, legal father, and paternal uncle), she is not the uterine or ritual 'sister'. At present the relatives through the queen's mother, not through Mujaji II her legal father, are important councillors, but it is not unlikely that in the next reign the great councillors will be the present heir's relatives through her legal father, the queen, who is also her physiological mother.

642 Owing to the inapplicability of the term 'council' to Lovedu arrange-
643 ments, we need say only a few words on this subject. There is no need
644 of a visible organization to support Lovedu court life, which is ceremonious, but not politically oriented. Power and authority derive from the queen's divine appointment, her exclusive secret of rain-making, and her strategic position in the social web. She is neither a military nor a political leader; she does not even have a priesthood organization to assist her in her function as high-priest. There are confidential advisers, but they neither constitute the more or less definite secret council (*sephiri*) of some neighbouring tribes nor necessarily function as political councillors; on the contrary the former, having assisted in the accession of the queen, are in institutional conflict with the latter, who later gain political control. The councillors represent the assertion of power by the rising generation of men in the sphere of law and politics as against women and the older generation in ritual, religion, and the social system. They are part mainly of the court (*khosi*) and the tribal gathering (*khivijo*), two indeterminate bodies.

644 Confidential advisers are mainly important district heads; councillors
643 are always residents in the capital. Both are relatives, but, in the case of
634 the confidants, not necessarily close relatives of the queen. In the inner royal circle, the closest kin are necessarily those reckoned through the

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queen's mother—that is, either the queen's predecessor on the throne or, if she has borne no children, the queen's physiological mother. The unofficial husbands of the queens are brothers chosen from the line of Malegudu (elder brother of Mujaji I), but relationship is not reckoned through them as fathers. Closeness of relationship is important, but personality and opportunity count as much. The most influential councillor is often said to be the queen's mother's brother—in other words, the brother of the deceased queen or, if she has no issue, the brother of the wife of the queen who bore the queen. In fact, however, other relatives rise to equally influential positions. To take a concrete instance, the councillors of Mujaji III have been relatives either through Leakhali, chief wife and 'sister' of Mujaji II and physiological mother of Mujaji III, or through Mujaji II, her mother, Mujaji I, and the latter's brothers, such as Malegudu. Muneri, the chief councillor to-day, is Leakhali's uterine brother's son, and before him there were Mulogwane, uterine brother of the queen, and also Leakhali's uterine brother. Earlier still, but in the present queen's time, the greatest councillors were others tracing descent from Malegudu. There is no precise rule either as to the number or identity of the councillors. The *dusa* of the queen should not be a relative; he is merely a messenger, and, unlike the *induna* elsewhere, is of no account, having no special legal or other status or function.

The *khiejo* is neither the more or less determinate body of private advisers (*kxotla*), nor even the tribal gathering (*pitsho*), of the Sotho. It is mainly constituted by district heads, or their representatives, and the men of the capital, but any one attends; and it is never conceived of as a general assembly of all the initiated men of the tribe. It has little power and less initiative; it is summoned mostly to discuss European matters, and there is now a tendency to place some decisions of the men of the capital before it for confirmation; but it is hardly a means of gauging popular feeling or of expressing the royal will. The co-operation of the tribe is secured and its desires made known, not through the *khiejo*, but through other social arrangements, which we shall describe at greater length.

These arrangements run parallel with a distinctive system of wives of the queen, called *ratanosi*, a term also applied to the wives of all nobles and women other than the queen may have *ratanosi*. The majority of the queen's wives are given to her by her district heads. In a sense, these wives are tribute (*na ha lowa*), but the queen always gives some *manywalo* She also receives wives from foreign chiefs who supplicate for rain or for peace, and from headmen who settle in her country and send their daughters or sisters; in these cases no *manywalo* is given. Finally, she is sent wives by the nobles, by those to whom she has given wives or cattle with which to secure wives, and by those who promise their little 'mud-stampers' as repayment for the assistance they ask. Sometimes also the queen takes a liking to a girl and asks her in marriage and sometimes commoners send their daughters. It will be impracticable to deal with all these cases; and, from the point of view of the political organization, we are mainly concerned with the wives sent by district heads. They send their daughters for purposes of *ha lowa*, a word used in a wide

[marriage cattle, See col. 583 for detail.—Analyst]

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men,
588 and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
•644 or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to
[557] be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the
[565] village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's
[171] mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage.

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

marriage. Where the chief is a woman, her own son or daughter succeeds. The Lobedu now have a distinct preference for women rulers; the last three chiefs have been women, and the present queen succeeded in preference to her elder uterine brother. It would seem that the fashion was set by the Lobedu, for tribal genealogies show no women chiefs in the Lowveld prior to the accession of Modjadji I. Shortly after that we have the appearance of the first queen in the Khaha and Mamaila tribes, followed later by Letswalo and Mahlo. Lowveld tribes are no exception to the general tendency among Bantu for succession to the throne to be accompanied by trouble and bloodshed. They have, however, an interesting method of submitting the case of various claimants to the decision of the powers that be by the ordeal of trying the door. All claimants to the throne are brought to the closed door of the hut in which the old chief died. One by one, they step forward shouting their own name and ancestry to try the door which, while resisting all efforts of other claimants, flies open at the touch of the rightful heir.[1]

The Lowveld chief is assisted and advised in the government of his country by his relatives,[2] generally known as *bakhomana*. There are no formal councils, as among Tswana, and it is even doubtful whether the *pitjo* or meeting of all adult men in the tribe ever had power to make decisions. Certainly to-day it is called only when orders or notices from European authorities have to be transmitted. No one in the Lobedu tribe ever knows what is happening even in important matters affecting them all, and the tribe accepts with equanimity the most outrageous favouritism of the royal family.

The district, bounded by natural features such as streams or depressions down the hill-sides, is generally quite small, varying in extent from about one square mile to five, so that in a country like Modjadji's with an area of some 140 square miles there are about 100 headmen. Aggregations of districts into larger units under sub-chiefs, such as are found in Zululand, though not unknown, are not

[1] Some one is, of course, inside to hold the door against the wrong claimants and in Modjadji's tribe the chief always has one hut with two doors, said to be for this purpose.

[2] The *rangaw* (father's brother) or *rakhadi* (father's sister) are often important advisers or, especially where a woman is ruling, the *malaw* (mother's brother).

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1934
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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugɔ*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*figehela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *dere*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex-intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [783]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanoni* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
559 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanoni* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanoni*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[634] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[836] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

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613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mohale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

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queen's mother—that is, either the queen's predecessor on the throne or, if she has borne no children, the queen's physiological mother. The unofficial husbands of the queens are brothers chosen from the line of Malegudu (elder brother of Mujaji I), but relationship is not reckoned through them as fathers. Closeness of relationship is important, but personality and opportunity count as much. The most influential councillor is often said to be the queen's mother's brother—in other words, the brother of the deceased queen or, if she has no issue, the brother of the wife of the queen who bore the queen. In fact, however, other relatives rise to equally influential positions. To take a concrete instance, the councillors of Mujaji III have been relatives either through Leakhali, chief wife and 'sister' of Mujaji II and physiological mother of Mujaji III, or through Mujaji II, her mother, Mujaji I, and the latter's brothers, such as Malegudu. Muneri, the chief councillor to-day, is Leakhali's uterine brother's son, and before him there were Mulogwane, uterine brother of the queen, and also Leakhali's uterine brother. Earlier still, but in the present queen's time, the greatest councillors were others tracing descent from Malegudu. There is no precise rule either as to the number or identity of the councillors. The *duna* of the queen should not be a relative; he is merely a messenger, and, unlike the *induna* elsewhere, is of no account, having no special legal or other status or function. 644 643 634

The *khivijɔ* is neither the more or less determinate body of private advisers (*kxotla*), nor even the tribal gathering (*pitshɔ*), of the Sotho. It is mainly constituted by district heads, or their representatives, and the men of the capital, but any one attends; and it is never conceived of as a general assembly of all the initiated men of the tribe. It has little power and less initiative; it is summoned mostly to discuss European matters, and there is now a tendency to place some decisions of the men of the capital before it for confirmation; but it is hardly a means of gauging popular feeling or of expressing the royal will. The co-operation of the tribe is secured and its desires made known, not through the *khivijɔ*, but through other social arrangements, which we shall describe at greater length.

These arrangements run parallel with a distinctive system of wives of the queen, called *vaṭanoni*, a term also applied to the wives of all nobles and women other than the queen may have *vaṭanoni*. The majority of the queen's wives are given to her by her district heads. In a sense, these wives are tribute (*va hu lova*), but the queen always gives some *munywalo*. She also receives wives from foreign chiefs who supplicate for rain or for peace, and from headmen who settle in her country and send their daughters or sisters; in these cases no *munywalo* is given. Finally, she is sent wives by the nobles, by those to whom she has given wives or cattle with which to secure wives, and by those who promise their little 'mud-stampers' as repayment for the assistance they ask. Sometimes also the queen takes a liking to a girl and asks her in marriage and sometimes commoners send their daughters. It will be impracticable to deal with all these cases; and, from the point of view of the political organization, we are mainly concerned with the wives sent by district heads. They send their daughters for purposes of *hu lova*, a word used in a wide 643 588 634 789 648

[marriage cattle, See cat. 583 per detail.—Analyst]

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643 connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
588 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
634 District heads *lova* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
789 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
648 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Ḋulovedu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*hu lova*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Ṭonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
588 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of
[831] marriage and *munywalo*; the *munywalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
588 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
837 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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241 couples sleep for the first few nights. Among the Lovedu these practices
789 have no counterpart. Given rain, what is necessary to make the crops prosper is work and good soil, not medicine, and as a result one receives the impression of a practical attitude, not only to agriculture, but, by extension, also to most economic activities. But success both in hunting and in pastoral activities to some extent depends upon the use of magic, although by comparison with the Nguni and Tswana the cattle cult is very much attenuated.

461 Thrift and industry are regarded as virtues. It is the hard-working bride who is sought after, while the most eligible bridegrooms are the *dibuḑu*, those who by industry have filled their grain pits. But what is valued is not just work; it is work to attain self-sufficiency, that will make one independent, rather than work which places one in a subservient position. Even, as they phrase it, 'In work for the chief, it is only the fool who kills himself'. Hard work must not be thought of in terms of our conceptions, for the outlook of the Lovedu is far less dominated by intensive striving and deep concentration and more by care-free, easy-going standards than ours. Work has dignity, for the maxim, 'It is not the gift-pumpkin [but the produce of one's own garden] that is juicy', is meant, not to deprecate the gift, but to foster pride in the products of one's labour; it is a tenet appropriately urged when the clothes which a youth displays have been acquired, not by his own efforts, but as a present from his parents. Work is accorded recognition: the child who begins herding is said also to begin to deserve the food he gets. Work excuses failures and losses, for as they say, 'The one who loses cattle is the one who herds them', or, more generally, 'The one who breaks is the one who works'. On the other hand, there is scorn of indolence in the proverb, 'The sluggard has no locusts even if they sleep in his courtyard', and a warning in 'He who sits with staring eye-balls [idly] will die, but he who scratches for food [cultivates assiduously] will live'. Considering the craving for beer, it is almost heroic for a man, when refused this elixir of life, to console himself with the thought that 'He who stints me is he who helps me' [because I shall better be able to attend to my work]. But the work that is honoured and considered most congenial is work in situations in which, as in the work party, the reciprocities are fundamental.

643 The weakness of the queen as a woman is also her strength and the
648 source of the prestige of the tribe. Her foreign policy is appeasement, not war; for, as they phrase it, 'The queen does not fight'. Reciprocity is the basis of her relations with her district heads, reconciliation the method of settling difficulties. Appeasement, one of the great values in the society, harmonizes with, supports, and is in turn supported by the reliance of the whole social structure upon compromise. This value and the traits corresponding to it interpenetrate every aspect of culture and of life. The hard régime of the initiation 'school' has been softened: there is no need to direct its procedures towards hardening the youth or instilling manly courage, and military discipline and regimentation are of little or no importance. Diplomacy works hand in hand with the
157 methods of the *khɔrɔ* and of reconciliation (*hu khumɛlwa*), but it also

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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

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their right to their lands. It is usual for people to 'beg' fields also in areas other than that in which they are living, partly to take advantage of diverse climatic conditions, partly because of land shortage; but their right to these is not as strong as to fields in their home district. Land shortage has not yet reached serious proportions owing to the fact that since the 1920's the tribe has been buying up sparsely populated Crown lands to the north. Grazing and the right to collect wood, thatching grass, wild fruits and plants for economic use are free to all, though herd-boys jealously guard good pastures in their own areas to which they feel they have first right.

Livestock takes the form chiefly of cattle and goats; fowls, still forbidden at the Capital, were introduced by the Tsonga; donkeys and pigs are a European innovation, the former being popular among Christians for use in ploughing and transport, the latter being kept largely by women for exchange purposes. Though of considerable economic importance cattle play little part in the diet of the people, being used mainly for ritual purposes and as bride-price. They move in a chain of marriage exchanges from one family to another, creating and maintaining social links and knitting together in preferred marriage the descendants of brothers and sisters. It was calculated in 1939 that bride-price accounted for 95 per cent of all transfers of cattle in the Lobedu tribe.[1] Cattle coming in as bride-price are not supposed to be used for any other purpose than marriage for, unlike the Zulu who kept large herds, constantly replenished in the old days by raids against neighbours, most Lobedu families do not possess cattle except for short periods of time.

Lobedu ideas of property and their attitude to its possession and accumulation are rather different from ours. The correct use of cattle in Lobedu eyes lies not in accumulation but in their investment in 'building a house', i.e., setting up a new social and economic unit of a wife and children. Surplus crops, similarly, are not accumulated but are generally consumed in a succession of after-harvest beer parties in honour of kin and affines which adds considerably to one's prestige. This, so often cited as evidence of wastefulness and lack of foresight is, in the absence of any really reliable termite- or pest-proof form of storage (which makes accumulation risky), a means of insur-

[1] Krige, J. D., 1939, p. 396.

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857 of *lefafe* (*Mariscus sp.*) or *lejchejchi* (*Cyperus immensus*), rush-grasses which the ants seize with their antennae. The girls who have been stamping now set out with some friends from a neighbouring village, all armed [561] with axes, to collect firewood. The girls of this company are age-mates; they share their labours, confide their love affairs, bathe together, and, in [832] the late afternoon, when they go to the bush, they sit together elongating their *labia minora* (*hu kwewa*). Meanwhile the village lies basking and dreaming in the afternoon sun; except for the pecking fowls there is hardly a stir. '*Vu gae*' ('Where is it—beer'), says Raselaka to his son Sekware, as he returns with some poles on his shoulder for repairing his 574 wife's granary. 'There is beer of *lejema* [work-party] over at Mudziri's,' 273 is the reply; and the men, accompanied by the visitors, set out for the beer drink, knowing they will be allowed to partake even though they have done no work.

The hum of voices as you near a certain kraal leaves you in no doubt that this must be Mudziri's village. A fair crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the woman who is holding the *lejema* and a typical beer-drinking scene meets the eye. The centre of the picture is a large pot of beer placed in a rounded depression made for it in the courtyard. Beside it stands a flat winnowing basket containing long-handled calabash cups from which the beer is drunk. Beside the pot sits a man who serves the beer, using a beer-cup as ladle; he gives each cup to a young man of about twenty, who hands it round. The guests have ranged themselves on either side of the beer pot, women on one side, men on the other. As each calabash is emptied, it is brought back by the young man who is doing the waiting, to be filled. There is no hurry. Each one drinks at his leisure and conversation flows freely. Every one knows he will be given in his turn and, if one man is handed a second cup, he will pass it on to any one who has not yet been served, till all have had four or five. It is a pleasant social gathering and all the latest gossip is discussed. Small children toddle about in between the drinkers and may even be given a ●651 little of the beer. Ominously Pheduli remarks, 'Madume has seen police 625 near Medingen. There appear to be four of them. What can they be wanting?' 'Oh,' replies Dwagu, 'they are no doubt raiding for tax defaulters!' There is general uneasiness, for about a fifth of the gathering are in arrears. Muhale is six years in arrears and, as he never goes to town to work, he has not once been caught. 'They won't catch me napping in my home to-night,' volunteers Mathekha. 'I shall go into the bush again. Are they Shangana-Tonga or Sotho, those police Madume saw?' a very relevant question, because the Shangana-Tonga, more likely than not recruited from outside the reserve, will not know these hiding places in the forests and caves. Here Pekela describes how his friend Setimela, who had himself always been in default and knew all the best hiding places, had joined the police the previous year. Consequently, at the very next raid the police made a most successful scoop, catching ninety-six defaulters, whom they marched to Duivelskloof.

574 The beer-pot is almost empty and people are merely sitting talking 273 when the host calls Raselaka and his European guest aside into his reception hut, together with a few other intimates. A woman brings in a small

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643 766 [789] and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mufugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

643 765 372 651 789 A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mufugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khɔrɔ* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mufugo* (*hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

372 783 177 Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite.

Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khoba*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*vudiga*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*washe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *vyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu swa*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mufugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mufugo* is used before the accession of a new queen.

Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, i.e. firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mufugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital.

Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *goma* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*diphaba*) in which the products of the sea are the most powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mufugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler.

Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly reasserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be auspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite.

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634 for land would then be regarded more favourably should he one day
425 return. The fruits of the soil are dealt with in much the same manner.
423 A man may graze his cattle inside or outside the district, but the cattle posts of the old days were within the district only. We have mentioned the rivalries of herdboys of different districts; we may add that some district heads, because of traditional values and limited grazing land, object to fencing. District heads sometimes reserve valuable trees for themselves, and it is they who give permission for the cutting down of large and shady trees or indigenous fruit-trees (though they be on the landowner's land). Honey found in trees, but not that found in the ground allotted, belongs to the district head. Some heads allow only residents to cut grass, making others pay. Hunting and water rights are not so regulated, but digging of clay is sometimes, if illegally. The
[778] preservation of large forests, a national asset, as places of the gods or of refuge in time of war is the concern of the queen, so that, for instance, Mujaji II had her cattle driven into the gardens of some people, including a district head, who had cleared part of the Levyeni forest and had not begged pardon by sending a *mafanoni* to her.

634 Some distinctive cultural and administrative arrangements of the
643 districts have already been mentioned. There are many others. All
651 district heads used to have, and many still have, certain fields cultivated for them. The queen also has such fields in her districts, and since 1927 each district head has had to cultivate a field (*muremo*) in his district for the queen, an innovation suggested by the European to enable the queen to help her people during famines. The experiment has turned out very differently. These fields are badly cultivated, for years some district heads bring no mealies, the failure only sporadically leading to the penalization of the head and his district, and the mealies are always converted into beer for entertainments at the capital that benefit only the local residents. The storage of mealies is impracticable and a system of distribution is not implied in cultural arrangements. A district head unwillingly surrenders land and sometimes expropriates first one then another landowner, so that there is much dissatisfaction and even refusal to cultivate the *muremo*.

634 In many respects district heads are like chiefs. They are often called
651 'chief' (*khosi*) and, like the queen, have medicines to safeguard them in their position of authority. A district head is not only the most im, ortant person in the district, the centre of its political and legal life, the man who is responsible for the welfare of his people, but the obligations of district residents towards him emphasise both his position and the reciprocities between ruler and subject. It is expected that his subjects shall bring him beer periodically, and sometimes it is held that he should be invited to every beer party held in his area, partly because he is responsible for order at the beer drink and partly because it is his due. All his subjects must make *marula* cider for him in the proper season, and similarly, when at certain ceremonies, held by him for the well-being of the district, beer is required, every resident must contribute. The most important occasion is at the harvest thanksgiving and the beer brought is regarded as being in return for the land given by the head to his people. On the pattern of

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services to a chief, residents must also build his village and mend his huts. These privileges and obligations are not merely theoretical; they are very much in evidence and can be observed to-day in the districts as much as, if not more than, at the capital. The first edible termites found in the district must, in the case of some of the more important heads, be brought to the district head; these ants are ritually associated with rain-making and are put into the rain pots which these heads have. 634 651

The national 'schools' are sometimes held independently by district heads; in 'biting' the first fruits (*ku luma*) and in turning the first soil, the precedence of the queen is hardly recognised. The head at Ḏaja and the senior male line of the royal family have theoretical precedence in *ku luma* and, in contrast to many neighbouring tribes, there is little stress upon having the queen's field hoed first; in practice to-day her field is never ploughed first. Maunadala, it is said, in the old days paid an ox to anticipate the queen's hoeing and thus avoided threatening starvation; but dispensations of this nature, while recognizing a theoretical rule, throw into relief the much greater autonomy of the district here than elsewhere. The district head is solely responsible for *ku upa*, the rite that drives away destructive birds and monkeys when crops are ripe; to him the death of every resident is reported (the report being transmitted to the queen only when a relative of hers dies) and the resulting 'holiday' is held only in the district. Each district head has his own drums through which he controls dancing (*guba*), religious observances, and some of the 'schools'. The girls' puberty rite (*khobo*) is entirely district-controlled. 634 796

The individuality of some districts is seen in esoteric customs; elsewhere by taboo, succession ceremonial, and a distinctive community life. At Khiobeni people may construct on the edge of the village a rain-shelter (*kmado*) in which fire is made; in neighbouring areas this is taboo. Work on the day following the new moon is said to have been taboo in the old days at Matsui, though the rule is never observed to-day; in neighbouring areas there never was such a holiday. The Thovula in one district have a special dance with a special ritual. As regards succession, the queen usually merely confirms, though she maintains touch through an elaborate ceremony: she is notified of the death of the head, sends the 'mother' of the district to take part in the ceremony of installation and, in the case of heads of the royal group, the *swiqajani* appear. The ceremonial, however, more intimately concerns the district: there is a local 'holiday' after the death, the *guba* dance is taboo for a year, girls undergo puberty initiation elsewhere, beer is made by the district to 'open the drums', and each head of a family sends a goat or 10s., 'the eye of the chief', to acknowledge their new head. The life of the district is often distinctive. Matsui is said to be wasteful and, according to one of their praises, people there, instead of stamping, for which they are too lazy, 'burn their finger-nails roasting green mealies'. Everything is rather slack and happy-go-lucky, beer drinks are apt to be unruly, the district head is at loggerheads with his uncles, and his subjects talk disparagingly of 'this district-head business of going about and drinking beer'. Bacchanalian orgies after the harvest, slack morals, and other irregularities at Matsui contrast strikingly with conditions at Bagoni, an adjacent district. At Bagoni there is a tradition 634 184 [784]

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177 695 The handling of this evidence is woefully unskilful, but important distinctions must be made. Where the writing takes the place of the notches that used to be cut on sticks to indicate the cattle that had passed, it tends to be accepted if there is other supporting evidence; statements in a letter of the amount of money sent with the letter are generally given credence; but sentiments expressed in letters and written accounts of the circumstances of a case are usually completely ignored or dismissed as unimportant. In one case where a husband wrote that he had definitely deserted his wife, the court ignored the letter on the ground that, unless the husband gave his evidence in person, he might well reverse his attitude and appeal to the Native Commissioner. The subject of the development in the handling of written evidence is a large one; but to what we have said we would merely add that the recording of evidence in writing has been attempted, since 1932, in only fifteen cases all told. The attempt has miserably failed. The usual record reads approximately as follows: 'Andrew Malopo v. £19. 5 Jim Malate 2/8/32', and to that cryptic statement nothing is added by way of such embellishment as the nature of the case, whether the date refers to the day of trial or retrial or payment, whether in fact there has been payment, and so on. Native Commissioners have sometimes tendered advice about how cases should be decided and recorded, but it is beyond their province, and the results have been precisely nil.

177 642 Political institutions have suffered no fundamental change. External relations are maintained through the wives the queen still receives from, and the rain she still gives to, foreign chiefs; the suppression of military exploits and cattle raids has not affected the Lovedu. Relations with European authorities have modified initiative and control over large spheres of policy, for the tribal authorities receive instructions rather than discuss suggestions, though consultation is nowadays a recognized preliminary to the introduction of an innovation. The tribal gathering (*khotla*) never was important in Lovedu; now it discusses perhaps more tribal matters than in the past, as well as European proposals and demands, but it has little power. The councillors, presenting European matters, sometimes give a distorted version, finding it difficult to justify either the measure proposed or their inability to bring about modifications or to circumvent it; and very often they do not mention important points at all. The widespread tendency to justify a desired action by saddling the European with responsibility for it reappears again and again. The people may be told by the councillors (who have a car) to mend the road, because, they say, an official who broke the spring of his car upon it has complained to the Native Commissioner; the administrative admonition to maintain better control over young boys going to work without their parents' consent was presented to the tribal meeting as a warning that boys not carrying tax receipts would be arrested if found at beer parties. (By traditional standards, now maintained with difficulty, beer parties are only for adults.) The justification or circumvention is upon the pattern that is known, and that pattern, despite the intervention of the European, remains intact.

177 231 654 Measures taken to protect national (South African) interests, such as

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cattle-dipping, quarantine regulations, and the reclamation of the reserves, have increased in recent years. Unless some compromise can be reached in regard to the prohibition of cutting down trees, all the Native industries will be stamped out. The change from wattle and daub to sun-dried bricks for constructing huts began before the forestry regulations and is now accelerated, fortunately without causing a major disturbance. Dipping is regarded as a sinister device for keeping down the number of cattle—the hurried driving to and from the dip and the lack of care of wounded cattle or of those in calf do in fact cause deaths, but the absence of milch cows, also attributed to dipping, is the result of overworking the cattle, their poor quality, and inadequate grazing land. Natives believe that dipping exists for the special benefit of dipping officials, who come as poor men, but are rich when they leave. Dipping and quarantine regulations, as well as grazing fees in the Crown Lands, have led to complications in transferring the cattle of the marriage exchanges, driven out customs incipiently accepted from the West, such as cattle posts and cattle racing on the day of the first fruits festival, and introduced the conception of fees for *ku fisa*, the care of cattle by others.

But one of the most unsuspected results is the growth of a reluctance, not merely to slaughter, but also to sell cattle. The evil of this tendency is incalculable, but it is an inevitable result of modern conditions. Sales are difficult, because of the restrictions on movement and the absence of markets; the need to sell or to slaughter is smaller than it was because money is available and agriculture less precarious; the emphasis upon material possessions and the liberation among Christians of cattle from the chain of cattle exchanges tends to imbue them with new values. The tendency is for them to become a standard of wealth rather than a means of subsistence or of facilitating marriage. There is a strong aversion even to slaughter the cattle that used to be killed in marriage negotiations, their place being taken by money and clothes. A strong incentive to slaughter cattle cannot easily be created, since it is not meat, but beer, with which one regales one's neighbours and maintains a reputation for liberality. Among the Lovedu the growing anti-economic conception of cattle has nothing to do with their alleged sacredness.

Western culture has presented itself with a formidable problem. Improvement of stock by way of pedigree bulls, the Lovedu have decisively rejected: they suspect that the Government will claim perhaps the calves, perhaps some other right of interference. They have also for similar reasons refused other aid, such as the introduction of a suitable grass.

Not all the great changes in agriculture have come from the European. The Shangana-Tsonga introduced valley cultivation, which was subsequently stimulated by congestion on the hills and by the greater ease of manipulating the plough in the valleys than on the hillsides. With the plough, rejected in its early heavy form, but accepted later when it became lighter, a new set of reactions started. Crops and beer became more abundant, the old forms of co-operative work were transformed, and the effect of the absence in town of the men was minimized. But the plough is destroying the protective verges of fields, sweeping away the borders

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CHAPTER XI

THE GENIUS OF JURIDICAL ADJUSTMENTS

Conciliation machinery at the capital—quasi-judicial systems of appeasement—reliance in full-dress trials and sanctions upon agreement and compromise—procedure in 'blood' cases—appeals to ordeals and diviners.

692 671 THE genius of the Lovedu political system is its network of reciprocities; the genius of the legal system is its procedure of reconciliations and compromises; and both the political and legal systems reflect the main emphases and purposes of the culture. *Khotso* proceedings, the full-dress trials of the Lovedu, stand out conspicuously amid the various judicial arrangements, some of which we may be inclined to call quasi-judicial, but in reality none of our legal terms are appropriate. Their *khotso* is court-like, but it is not a court in our sense of the term; their law is law-like, not the equivalent of our law. All the procedures aim, not at settling legal issues, but at effecting compromises and reconciliations. The *khotso* itself, the most imposing feature of public life and the pinnacle of the cultural edifice, relies, not on force, but on friendly adjustments. It is the courtyard of compromises, not the arena of casuistic contests. It disposes of no sanction of execution: coercion is incongruous with its purposes. Culture contact has weakened the effectiveness of compromise and thereby has rendered necessary what it denies to the *khotso*—namely, the sanction of force.

692 In this chapter we deal briefly with the organization of the *khotso* and then touch lightly upon certain quasi-judical processes. These lead us to cast a passing glance first at *khotso* procedure and thereafter at various other types of procedure which centre, not in the *khotso*, but in other arrangements such as those involved in settling 'blood' cases and in dealing with the deeds of darkness by divination and the ordeal. All these procedures are part of the legal machinery, but they can be understood only as part also of the whole social structure. A comprehensive account of them is out of the question; we have no time even for a glimpse at substantive law.

692 643 The queen is at the head of the *khotso* organization. She never sits in the *khotso*, for it is the courtyard of the men. But she is always in the background, and in theory all decisions at the capital should be reported to, and confirmed by her. Five years ago, when the queen's uterine brother still lived and was a councillor, this was no formality, but to-day only very serious cases or decisions are submitted for her verdict or confirmation. This divergence from the ideal is due to conflicts, fear of involving the queen with European authorities, and a growing desire to reserve *khotso* affairs to the men. The queen's approval is still sought, always when the dispute involves the position or status of a royal relative, often when a district head expels a subject, and sometimes when a recalcitrant party is to be sent to the Native Commissioner or when one

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yard, where they may more freely advance personal considerations, the *khɔrɔ* goes on to the next case. After plaintiff and defendant have spoken, the discussion may become general and heated, or it may peter out or degenerate to *ad hoc* arguments in various quarters, and no crisp decision may be given. There are many interruptions. Yet the men say that *khɔrɔ* work is arduous and requires much concentration—clearly their conceptions are very different from ours. They attach great importance to impartial justice, and bribery in our sense is rare. The danger of partiality arises from relationship and friendship; arbitrators do not recuse themselves, but often show their embarrassment by silence or slipping out of the *khɔrɔ*. We have seen cases in which a district head was fined by his own *khɔrɔ* for assaulting one of the residents of his district. Even the queen may be judged (in private) by her retinue, the nobles (*Varamuhafulwa gi valada*).

The problem of the *khɔrɔ* lies, not in sifting evidence or dispensing justice according to law, but in adjusting personal differences within the general framework of the social structure. Success is achieved when personality compromises can be harmonized with the implications of the social system. The *khɔrɔ* is not much concerned with strict law or the details of law. They do not rely upon judicial precedents for authoritative legal material. If precedents are quoted, and that is exceedingly rare, their purpose is to suggest arrangements and adjustments that are effective, not to determine a legal rule. The law is not the law of the courts; it is the 'law' of the institutions and is embedded in the institutions; and the harmony of different institutions and their 'laws' results from the total cultural configuration, not the judgements of the *khɔrɔ*. If the arrangements or 'laws' of two institutions conflict in a case, as they sometimes do, the *khɔrɔ* is powerless to resolve the conflict; for law is not of an autonomous order.

We cannot speak of examination, much less of cross-examination, of witnesses. All the parties are present when evidence is given, for 'Only Europeans conceal what one says from another and allow secret manipulations of evidence behind the backs of others'. The foreknowledge of the *khɔrɔ*, the availability of the weapons of confrontation and publicity, reduces direct perjury to a minimum. Litigants know the art of presenting their cases and of skilfully twisting a story, but a man caught out in telling an untruth readily confesses the truth. Falsehood is dealt with by ridicule and laughter; it is not punished as perjury. There are no rules as to what may be admitted as evidence, but the probative value of different kinds of evidence is well understood. The evidence need not bear upon the issue presented to the court, for that issue may merely reflect a more fundamental conflict, and it is with this conflict and its resolution that the *khɔrɔ* is concerned. Hearsay and irrelevancies may furnish important clues as to the origin or nature of the dispute. Rigid proof is necessary when elementary facts are in issue, as when the sole question is how many cattle have to be returned upon divorce, and then reliance is placed upon the evidence of the two marriage intermediaries. In theft and adultery cases, despite presumptions that supplement the evidence of the senses, the *khɔrɔ* is peculiarly helpless and extra-*khɔrɔ* procedures must be invoked.

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[8] attached to possession and no socio-economic stratification of classes; for a great man, whether he be poor or rich, is first and foremost a royal relative, and the purpose of economic activities is self-sufficiency and independence. Trade is disliked and competition is absent even in craftsmanship. So marked is the disinclination to make comparisons that it is difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things that Europeans quite naturally compare, such as the achievements of individuals or objects of craftsmanship.

Children are taught 'to be like others', not to strive to outdo them and precociousness is disliked. A child asking for sweets often says 'Give me also', even if no one else has been given any on that occasion. He begs for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors the prayer is quite often phrased, 'Give us also', or 'Let him have health like others'. To stress, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with or greater than that of others would be improper. Contrast with this the opportunities for and love of competition in Zulu society where every boy is constantly measuring himself against others, vieing with them in fights, in dress, in love-making, in dancing, for leadership and praise.

The give and take, absence of competitiveness, and lack of force in the social and political structure, make moderation the keynote of Lovedu social life. Outstanding individuals are not tolerated: a show of forcefulness on the part of a councillor one day, which appealed to us as an indication of efficiency unusual in the society, was apologized for with the excuse that he must have been drunk. Display of all kinds is disliked. The elaborate beadwork and interest in dress, so characteristic of the Zulu, are absent, and there is nothing to correspond to the institutionalized public boasting (*ukugiya*) —jumping and stabbing at an imaginary foe to the accompaniment of a string of praises—that plays so important a role in Zulu life.

Excess of every kind is deprecated. Speed is undignified. Things must be done *ga raya*, slowly, at a regular pace, in a moderate and dignified manner. Excess in human relations, like heat in the cosmic order, is liable to bring disaster. The reaction to death is calm, quiet grief, not the funeral wail of [761] the Nguni or the terror reaction of the Tsonga. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to call down evil upon the next child born to her. Mputa was born a cripple, because, so we were told, his mother, Makwadu, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. Even in scolding moderation has to be observed, for scolding out of proportion to the offence, can, as we have shown, bring evil, even death.

Quarrelsomeness is one of the worst offences. Congruent with this outlook, the murderer or the warrior who has killed an enemy must purify [783] [8] himself to avoid becoming quarrelsome, the threat of which is so unpalatable as to be a powerful sanction. But quarrels and conflicts do occur on [67] account of temperamental qualities, conflicting interests, and other causes; they are also precipitated sometimes through imperfections in the social

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institutions or their inadequacy for meeting all situations. In the resolution of difficulties of this nature arbitration and compromise play an important role, both judicially and extra-judicially. The genius of the legal system even in its most formal aspects is the skilful use of the restitutive sanction, in its spiritual rather than its material sense. The fundamental objective is the re-establishment of relations that have become broken or strained, and that objective is achieved, not so much by vindicating rules as by reconciling the parties. There is indeed a tacit assumption that the social equilibrium will be maintained if personal relations are suitably adjusted. The primary task of the courts is therefore to smooth out personal difficulties rather than to settle legal issues. For in law as in life it is not the rule that is important but the personal and social relations. The cattle-linking of brother and sister from different 'houses', ordinarily disapproved, is an arrangement that agreement between the 'houses' makes possible, and if the parties agree, even murder can be compounded. Even when a diviner has found a man guilty of witchcraft, it is felt to be necessary that the culprit should 'agree' with the findings, i.e. accept the verdict of the bones. In judicial proceedings a defendant will be asked if he agrees to pay the award; if he disagrees, full latitude is allowed him to expostulate. Should the court sense a genuine grievance it will reopen the case and bring its decision more into line with an amicable adjustment. As laws and institutions exist for human beings, they are not ends in themselves, and even the most fundamental duties and obligations between individuals and groups are conditional upon the ever-invoked 'if they agree'. If people do not agree there can be no relationship. If they have to be coerced there cannot be genuine agreement. This is why the execution of a judgement is left to the parties. The whole social and political structure relies upon the maintenance of good relations without resort to compulsion. Hence the use of the mechanisms of marriage and bride-price to hold in willing allegiance a great diversity of alien groups, who outnumber the Lovedu proper by nine to one; hence also the aversion from regimentation and military discipline.

Great importance is attached to the dignity of the individual. Every person has rights and obligations; even a child's rights to property are respected. If a man feels that he is not being given his due, it is right to complain (*velacla*) just as the ancestors do when they have not received proper attention. Any indignity to the personality, such as corporal punishment, is socially disapproved. Perhaps it is for this reason that a Lovedu soon becomes tractable if ordered by the court to carry stones or perform some other useless task when he has been guilty of 'despising' the court.

Suicide is not common, but when it is resorted to it is as a protest against wrongful accusations or as a result of the complete frustration of an individual forced against his will into an impossible situation, e.g. a girl forced to marry someone she dislikes.

A high value is placed on human life. An aspect of Western civilization that puzzles the Lovedu is that we tolerate the loss of human life involved

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754 standing of ordinary men; sorcery is the manipulation of lawful means for unlawful ends.

The night-witch belongs to an unholy fraternity whose members meet at night to dance to their drums and deliberate upon their deeds of darkness. She uses no medium of destruction and no medicine or spells, but has inborn powers to do what is physically impossible to ordinary men. She goes herself on her nefarious errands or uses familiars. Witches are almost invariably women, partly no doubt because it is difficult to conceive of women having the facilities to purchase medicines for purposes of sorcery, partly also because they are endowed with more mysterious powers than men. The sorcerer, usually a man, whose machinations involve the use of medicines and spells, is a day-witch because his power is derived from ordinary natural techniques 'of the day'. The essence of sorcery is the criminal use of the potency of medicines which can be, and usually are, used in the service of legitimate ends.

754 Many medicines are specifically good or bad and their use cannot traverse their intrinsic nature; but some of the most important are good and hence •673 moral, or bad and hence immoral according as they are used for socially approved or socially disapproved ends. *Madabi*, for example, has the power to transmute the nature of things. It is right for a husband to manipulate *madabi* in a way that will cause wild animals to appear while his runaway spouse works for her lover, for in this way he may frighten her into returning to him. But a jilted lover who takes revenge upon a girl is guilty of sorcery if he uses *madabi* to change her sex when her child is about to be born and thereby endangers her life. Such an act is unlawful vengeance, which is sharply distinguished from lawful restitution; it reflects a desire to injure another for personal motives which are not in harmony with approved social values.

754 Witchcraft and sorcery can always be counteracted. A favourite method of dealing with a witch is the use of reprisal magic whereby the evil is sent 789 back to him, but there are many charms and medicines, all relying on the power of *vuyaga*, by means of which witchcraft can be combated or rendered harmless. Villages are protected against witches and sorcerers by charms circling the village or placed at strategic points, while the witch within the village is treated by *hu fera*, i.e. a drug is introduced into his food which has the power of making him forget his frustration and seek compensation in day-dreaming and doddering. After witchcraft or sorcery has been established by divination as the cause of an evil, and the culprit has been identified (the diviner mentions no name but gives certain attributes, such as sex, clan, locality), it is open to the victim to make an accusation and risk the legal proceedings that will inevitably follow. But resort to law is not entirely satisfactory since appeasement, not the hardening of animosities that accusations occasion, is the function of law. Moreover, the initiation of legal sanctions against a witch may spur him to greater activity.

777 Witch beliefs reflect the Lovedu notion that almost all the misfortunes

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in the use of motor traffic. Are not people more important than speed? The need for even a chief to respect the wishes of his subjects upon whom he depends for a following is summed up in the saying, *Uuhosi gi vatho*, 'chieftainship is people'.

The qualities or virtues that are stressed, then, in the moral code of the Lovedu are moderation and temperance, compromise and agreement, humility, respect for the personality and rights of others. Courage is not rated very high in this non-military society. Perseverance is often enjoined and is especially necessary in the monotonous tasks of hoeing, carrying heavy loads of wood, walking up steep mountain slopes; but it is never carried out with the single-mindedness that a European might expect. Theft is condemned and there are ritual sanctions against it. If the object stolen has been magically treated, for example, a painful sore will develop on the finger which defies treatment until guilt has been confessed and restitution agreed to. 'Don't steal, always beg (*hobela*) for what you want', children are exhorted. But theft is not a problem in this economically undifferentiated society, though nowadays cases of theft, even if extremely rarely, do come before the tribal courts. Drunkenness is bad only if it leads to neglect of duties or fights and quarrels. To be drunk is in itself no disgrace, it is merely pleasant and perhaps exhilarating, not a condition to be ashamed of. Indeed everyone looks forward to the *murula* season when all become slightly intoxicated from the cider made out of the fruits.

Right conduct is relative always to the human situation and morality is oriented not from any absolute standards of honesty or truth but from the social good in each situation. Conduct that promotes smooth relationships, that upholds the social structure, is good; conduct that runs counter to smooth social relationships is bad. Courtesy and the respect due to age or seniority are thus of greater importance than truth. A son-in-law who, tired of always being imposed upon by his wife's father, truthfully signified his unwillingness to help him by providing a goat would be guilty, in view of the special mutualities between families related by marriage, of unpardonable behaviour which might jeopardise his marriage. The correct procedure is to agree to help but to be always 'still looking for it' when approached for the goat. It took us a long time to discover that the right way to deal with incessant begging was not to refuse however politely, but to say 'I have none' or 'It is not mine to give'. The polite lie even if palpable is better calculated to maintain smooth relationships than strict adherence to truth. Truth is not good in itself nor is a lie always evil. Lies are objected to when they are socially inconvenient. Yet not only is it expected that a man will lie to get out of difficulties but there are cases in which lying is prescribed, as when children are told to lie to strangers if asked about village affairs. To keep tribal secrets and the secrets of initiation schools is of far greater importance than to tell the truth.

The social orientation of morality is clear in Lovedu sex morality. Sex is not regarded as a temptation to be resisted by painful efforts of will.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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431 I want a wife to come and stamp for me', said the queen. The
583 girl was married by the queen and shortly after was given to
643 the son of another 'wife' (*motanoni*) of the queen with whom
571 she is now living at the Capital.

437 Sometimes the transaction takes on more of an economic
583 character, a man pledging his daughter in order to receive economic help. Thus Jim's father in a period of starvation took his ten-year-old daughter to a man at Malemacha and said, 'I am starving and poor. Give me money. I have a girl, a *ledolo*'. Money was given to him and later when the girl was sent in marriage, cattle were handed over in the usual way. More commonly this technique was used when a man had no sister whose cattle he might use to marry with. He then went to a maternal or affinal relative or to a friend or even a stranger who had cattle, saying: '*Ge no khuru*—I have a knee', in reference to his procreative powers, thus pledging himself to send an as yet unborn daughter in marriage. Today such transactions have become infrequent since money can so easily be obtained by migrant labour or a loan can be repaid in money without having to pledge a daughter.

675 The cattle or other property (marriage hoes were used in the
437 old days)[1] establish tangible obligations between the two
583 families which can be upheld at law even though the contract is fulfilled only in the next generation or later. Moreover the bond is permanent: other marriages will follow the first from generation to generation in a manner that will be described below. The use of women in property transactions of this kind which is not considered to be derogatory by the Lobedu is all the more remarkable in the light of the very high position of, and the power wielded by, women in Lobedu social life.

Some Aspects of Marriage

581 It will be necessary before discussing the domestic cycle to examine briefly the nature of Lobedu marriage; for not only does marriage establish strong economic and social relation-

[1] These hoes were too large and heavy for tilling the soil and were merely kept in a hut. The chief councillor of the queen, a man of about eighty years old, still remembers the use of marriage hoes in a few cases in his boyhood. Six hoes or eight head of cattle passed in marriage at that time.

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693 great weight. There was also muddled-headed old Mabungwani, who, as judgement creditor, regularly for two years came from a far-off district fruitlessly to complain that Maake, the debtor, had not yet paid him, but was still 'looking for' the fine; he took a prominent part, muddling the issues, but humouring the men; and it was a real joy to listen to him These were but some of the striking personalities of the fifty men or more who habitually came to the *khɔrɔ*. They attended, some for one reason, some for another, as we would attend a function which is partly an entertainment and partly a responsibility. The *khɔrɔ* is not wholly a casual assembly, since men living in the neighbourhood are expected to give their assistance at the sessions every Sunday morning.

Not the men of the *khɔrɔ*, but only 'mothers' and messengers, are specially rewarded. A plaintiff, resident, say, in the district of Madumani, taking his case to the capital, should go accompanied by a messenger from Madumani to report his complaint to his 'mother', Khidima, to whom he gives three goats or their equivalent, usually £1 and a goat. By this formal complaint (*hu ɖalia*) he becomes the plaintiff (*muɖalii*): the £1 is *hu ɖalia*, serves to 'open' the *khɔrɔ*, and is handed by the 'mother' to the queen; the goat or 10s. is to 'break down the *khɔrɔ*' and will be retained by Khidima if the defendant lives in one of his districts, for then Khidima must summon him; but if he resides in, say, Matsui, Khidima must give the goat to Muneri, 'mother' of Matsui, who is responsible for calling his own 'children'. The 'mother' himself, as was usual in the old days, or a messenger of the 'mother', as is common to-day, receives from the defendant he summons a goat called *budi ya bija* (goat of the pot) or *leudu la mudzeɖa* (fee of the feet). In cases of 'blood', of witchcraft, and of offences against the tribal authorities, when they come before the *khɔrɔ*, the procedure is different and these fees are not paid.

All the young men in the district of the capital are *maharula*, envoys of *khɔrɔ* or queen. The usual work of a *leharula* is to call district heads to tribal gatherings (*khiwijɔ*), though much of this is now done by herdboys, who every fortnight drive the cattle to the dipping tanks. The *maharula* also represent the queen at *morula* cider drinks, given to the queen by districts other than the capital, for, except on special and very rare religious occasions (say once in every few years), she does not move beyond her own district. But for our present purpose we shall consider the *maharula* as a kind of police force, though without its powers. Police, prisons, process for executing judgements are alien to the culture, but situations akin to contempt occasionally arise in the *khɔrɔ*, and, if it is a young man or woman who despises the authority of the old men, a *leharula* may be detailed to supervise the execution of a patently absurd piece of work by the offender. The object is to humiliate, the onlookers are amused, no force is used, and usually the prisoner submits before he has started the work. *Maharula* do not specially attend the *khɔrɔ* for this purpose; the *khɔrɔ* usually ignores indignities; and submission, even if merely assumed, is accepted as sufficient.

693 Another duty of *maharula* is to collect fines, imposed by custom, not
• 691 by trial, upon a whole district that has offended. When, for instance, in 1937 none of the young boys and girls of the district of the capital

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responded to the order to weed the queen's field, *maharula* went to collect 693
a fowl from each 'rebel'. They collected seven fowls, because most of the 681
delinquents could offer excuses which showed, to the satisfaction of the *maharula*, that they had repented. In 1938 Mahubusana complained that the residents of his district despised him. They had successively ignored his order to make *morula* cider first for himself and then for the queen and also to bring the 'money for the petrol of the queen's car'. *Maharula*, the councillors said, would be sent to exact one goat from every household. Nothing happened. Later Mahubusana brought the five main culprits to the capital and there they were told to pay 5*s*. each to their district head and to leave the district after having gathered in their harvest. 'You have despised the district head and the queen,' it was said. 'Go, then, and live where there is no chief, for here you worry the queen.' There was no trial; and a year after the 1938 harvest the rebels were still living in the district. *Maharula* are also sent to exact the fine due in those 'blood' cases that are reported to the queen. Despite apparent exceptions, *maharula* are not and never were deputed to execute upon a decision of the *khoro*, for the *khoro* is concerned with private delicts, wrongs between individuals who, in the last resort, are left to arrange restitution among themselves.

At the village of each district head there is also a *khoro*, the arrange- 692
ments of which resemble those at the capital; but, of course, there are many variations. Its competence is in practice determined by the presumptions of the district head; and the law it applies is not necessarily the law of the capital. Some district heads, having sub-districts under them, attach 'mothers' and *maharula* to the *khoro*, but usually these are only messengers for calling defendants. *Khoro* trials are usually held in 695
the district of the defendant, and the messenger or 'mother' is entitled to the 'fee of the feet', but not all district heads charge for 'opening' the *khoro*. The district head may have a special *dwna*, often his elder brother, who is entrusted with legal matters and 'presides' in his absence; women who are heads do not appear in the *khoro*, but *confirm decisions*. Sometimes the district *khoro* is better organized and controlled than that at the capital, there may be regular judges and assessors, the word is 'passed' (*ku suma*) from the junior to the senior members, contempt is strictly dealt with, and so on. But this is unusual, the organization being much more haphazard and the procedure much less regularized. Mostly the district head intervenes at the request of one party to see whether he can effect a reconciliation: he sets out with the plaintiff to the village of the defendant rather than summons the defendant to his *khoro*, or he goes as an intermediary (*mukhumadi*) of the one party to persuade the other to accept the settlement offered. Full-dress *khoro* trials are often like heated family consultations. *Khoro* cases in which the fine of restitution is a head of cattle must theoretically be reported to the capital, not for confirmation, but for directions as to the disposal of the fine; but in practice this rule is often not observed. 'Blood' cases not reported to the capital are dealt with by the district head, whose function is something between that of an intercessor and a judge. In theory 'blood' cases are not tried, and in practice district heads do inquire into and often finally settle such cases.

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confidence in the *khoro* and its methods, but some men increasingly resort to a mixture of the supernatural, the 'sending back' of the evil, and the processes of the European courts.

'Blood' cases and disobedience to tribal authorities, as well as witchcraft, are dealt with by procedures essentially different from those so far described. Homicide, especially accidental killing (*gozi*), is usually restituted by *ku khumtlwa wa* and by converting the criminal to a kinsman, without the intervention of the *khoro* or payment to the queen. But other procedures were also used: a murderer might be killed in the heat of the moment by a relative of the victim, and in such a case that ended the matter; or he might be executed by order of the queen unless he could escape to one of the recognized sanctuaries in the country; or he might be dealt with as a witch. Homicide in its manifold aspects is too large a subject for treatment here, but since it is, in regard to aspects of law dealt with in this book, adequately illuminated by our next subject, viz. procedure in 'blood' cases, we may content ourselves with the remark that homicide apparently did not involve a *khoro* trial.

'Blood' cases to-day present a curious mixture of different procedures of the past. One old element of the procedure, being incongruous with the disapproval of self-help, has completely disappeared. Old men told us that 'blood' cases were settled by the kin, not submitted to the *khoro*. That, but no doubt also the reluctance to appeal to the European, to-day explains the emphasis on reconciliation and the encouragement of *ku khumtlwa* in these cases. If a 'blood' case comes to the *khoro*, the victim gets nothing and the assaulter pays heavily; if the matter is privately settled, the victim gets something and the assaulter pays less. In the old days, if private settlement failed, the kin of the victim went to attack the assaulter's village: they reported to the queen, but she exacted no fine if in the attack a man was killed. Though this method of execution is unknown to-day, it is still said that a man who kills an aggressor pays nothing, not even to the queen, for 'He who dies on the road is not to be cried for. Let the aggressor kill himself' (*mafa-dzilewi a u lthui, mulala u tholaki*). This precept is also invoked to justify 'revenge' by means of medicines, but here, as in the case of aggression, it is regarded as self-defence, not self-help, just as killing an adulterer caught in the act—in which case also no blood-money is paid, even to the queen—is thought of as killing a thieving dog. These conceptions leave intact the aversion from vengeance: there is no blood revenge, no vendetta, no trace of the *lex talionis*, though a limb for a limb is known not very far off. Self-help, even in cases where it is admitted among tribes with more highly developed legal institutions, is frowned upon: one may neither kill a pig of another that damages one's crops nor drive cattle that have entered one's gardens into the fields of their owner. A man, provoked or assaulted by another, has no right to retaliate; and it is doubted whether the provocation will mitigate his offence, for no man may take the law in his own hands. Phedulí's relative had been killed by Magwale's sorcery, and in anger Phedulí struck Magwale's cow, which subsequently went lame; yet he was ordered by the *khoro* to pay the usual compensation.

How has the old procedure merged with the new conceptions? We

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692 can give only part of the answer. The exaggerated abhorrence of self-
●682 help and the insistence upon *ku khumelwa*, side by side with the
627 tendency to regard blood as belonging to the queen (phrased as 'the head belongs to the chief'), has not driven the old procedures wholly out of the field. Old men say that 'blood' cases cannot be submitted to the *khoro*, yet they are second in number to *mayuwalo* cases. In theory, the procedure is that the victim, having notified his district head, runs to show his blood at the capital, messengers (*maharula*) of the queen are sent, not to institute an inquiry or conduct a trial, but to collect one goat from every married man in the district of the victim; and each *leharula* takes two goats for himself and gives the rest to the queen. We have never seen this procedure applied in practice; the danger of European intervention makes it wholly impracticable. Instead, the wounded person reports immediately to the district head, sometimes to the queen, or if the wound is not serious the parties settle the matter by *ku khumelwa*. The district head often arbitrates successfully; but he can neither try nor fine nor exact court fees. If the victim goes to the queen, she sends a *leharula* (and often more than one) who exacts one goat (the 'fee of the feet') from the assaulter and one from the victim (the 'stick for roasting meat') and should he settle the matter informally, for he cannot conduct a full-dress trial, he receives one further beast (the fine) from the wrong-doer. The latter is given to the queen; the goat given by the victim is killed for the *leharula*, who takes a hind leg to the queen's *khoro*, where it is eaten chiefly by the councillors; and the victim gets nothing. But if the *leharula* fails in his mission, which in practice means that the assaulter refuses to submit to him or denies his guilt, he is summoned to the *khoro* at the capital. There is no 'opening' fee, for 'blood' opens the *khoro*; sometimes the parties are ordered to settle the matter between themselves and sometimes the offender is fined one head of cattle, which goes to the queen, and one goat, which is killed for the *khoro*. Sometimes, however, a victim reports to the queen merely to obtain a letter to the Native Commissioner.

692 These general principles are subject in individual cases to many
683 variations which reflect the transitional nature of the procedure and the adjustments that are being made by the society. We have been able to observe the cases that came before the *khoro* far more closely than those settled privately. In one case where a father intervened in a fight between his son and his son's wife, the son in anger stabbed the father; the *khoro* ordered the parties to become reconciled by *ku khumelwa*, the son to beg pardon with a goat. In similar circumstances, where a stranger intervened, the husband was ordered to clear the grass in the queen's garage. In another case the husband wounded the mother of a youth whom he found with his wife, because the mother interfered in the ensuing quarrel between the husband and the youth; the *khoro* told the youth to beg pardon with three goats but fined the husband one head of cattle and one goat. While the *swiglajoni* (whistling ancestors) were performing at a religious ceremony, one of them, very much intoxicated, blew his whistle in public and tried to drag one of the women away to the bush. A district head, an initiated man, forcibly ejected the offender, who next

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Highveld. When, after many private consultations with diviners, a man decides to make an accusation of witchcraft, he and the accused will *betoke* or lay a wager of money or cattle on the matter, after which, accompanied by a witness, the 'ears of the chief', supplied by the Head Kraal, they set out to consult a far-away smeller-out, nearly always a Shangana-Tonga who lives too far to know anything of the people concerned. Unless the smeller-out is able to give the totems of all members of the party and successfully find an object that has been hidden beforehand, they will pass on to another until some one suitable is found. The verdict of the smeller-out is taken to court where it is always accepted and the guilty party told to pay his wager, the modern counterpart of the death penalty of old. A distinction between murder and accidental homicide is everywhere found in the Lowveld, punishment for the latter being the handing over of a girl to the injured family. She never returns home, nor does any bride-price pass. 695 [illegible]

Bantu etiquette, which makes it impossible for a case to be reported to the chief except through a third party, generally among other Sotho tribes one or two specially appointed men, has in the Lowveld given rise to a rather more complicated system whereby each district has its 'mother' at the Head Kraal, through whom reports are made and actions brought. Where a person in one district has a case at the Head Kraal against some one in another district, the 'mother' of the complainant's district will approach the 'mother' of defendant's district to call his 'children' to the court, and various payments are connected with the system. Most of the important men living at or near the Head Kraal are such 'mothers', many having more than one district in their charge. 576 694

Family and Clan. There is among Lowveld Sotho no term distinguishing the father's from the mother's side of the family, the word *malala* being used to denote all relatives whether on the father's side or the mother's; and in practice, whether at weddings or at working parties, both sets of relatives play an equally important, if sometimes different, part. A man inherits his totem and family name from his father, but in his education and social life his mother's people have great influence. Most children spend some years of their life with the 601 611 855

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morning assaulted him, but was worsted; the offender then reported his wound at the capital. A *lekwale* was sent to collect the blood fine from the district head, but, not finding him, left a message summoning him to the *khwo*. There the case was discussed with only *initiates* of the *gumme* present. The men could not decide upon their course of action. They said, 'Let no one be angry. The district head did right, but we cannot carry out the law of the "school" (the men who reveals the *digume* secrets must die). We cannot even impose a fine; no one knows what the fine should be. Let the matter rest.'

Khashani, working on a European farm, called his wife, whose baby was ill, to come to him. The baby died and Khashani, seeing 'medicine' on the fireplace, suspected and severely beat his sister's daughter as well as his sister. The case came to the *khwo* of the queen, which pointed out that *if*, as Khashani thought, his sister was a witch, he also probably was one. This did not satisfy Khashani, but his sister demanded back her cattle, and the *khwo*, attempting to isolate the struggle, said, 'We are discussing the "blood". You, Khashani, must pay your sister one head of cattle.' Khashani replied, 'That I agree to do. I shall even drive away my wife, so that I can return my sister's cattle.' The *khwo* was not much perturbed, since it thought that Khashani's threat was either bluff or the raving of a madman.

In the last case it was the victim, not the queen, who was awarded the head of cattle. The argument sometimes used by Lovedu men against such an award is better known in other tribes: it is that, if the victim is benefited, all he need do to become rich is to provoke others to fight him. And the theory held by those advancing this argument is that to spill blood is 'to break the queen's calabash', and therefore 'blood' cases must be submitted to the *khwo*. This is the view gaining ground, so that *mukwale*, going to collect the blood fine, become messengers summoning the parties to the queen's *khwo*, without, however, ignoring the position of the district heads. The whole procedure is in a state of flux, but we can see in outline how the blood feud has gradually receded as the kin groups become submerged by the district organization and how, as a consequence, the procedure of reconciliation gained so firm a hold that it maintains its stand against the forces making for centralization.

Not long ago the procedure appropriate to cases of witchcraft and sorcery was the ordeal (*mawu*); and though the *mawu* has given way in Uulowedu to smelling out by the diviner (*magwa*), it can still be seen further east among the Phalaborwa. The test takes various forms: drinking poison, usually an extract of *mawawa* (*Datura stramonium*), licking a medicated stick or a heated hoe, removing a stone from boiling water, floating the kernels of *magwati* (*Oncoba spinosa*) in water and observing whether they separate or come together, sometimes accompanied by an oath or followed by the washing of hands or the squirting of water (*ku phasa*). All these are well-known in the lowveld, though the Lovedu used only or chiefly the first; but on the highveld, where witchcraft and sorcery are treated as private matters, there is no legal but only a magical method of dealing with them: the evil is sent back by a doctor privately employed by the victim. The Lovedu no longer rely upon the *mawu*,

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695 because it involves too great publicity and danger of European interven-
683 tion, though they say, perhaps by way of rationalization, that the doctor
754 of the ordeal could manipulate the test. As this procedure is merely of theoretical interest, we need refer only to its salient features.

The victim or his relative privately consulted a bone-throwing doctor, whose verdict he had confirmed by perhaps two or more other doctors before he or an intermediary on his behalf made a public accusation. The ordeal or test took place at the capital and was public. Lineal relatives of accuser and accused or, according to some, two strong men chosen by them, were given an intoxicating drink by the official 'doctor of the ordeal', the spectators watching to ensure that equal quantities were administered. Those who had drunk were put in the sun and he who began moving about or became dizzy, drunken, or incoherent was in the wrong. The witch was usually executed at once, at the orders of the queen, being strangled at the river; but if she was a woman, one of the executioners first had sexual intercourse with her; and the body, tied to a weight, was sunk into the water to be eaten by animals. But the witch was sometimes delivered to the victim to undo his evil work (*ku ma lwalo*), and if the illness left the victim the witch was released. Sometimes, also, suspected witches were beaten, tied up (nowadays, as we have seen, handcuffed and submitted to ridicule and abuse), and left without food or tortured with velvet stinging-beans until they confessed; this was sometimes done privately, and it was possible also to kill them without the public ordeal, the killing being reported to the queen; but usually they were merely banished.

683 The property of a witch who was killed was not all confiscated, but
754 *hana*, consisting chiefly of his cattle, was taken by the queen for division between herself and her nobles. No one else could appropriate *hana*; even the village head, if he did so, was regarded as a thief. The witch's gardens reverted to the district head, the crops were taken, not by the queen, because she could not eat the 'fruit of the witch', but by the messengers of the queen, for they were so busy in her service that they could hardly cultivate their fields. Residents in the district surreptitiously during the night took the witch's crops, but it was regarded as disgraceful to do so openly during the day. The wife of a witch was taken by a classificatory brother, and his children were adopted by the queen, who received *mayenalo* when she married the girls to her nobles (in more recent times, to commoners, because the girls often deserted). In the days of the kings, all the relatives, or, as some say, only those on the mother's side—the mother's uterine brothers and sisters especially—were killed. The queens had only a uterine brother or sister killed if they failed to leave the country. The witch, unlike a murderer, could not find sanctuary in the forest of Deje; and only a witch's, not a murderer's, property was *hana*—confiscable property.

787 Since the beginning of this century submission of issues to ordeal has
695 been replaced by their submission to the smelling-out diviner (*mugwa*).
[177] The institution of the *mugwa* has been borrowed from the Shangaan-Tonga and its whole complicated legal procedure is still in a state of flux, adjustments being constantly made especially to avoid European intervention.

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Accusation of a specific person may lead to *khoro* proceedings which involve, as described elsewhere, the appointment of the 'care', who receives a goat or 10s. from each party as well as provisions, a wager of a head of cattle, or £1 10s. or more, and payment, the vanquished eventually to reimburse the victor, of £1 10s. or more, as the fee of the *magwau*. Occasionally in practice, if accused does not demand to have his innocence proved, the accuser does not go to court and the matter is left. All victims of witchcraft do not act in the same manner. One man proceeds to a specific accusation the very first time he is harmed, another only if the same witch has been responsible for many evils; if the witch is a great rival or personal enemy, the victim more readily resorts to action, but a commoner, unless he is prepared to leave the district, will be careful to avoid accusing his district head or a relative of the queen. A victim never makes an accusation without previous private consultation with a number of doctors and often even a *magwau* as well, and the accusation is conveyed to the witch, either directly by the victim or indirectly by his intermediary, and usually in metaphorical language. In case of illness, the witch may be invited to 'come and *phase* for our patient' or, in case of death, to 'come and shave us', duties which only special relatives can perform; or, more directly, he may be asked 'to come with us to consult the bones'. The accused will then demand to go to a *magwau* to clear his name; if he does nothing, but merely remains inactive, his accuser may proceed further and take the case to the *khoro*.

When proceeding to a smeller-out, the parties have no definite destination. They set out in a north-easterly direction, where *magwau* abound, usually with the intention of going somewhere very far away. After a day or two, however, they grow tired, or the official witness complains of the heat, and they find some one nearer. The witness has on his person an object called *phitho* that has been given to him by the court or at the royal village. This the smeller-out has to name and find, and it is said that, unless, in addition, he is able to give the totem of every one in the party and clearly to distinguish between accuser, accused, and official witness, they will pass on to some one else. How far this is carried out in practice we shall see later. It is sometimes said by Europeans that smellers-out have spies who bring them the information necessary for their divining. This would, however, be impossible: not only do people come from all directions or tribes, sometimes as far distant as Mapulanong beyond the Olifants River, but it would require an elaborate system of espionage that could hardly be kept secret from the people in the conditions that obtain in Bantu society. Moreover, the methods employed by smellers-out make such a system unnecessary. There is no doubt that *magwau* are clever, and we have ourselves been amazed at the manner in which, under test conditions, a *magwau* was able to name and find an object hidden on our person. But it must be borne in mind that they use a trial-and-error technique based upon the responses of the audience. Of course, the presence of a European is always a disturbing factor, but in our experience, after the first few responses, the *magwau* begins to speak more and more loudly and quickly and a situation of free association of ideas and great suggestiveness arises. The consultants

[Accusation of witchcraft, see Gl. 116, pp. 883–8. — Analysis]

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become less guarded and the *magwa*, skilled in his art, is able to draw conclusions from their reactions. A good deal of vagueness is permissible: the term *mukhulaga*, for example, can refer to a number of different totems: *mukhulaga* proper, *mukhulaga mawyai*, *mukhulaga ɓw* (elephant), and this applies also to other aspects of their divination. An actual example, albeit a case of theft, not witchcraft, will elucidate the methods employed. 754 683 787

Mudana accused Bodile, his half-brother's son, of stealing £9. The case had been tried first at home, and then at the Native Commissioner's, where it had been dismissed owing to insufficient evidence. The parties decided to go to a smeller-out. On the second day of their journey, when they were resting under a tree to enable the official witness to take off his jacket, a small boy standing some way off said to them, 'There is a *magwa* over there.' He was a decoy watching the road to direct people to a diviner who had lately arrived and set up a temporary village of rough huts. Deciding that it was too hot to go further, the party followed the boy and sat down outside the village fence. A man approached them and, after ascertaining how much money they had to offer, showed them into an enclosure of old sacks. At the entrance stood the diviner himself, holding a stick under which the four of them were made to pass in single file. Diviners are said quite frequently to test their clients in some such manner; sometimes they are made to jump over a furrow and it is said the guilty man usually falls in. 787

When they had seated themselves on the ground, the diviner asked first of all for his money. The official witness handed him £1 5s., but he insisted on 10s. more, because, he said, it was a difficult case—one that had been much tried in other courts. Stick in hand, but without the use of any divining bones, the diviner began asking the party to respond (*ba vuma*). '*Ya vuma*,' they replied, and he proceeded with his chanting in a mixture of Sotho and Shangaan-Tonga in sing-song phrases, at the end of which the clients had to assent. 'You have come from home on a matter', he began. Pointing to the official witness, he said, 'You have accused this boy (pointing to Bodile) of witchcraft. No. I'm making a mistake on purpose. You have not come for this reason.' Looking into a large shell, he continued, 'You have come on a different errand. You have come about money. The sum concerned is £30. No. It is £15. No. It is £10. The owner of the money sells hemp.' Continuing in this manner in short phrases, to which the party responded '*Ya vuma*,' and, suggesting first this, then that, he eventually said, 'I don't like to cause brothers by the same father to fight. Your quarrel is a vain one. The money was stolen by a woman of the Crocodile totem living near your village. She has not yet used the money.' Pointing to Bodile, he said, 'You, why do you want to kill him [Mudana], and you [Mudana] be careful. They may kill you with medicines they have just bought.' Turning to the official witness, he demanded, 'Give me my *phiriho* (hidden object). What kind of thing is this which is hidden from me?' It is a snuff-box. No. It is a half-crown. No. It is a penny. No. It is European iron. If you think I am telling lies, take out of your left-hand pocket the thing which you have been given.' The official witness took out of

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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the *nuglaru* institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of completely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the purposes of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suckling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried people who have their lovers (*nuglaru*). Nevertheless, a European finds it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grandmothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our preferences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should as often as not be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the *syuli*) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Tongas. The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men, but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy and was proudly worn by her younger sister; if not, the girl's people had to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. Girls are still examined, especially at the *khobe*, but the matter is private; and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sins of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*ghrt* or *vulurgk* *nya* *nuandi*). A man gets *ghrt* from intercourse with a woman who has had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death from *ghrt* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter.

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578 unmanageable complication arises, unless there is agreement between all the persons interested: the son to whom the cattle should have been allotted, the daughter from whose marriage they came, the house established by these cattle, and the father himself. Tensions arise in many other ways: neglect of one wife and favouritism of another in respect of economic services, interference with the independence of the houses, and so on. Unwillingness to co-operate in the home and in fulfilling the wider group obligations is a more potent cause of trouble than adultery; and witchcraft, except as a symptom of tensions otherwise created, takes a minor place; and neither adultery nor witchcraft as such can snap the *mungwalo* bonds.

426 595 684 The character of these tensions may be briefly illustrated by the case of Muvirwa and Mara. Faced with starvation, Mara obtained cattle from Muvirwa (who was a friend, not a relative), promising, in accordance with the 'mud-stamper' institution, a daughter in exchange. In fact, this daughter, the little 'mud-stamper', as she is called, because she is too young to stamp mealies, was not yet in existence. That is not unusual in these transactions, which require that the 'mud-stamper' shall in due course be given gratuitously to the benefactor; and thereby the two lineages become cattle-linked, so that, for instance, Mara and his descendants would have to offer brides and receive cattle and Muvirwa and his descendants would offer cattle and receive brides. If Mara had no brides to offer, Muvirwa would still have to give cattle; otherwise the link might be broken. The 'mud-stamper', after reaching years of discretion, may dislike the benefactor, who is usually already old and decrepit, and that may lead to conflicts. In this instance, when Mara's daughter entered her *Akobe* initiation, Muvirwa, as is customary, paid the *lewale* goat, for a bridegroom for whom a bride is 'born' must, so to speak, nurse her and 'grow' her. Not long afterwards the 'mud-stamper' died. Mara offered another daughter and, as the girl had died before actual marriage, no further *mungwalo* was required from Muvirwa. But the substitute, having grown up, married and then deserted Muvirwa, who was already very old; she ran away to a lover, Mara himself conniving at the desertion. Mara returned some cattle to Muvirwa, thereby severing the relationship, and promised the balance when the lover had paid *mungwalo*.

684 Years passed and nothing happened. Muvirwa eventually brought an action, which Magaobia, Mara's wife, contested. She said that on the death of the 'mud-stamper' she had offered to return the cattle, but this was refused, that the substitute was forced to marry Muvirwa against her will, and that the religious ceremony was omitted. Muvirwa replied that he had already received seventeen of the twenty-four cattle (the number to which the original eight had increased), that it was thus not he who had broken the relationship, and that the religious ceremony, which for various reasons could not be held in Mara's village, had taken place at the village of Magaobia's brother. The court could not but side with Mara, but it tried hard to reduce his claim, for twenty-four cattle, it said, were an enormous number. Then recriminations broke out between Mara and his wife, which revealed a many-sided conflict in the

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family. 'That woman,' said Mara, indicating his wife, 'took her daughter from Muoirwa and gave her to the lover because I had eaten four of Muoirwa's cattle. Two of them I gave to a son of another house to help him marry and two I sold for food. My wife disagreed and deserted me. Now the lover has given seven cattle to my wife. She can pay Muoirwa with them. As for me, I wash my hands of the whole matter, because my wife has deserted me.' But Magaebia replied, 'It is you who, seeing the seven cattle arrive, urged me and my daughters to marry a wife with them. They refused and the cattle have died.' The court, realizing the nature of the conflict, said, 'We see that you, Mara, were planning things to your own advantage. But you have already paid many cattle. It will be enough, if Muoirwa agrees, that you give him four more cattle, to show that you are weeping with him, for he has lost a wife (the 'mud-stamper' who died). If you do so, we shall know that you are not bad people. As for the disagreement between you and your wife, the discussion where to get the four cattle may bring you together again. Go home and decide the matter between yourselves.' The court was right. Mara had another daughter from whose marriage he was receiving cattle and he had thought of using the cattle for himself, as the daughter, siding with her mother, had also deserted him. That would have led to further complications. It was better to give way and arrange amicably with his wife how the future claims of her house should be settled. And once this was done, the cause of the conflict disappeared.

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881 established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on either
794 side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dzimo* or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, wailing manner.

794 An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tendency for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools, to set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where they are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they are a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Highveld have no *Asomasa*; but a Narene man who has come to live in the area has brought *Asomasa* drums and holds schools to which many Dikxale go.

836 Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowveld
837 tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa in having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved of by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adultery, which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in any way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widows, especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even though
•[694] they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attached to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness is better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where there is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act will
[195] send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the bare word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepted.
[694] Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adultery, with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head of cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more than a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in the fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the parties concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a boy whose people they do not consider suitable.

582 Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution of
[71] preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu-Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully 40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with the

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in effective check the tendency for people to move away after every 361
quarrel or accusation of witchcraft, villages were not only appreciably 171
larger than to-day but also somewhat differently arranged, with both courtyard and cattle-kraal in the centre. Wherever possible the Sotho build on mountains, which are covered with a rich, loamy soil well suited to cultivation, are less fever-ridden than the valleys, and in the old days afforded better protection against enemies. Indeed, it is not until recent times that the valleys have been opened up even for agriculture. Within the village each married woman generally has [592]
two huts, kitchen- and sleeping-hut, while one or more fenced-in sections near the hedge are devoted to the storage of mealies on the cob and beer-making activities.

Tribal Economy. The tribes of the Lowveld are predominantly 241
agricultural, possessing on the whole few cattle. Milk, which many 231
adults find nauseating, plays a very minor part in their diet, milk taboos [262]
are unknown while the meat sacrifice is rare, beer taking its place. As among Venda and the Sotho of the Highveld, women are not as strictly excluded from contact with cattle as among the Nguni; not [462]
only is it common for girls to herd cattle in the absence of boys in town or at the circumcision school, but many women also possess cattle in their own right. While it would be impossible here to give 241
a full account of Lowveld agriculture, it is of interest to enumerate some of its more salient aspects. Men take a considerable part in agricultural activities, every married man having one large field for which he is responsible. But while women plant every kind of crop, men grow and reap only mealies, grain crops, and sugar-cane; pumpkins, beans, ground- and monkey-nuts, &c., are considered as purely a woman's concern. In our area, as elsewhere, these crops are mostly planted together in the same field, mealies predominating in some parts, kaffir-corn or millet being the chief crop in others. Partly as a result of congestion and partly in order to take advantage of differential climatic conditions as between mountain and valley, fields of any one family are generally very widely scattered, being sometimes as much as ten miles apart. Recognition of the food value of various wild fruit [685]
trees, such as the morula and wild fig, is shown by the fines attached to cutting them without special permission. An interesting feature

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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the 643
people. Khashani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as 578
well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugɔdɔ, 173
which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugɔdɔ was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwareni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by 643
them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by 644
an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong [877]
social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much 643
stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in 578
doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and 877
her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely 644
expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled

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643 to join him in exile. The conflict was so serious that the tribe seethed
578 with disaffection, though the queen seemed to be torn between love for
687 her daughter and disapproval of the whole episode. The present conflict
644 is in many respects typical. There is, as there used to be in the past, strife between the old councillors, who lose their power when the old queen dies, and the new councillors, who side with the new queen. The latter gradually supplant the former, but regard with fear the day when the friends of the heir in turn will oust them. This struggle is very real, and seems to reflect a more fundamental conflict; for the exalted purpose of the royal institutions exacts an unnatural sacrifice by the queen in order to make way for the heir she naturally loves.

643 The whole royal complex is perfectly logical once it is granted that there
644 must be queens, that succession is uncertain, and that ritual suicide is the guarantee of the chief's divinity. In a society in which the 'sister' (*khadi*) is priestess, her great religious role, still seen to-day among neighbouring tribes where chiefs are males, falls to the queen among the Lovedu. The ideal, imperfectly actualized since queens replaced kings, still persists that the *khadi* of the chief should have power and be given a large district to rule. In theory the brother of the chief is the great councillor, general, and judge. But in practice the complications set up by having queens throws these arrangements out of gear. True to pattern, the greatest district head is to-day a woman, who is a 'sister' to the queen and, though a 'sister' threefold (through mother, legal father, and paternal uncle), she is not the uterine or ritual 'sister'. At present the relatives through the queen's mother, not through Mujaji II her legal father, are important councillors, but it is not unlikely that in the next reign the great councillors will be the present heir's relatives through her legal father, the queen, who is also her physiological mother.

642 Owing to the inapplicability of the term 'council' to Lovedu arrange-
643 ments, we need say only a few words on this subject. There is no need
644 of a visible organization to support Lovedu court life, which is ceremonious, but not politically oriented. Power and authority derive from the queen's divine appointment, her exclusive secret of rain-making, and her strategic position in the social web. She is neither a military nor a political leader; she does not even have a priesthood organization to assist her in her function as high-priest. There are confidential advisers, but they neither constitute the more or less definite secret council (*ephiri*) of some neighbouring tribes nor necessarily function as political councillors; on the contrary the former, having assisted in the accession of the queen, are in institutional conflict with the latter, who later gain political control. The councillors represent the assertion of power by the rising generation of men in the sphere of law and politics as against women and the older generation in ritual, religion, and the social system. They are part mainly of the court (*khwe*) and the tribal gathering (*khotji*), two indeterminate bodies.

644 Confidential advisers are mainly important district heads; councillors
643 are always residents in the capital. Both are relatives, but, in the case of
644 the confidants, not necessarily close relatives of the queen. In the inner royal circle, the closest kin are necessarily those reckoned through the

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696 The procedure to-day involved in witchcraft cases can be set into motion and those cases may be settled by district heads. In short, set rules as to competence do not exist and district heads are left to cope with as much as they can manage.

576 627 561 A brief discussion of some quasi-judicial processes will enable us to appreciate better, as it will introduce us to the procedure and spirit of the *khoro*. Firstly, there is the method by which especially old women deal with disrespectful or insulting behaviour of younger women. Should one or more young women play a practical joke upon or be disrespectful to an old woman, or playfully 'dance' an infant child, even their own, or prematurely try to make it sit up or walk or scold or beat it, in the presence of the grandmother or of an old woman, their behaviour is regarded as insulting. The conception is that old women in their role as midwives, rather than young mothers, have brought children into the world and the old, not the young, are the guardians of the babes. If one young woman arrogates to herself rights and privileges which belong to the old women, the latter are entitled to take suitable action. The insulted old woman reports to a few of her age-mates and in consultation they decide to punish the age-mates of the young woman resident in the same territorial unit—for example, a district. There is neither 'trial' nor tribunal. The punishment consists of three elements: the age-mates of the young women (say all those who have one baby) must brew beer with which to effect a reconciliation with the older women; in a rite accompanying the beer drink and resembling that used at initiations, the oldest woman cases her immediate junior, who in turn cases the next, and so on, including the culprits; and, finally, the culprits are read a lesson as to the iniquity of being disrespectful to their elders.

One day three young married women, in circumstances that implied disrespect, sent three old women a tiny quantity of snuff. The older women immediately fined the younger and vicariously all their age-mates living in the Christian settlement, for they were all residents there. They were told to grind snuff and restitute their wrong with beer. Five days later the twelve young married women of the settlement came to the house of the oldest woman, bringing large quantities of nuts, light beer, pumpkins, and other food; their husbands, in addition, sent a large tin of snuff and these 'gifts' were divided amongst the old women. Then followed the rite and the warning. On another occasion all the young mothers of a district were fined because one of them had 'danced' its baby in the presence of its grandmother. Likewise, it is said, though we have not seen a case, that the old women may fine a young father and his age-mates, if he forgets their privileges in regard to babies. But we cannot speak of regimental courts, the age-grades are not determined by the 'schools', the responsibility is territorial, and the punishment is 'beer of reconciliation' (largely replaced by food among Christians).

627 691 The second procedure, that called *ho lokwetsha* (to beg pardon, to reconcile), has an enormous province and a profound significance, not only for legal arrangements, but in the whole culture. The procedure uses a mediaman, the emissary who intervenes on behalf of one of the parties to beg the pardon of the other. Its essence is not humiliation of

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the one, but bilateral reconciliation: thus people often talk of *ku khumc-* 627
jana, to beg pardon of one another, to become reconciled. If A., to whom 691
B. has lent her pot, breaks it, A. should send an old woman as conciliator (*makhumadi*) to express regret and to ask forgiveness. But the *makhumadi* figures in every conceivable kind of case, whether or not amenable to the courts: in homicide and adultery settled out of the *khoro*; in breaches of etiquette, such as bad behaviour of a bridegroom on his courtship visits, which cannot be submitted to the *khoro*; in disputes already before the *khoro*. It is not necessarily the wrongdoer, objectively considered, who should initiate the procedure: an illtreated wife who runs away to her parents must be sent back with a *makhumadi*. Nor will the *khoro* necessarily order the guilty party to *khumcluse*: he who must beg pardon is the junior, or the person of inferior rank.

The great province of *ku khumcluse* is in family and kinship disputes, only a small proportion of which ever reach the *khoro*. The group of people concerned as a family council is determined by cultural arrangements. A quarrel between a father and son of one of his wives is the immediate concern of that house alone; no one else, not even the father's brother or a co-wife, may intervene; but the cattle-linked sister who built the house with her cattle presides and 'cuts' the case. A brother of that sister may be called in, but it is not necessary, and in any case he may only advise if his opinion is asked. If the matter concerns a wider circle, others may be called in; it is impossible to lay down general rules, since on the one hand, each cultural complex (e.g. marriage or inheritance) implies a different set of interested persons and, on the other, each case has its peculiar aspects. The marriage of the daughter of a house is, as regards its obligation to a cattle-linked house, the concern primarily of that house, but if the daughter is to be married to a stranger the mistress of the cattle-linked house must be consulted. If co-wives quarrel, their differences are the concern of the houses concerned, but if one of the wives has bewitched the other, the husband is a mere spectator as regards the arrangements that may be made between the parents of the co-wives; and even in a *khoro* case, it is not the husband, but the parents who are the parties who may be ordered to *khumcjana*.

Ku khumcjana may be likened to compounding a wrong, but it clearly has much deeper significance: it may be ordered by the *khoro*, alone or in addition to restitution; and it is quite irrelevant whether the wrong is amenable to the court. There is no wrong that cannot be submitted to this procedure. Though theoretically 'A dog which eats another cannot grow fat' (*i.e.* a murderer must always be killed), *ku khumcluse* is in practice always possible, for 'He who kills another kills his brother-in-law' (*i.e.* if the victim's kin agree, the homicide may be made good by a full *mongwado* or a daughter or sister). In modern practice, most interesting cases have arisen. In one case some years ago the murderer, who had killed his victim for medicine, a heinous crime, offered his sister in marriage to the victim's elder brother; the investigation by the European authorities failed; and to-day there is a child of the marriage, and permanent links between victim and murderer because, on the pattern of

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bride and cattle exchanges, they have become cattle-linked kin. The handing over of a bride or of *mawyusis* may supplement the supposedly inadequate punishment meted out by European courts, or *ex in* substitution for the penalty such courts would have imposed if the parties had given away the facts. There is no payment to the queen, no trial, only *ku khumbuse*. The bride is not returned, as is reported in the case of other tribes, when she has borne a child in the lineage of the victim. In 1938, when the sons of A. and B. were herding together, A.'s son pushed a large rock which rolled over and accidentally killed B.'s son. A. sent a *mukhomadi*, but B. refused to accept a mere apology; he wanted 'something to wipe away his tears'. Eventually he accepted four head of cattle, which were brought to the *khwe* of the district head and there handed to him. A little later A. demanded back his cattle, saying that he had lost too much and hoping that publicity would frighten B.; but A.'s object was defeated by a device which we cannot describe here except to say that it was as cunning as it was effective.

Ku khumbuse is the predominant procedure in the districts, and everywhere it is considered especially appropriate to adultery, damage to crops, and 'blood' cases or bodily assaults; it is often the only permissible procedure in family disputes; and it is praiseworthy in theft cases. It may involve an elaborate series of acts, to some features of which we may refer. In one case a wife had committed adultery, and when the husband, after the birth of the child, had discovered the identity of the adulterer, he sent his wife to him. The adulterer, as is customary when he admits his wrong, sent the wife back with the 'goat of [illicit] meeting one another', which he had borrowed from a neighbour. The goat was killed and the husband gave his erring wife the back leg, the portion that really belonged to him, which was an unusual humiliation. The wife went to an old woman, who took her back to beg pardon on behalf of the wife and to say that the adulterer would later send a cow with his own *mukhomadi*. The procedure in adultery or seduction is not rigid, but essentially the injured husband or the father sends a messenger to adulterer or seducer, who, if he admits the accusation, sends back his *mukhomadi* with an offer of settlement; negotiations may continue for some time and the culprit may be let off lightly, in many cases only a goat being exacted, though, to avoid publicity, more than the usual compensation may be paid. In 'blood' cases *ku khumbuse* strikingly benefits both assailant and victim. In theft, the offender must offer the thing stolen plus a goat or even a head of cattle 'of causing [the thing] to come back'. Mudiwa, living at the capital, one day found that some of his pumpkins had been stolen in a field at Khikhudini. A little later he met a woman who, caught with some pumpkin leaves as she came from the field, admitted her guilt. Mudiwa reported to the district head at Khikhudini, who arranged that the parties met him at the woman's home to discuss the matter. There she offered a pig as pardon. Mudiwa accepted, told her to sell the pig and give him 10s. The proceedings were more or less private, those present being only Mudiwa, the woman and a relative or two, and the district head, in the role technically as judge, but really as *mukhomadi*. If the matter had been between residents of the same district, the intervention

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of the district head would have been unnecessary; but very frequently he acts as stakeholder in these cases. 627 691

Ho khomelwa is the only proper initial procedure in cases of damage to crops. The owner of the cattle is called to see the damage, begs pardon with a goat, and is told to strengthen his cattle kraal. If depredations continue, he may be taken to the *khoro*. To omit the preliminary procedure of *ho khomelwa* is not necessarily fatal, but is regarded as being revengeful and nothing is abhorred more than revenge. If the man whose crops are damaged refuses reconciliation and makes the owner of the cattle 'pay' instead of allowing *ho khomelwa*, the owner will, it is said, seek an opportunity to revenge himself, and the saying that applies is: 'It is the blow that follows, not the first blow, that hurts.' The saying is, however, of general application and is invoked in regard to any injury or wrong. Practice differs in the various districts as regards *ho khomelwa* for damage to crops, and when a man is resident in one district and has his fields in another, very interesting conflicts of jurisdiction and law sometimes occur, but we cannot stop to consider them.

After formal complaint—that is, after a case is 'in the *khoro*'—*ho khomelwa* may, according to the circumstances, either end the matter or be treated as a confession of guilt (*dumo molodo*) by plaintiff or *khoro*. *Dumo molodo* is a term used also outside the *khoro*. If the owner of cattle continues to be careless after several warnings, he may find that his goat of reconciliation will be regarded, not as a goat of begging pardon, but as a confession of guilt, and the victim will exact what he considers to be the real damage. To accept pardon stops *khoro* proceedings, and if after *dumo molodo* the culprit makes good what the victim demands there also can be no *khoro* trial; but if he does not, the offer of pardon is a confession, not conceived as having been made without prejudice, but admissible in evidence. More often *dumo molodo* refers to a goat which the defendant offers in the *khoro* in settlement and apology. The circumstances, especially the attitude of the plaintiff and the previous history of the case, will then determine whether the matter ends there. The *khoro* may say, 'This is your *dumo molodo*; now pay the ox which in our [or the plaintiff's] opinion fits the offence.'

Examples of *dumo molodo* are difficult to give as a long history is involved and, to understand them, we should have to refer to details of the culture which are not dealt with in this book. But it may be possible to simplify for presentation here the case of *Mabula* v. *Magwaba*, though it lasted six months in the *khoro* of the capital alone. These two women were co-wives of Khidai and were entangled in one of those polygons of *jealousies* arising in polygyny which are the counterpart of the eternal triangles of our monogamy. The co-wives quarrelled and fought about their extra-marital lovers, and Magwaba bit Mabula on the lip. When the wound refused to yield to treatment it was said to be due to the 'bad teeth' of Magwaba, who, it was suspected, must be a *lesheqa*, a person who had been allowed to live though her upper teeth had appeared before the lower. Having vainly appealed to her husband to order Magwaba's teeth to be scraped for medicine, Mabula complained to her parents. After much manœuvring in order to avoid being drawn into the conflict, 197 [326]

627 the mother and the brother of Mabula went to the parents of Magutsha,
691 who, however, refused to allow the scraping of their daughter's teeth on the grounds that it implied that they were witches.

When the matter came before the *khoro*, the view was taken that, 'If a dog bites you and the wound festers, it is not wrong to ask the owner for a hair from its tail': you are not imputing witchcraft and it does not matter that the hair or scrapings may have no healing virtues, the important matter being willingness to help. Many side issues emerged, especially as to whose responsibility was the scraping of the teeth: the husband's or the parent's. Once Mukugubi, Magutsha's father, by escaping from his village, evaded the attempt made by Mabula's elder sister to scrape Magutsha's teeth. There were at times recriminations in the *khoro*, which showed that the *mayumulo* links were about to be broken. 'If you no longer care for us,' said Mukugubi, 'I shall pay Mabula's parents'; but Khidai replied, 'What kind of ill-bred woman is that daughter of yours, who is pregnant by a lover, and swears at me by the things inside my trousers. My cattle have provided wives for two of your sons and only I of all your sons-in-law have "gone" in your village.' An old man interjected, 'The jealousies of the child are settled by its parents. Khidai is not responsible. You, Mukugubi, must *khomelwa*.' A week later Mukugubi offered a goat of reconciliation. But the *khoro* said, 'No. This goat is *dawa mulude*. We now want you to bring an ox, because the father of Mabula has come to you often to ask you to *khomelwa* and you refused.' And the father added, 'Yes, I came also to the *khoro* (a distance of eight miles) for eighteen weeks, but you did not turn up. Can I "work" eighteen weeks for merely a goat?'

Mukugubi consented to pay, but urged that he had a case against Khidai, who should have prevented the drawn-out proceedings by settling it. That was another matter, said the court, for 'The kidneys of an elephant cannot be harvested together' (they are, like two cases, too weighty to be dealt with at the same time). We may doubt whether it was wise, in view of the polygon of conflicts, to treat as *dawa mulude* the goat offered in reconciliation, but in these matters the *khoro* is generally wiser than we are.

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The *khoro* is the final safeguard of the *munyualo* system and, through that system, of the intricate social structure. It also deals with witchcraft, theft, assault, adultery, and other disputes; but its province in witchcraft and sorcery is limited and has only recently developed, theft and adultery do not lend themselves to its genius, and other cases are primarily to be settled by *ku khumchua*. Of all disputes coming before the *khoro*, 76 per cent. are *munyualo* cases, but if we consider only the disputes that are really submitted to trial and not merely for confirmation or registration of a decision otherwise reached, the percentage rises to 88. Yet the chief subject of litigation is *munyualo* only if we ignore completely the conflicts that are settled by *ku khumchua* or in the family. In our opinion, though by the nature of the case the evidence can never be complete, these latter cases outnumber *khoro* cases to the same extent as *munyualo* cases outnumber all other cases of the *khoro*. 692 691

Of the many implications of these facts, we shall refer merely to two First of all, contrary to what is often stated concerning the Bantu, it is not that most conflicts in the society arise from *munyualo*, but that, of the disputes having, as we phrase it, legal consequences, none are more in evidence than *munyualo* tangles. But as the *khoro* is really a *munyualo* court, we cannot argue from the litigation we find in it to the general nature of the conflicts in the society. The error is somewhat like concluding from cases coming before special divorce courts among us, that marital disputes are the main causes of dissension in our society. *Khoro* proceedings are essentially *munyualo* proceedings because the complex *munyualo* system, and the safeguarding of its intricate reciprocities, can adequately be entrusted, not to private arrangements, but to an imposing public organization. The stresses and strains in the system are not only of a personal but of an institutional nature, involving the integration of diverse elements in the social structure. Compromises affect individuals as well as larger groups and their interrelations, and, for the solutions required, the society needs the wide perspective and wisdom of a trained body of men. They have to adjust personal difficulties, but in the context of an intricate system that is easily thrown out of gear. Herein also lies the special genius of the *khoro*.

Secondly, legal arrangements appear to be made and controlled by men, but that is because we identify law with the *khoro*, the place of the men. In *ku khumchua* women are at least as important as men, and in family disputes no one occupies so pivotal a position as the cattle-linked sister, the legal 'builder' of most houses in the country, she who 'cuts' cases arising within the house and regulates the inheritance of goods and of widows. These 'judicial'-like activities cover vast provinces of the total culture, and they are fully recognized in *khoro* proceedings in which neither in arriving at a decision nor in safeguarding its execution can the men ignore the wishes, authority, or influence of the sister. In complicated cases, they often postpone their decision again and again until she 692 562

[See cit. 582 + 583 -- Analysis]

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CHAPTER IX

MARRIAGE AND THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Mate selection and marriage exchanges as reflections of the social structure—social and psychological aspects of nuptial rites—the handling of the themes of sex and concubinage, of barrenness and premature death in the marriage situation.

FROM mummeries and masks we turn to marriage and *manyusalo* (bride-price). The secrecy of the *digwa* contrasts strangely with the publicity of marriage ceremonial; but they are both cultural devices for dealing with cultural problems. The hidden forces in nature and man are intractable and can be brought under control only by rephrasing them as mysteries, the fear of which is overcome by man-made initiations and cults. Marriage is also an initiation, but its complicated ceremonial is concerned chiefly with laying the concrete foundations of the social structure. This is a gigantic and delicate task, almost beyond the capacity of the culture. Fortunately, we can see more clearly than in the case of the *digwa* how this task has been accomplished, but unfortunately we shall have space merely to glance at the larger features instead of examining closely the exquisite workmanship and superlative ornamentation.

It is not easy to appreciate the immense implications of marriage among the Lovedu. For one thing, the concomitant cattle exchanges transform it into something wholly unlike the contract between two individuals of different sex among us. The fact that a Lovedu woman may, just like a man, marry a wife, warns us that we are in a world entirely different from our own. The elaborate ceremonial reflects the enormous importance of marriage and of the network of links that are forged by the cattle that pass. The bonds that are created in this manner can be put to all manner of uses. They form the basis of the *manyusalo* ring of exchanges. They hold together the political system, incorporating as they do foreign elements in the tribe, and casting the net of relationship over the whole country. Marriage and *manyusalo* provide the pattern even for dealing with homicide: the murder is not avenged; by handing over cattle or by giving his daughter, the murderer and his relatives become enmeshed in the network of exchanges; he is transformed from criminal to kinsman and a potential blood feud is turned into the reciprocal relations between the people of the bride and those of the groom. A man threatened with starvation when his crops have failed and his cattle have died can, by linking himself to the *manyusalo* ring of another, save both himself and his family.

But the most startling proof of the importance of Lovedu marriage lies therein that the tribunals of the *khoro*—in other words, the organization that corresponds to our legal system—are mainly concerned with marriage and *manyusalo* tangles; the *raison d'être* of the *khoro* and its law appear to be the preservation of the marriage system. The whole genius of *khoro* law and of *khoro* judicial proceedings is the genius of resolving tensions within the gigantic superstructure built upon marriage and its

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581 associated institutions. In these circumstances, it is patently absurd for
182 us to orientate ourselves as if marriage affects only personal relationships
642 between two individuals. To regard marriage as primarily a sexual partnership or even as an institution for promoting the procreation and rearing of children is to misunderstand completely its great role in the social organization.

581 As the main function of marriage is to create and perpetuate alliances
582 between groups of people, sexual or temperamental compatibility between the prospective spouses is not regarded as an ideal. Emphasis on romantic love, and pre-marital sexual experimentation, with a view to testing out compatibility, would be incongruous with the prevailing type of marriage. Mate selection in its ideal form is socially regulated, and the ideal form is the basic pattern of all marriages. The social organization determines whom one shall marry, and the parents, not the individuals concerned, set the machinery of the organization into motion. The ideal marriage is marriage of a man with his mothers' brother's daughter or of a woman with her father's sister's son. This does not mean that all cross-cousins are preferred mates. It is, for instance, considered irregular for a man to marry his father's sister's daughter; that cases of such marriages are found should not surprise us. There are irregularities in every sphere of culture, and the rules of mate selection are particularly liable to be upset because of the complex interrelations that arise in the social system. The fundamental rule is that a man must marry, not the daughter of any brother of his mother, but the daughter of that brother who has used his mother's marriage cattle to obtain a wife for himself. His mother and his mother's brother are cattle-linked sister and brother because, when she married, the cattle that came in were handed to the brother for obtaining a wife: the cattle of the sister *ale* said to 'build a hut for her brother'. We may thus say that a man must marry a daughter of his cattle-linked maternal uncle, and we may call her his 'cattle-linked cross-cousin'.

But the Lovedu phrase the matter rather differently and more significantly. They say that the sister has 'built the house of her brother' (the cattle-linked brother), that therefore she 'has a gate' by which she may enter his house, this gate being 'the gate which the cattle seek', and that it is her right to demand from the 'house built by her cattle' a daughter who must come to her as her daughter-in-law to stamp and cook for her. Note that the right is not phrased as the right of her son to obtain his wife from that house; note further that the right is in respect of the house—that is, of the wife of the cattle-linked brother, not in respect of the brother. That wife is the *mawyi* (returner) of the sister, the person who is obliged to return her daughter to the place whence the cattle came; and it does not matter if in the house of the sister there is no son to marry this daughter. The *mawyi* must send her daughter if requested, and, if cattle are offered, to be the daughter-in-law of her husband's cattle-linked sister, whether that sister has a son or not; for it is the sister's right to be served and helped, especially in her old age, by the daughter of the house which she has established. The ideal is that a girl should not be married to her father's sister's husband or, in

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CHAPTER XI

THE GENIUS OF JURIDICAL ADJUSTMENTS

Conciliation machinery at the capital—quasi-judicial systems of appeasement—reliance in full-dress trials and sanctions upon agreement and compromise—procedure in 'blood' cases—appeals to ordeals and diviners.

692 671 The genius of the Lovedu political system is its network of reciprocities; the genius of the legal system is its procedure of reconciliations and compromises; and both the political and legal systems reflect the main emphases and purposes of the culture. *Khwv* proceedings, the full-dress trials of the Lovedu, stand out conspicuously amid the various judicial arrangements, some of which we may be inclined to call quasi-judicial, but in reality none of our legal terms are appropriate. Their *khwv* is court-like, but it is not a court in our sense of the term; their law is law-like, not the equivalent of our law. All the procedures aim, not at settling legal issues, but at effecting compromises and reconciliations. The *khwv* itself, the most imposing feature of public life and the pinnacle of the cultural edifice, relies, not on force, but on friendly adjustments. It is the courtyard of compromises, not the arena of casuistic contests. It disposes of no sanctions of execution: coercion is incongruous with its purposes. Culture contact has weakened the effectiveness of compromise and thereby has rendered necessary what it denies to the *khwv*—namely, the sanction of force.

692 In this chapter we deal briefly with the organisation of the *khwv* and then touch lightly upon certain quasi-judicial processes. These lead us to cast a passing glance first at *khwv* procedure and thereafter at various other types of procedure which centre, not in the *khwv*, but in other arrangements such as those involved in settling 'blood' cases and in dealing with the deeds of darkness by divination and the ordeal. All these procedures are part of the legal machinery, but they can be understood only as part also of the whole social structure. A comprehensive account of them is out of the question; we have no time even for a glimpse at substantive law.

692 643 The queen is at the head of the *khwv* organisation. She never sits in the *khwv*, for it is the courtyard of the men. But she is always in the background, and in theory all decisions at the capital should be reported to, and confirmed by her. Five years ago, when the queen's uterine brother still lived and was a councillor, this was no formality, but to-day only very serious cases or decisions are submitted for her verdict or confirmation. This divergence from the ideal is due to conflicts, fear of involving the queen with European authorities, and a growing desire to reserve *khwv* affairs to the men. The queen's approval is still sought, always when the dispute involves the position or status of a royal relative, often when a district head expels a subject, and sometimes when a recalcitrant party is to be sent to the Native Commissioner or when one

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of the parties objects to the decision of the *khoro*. It is the queen's prerogative to settle disputes between royal relatives, but she also privately settles differences which, for reasons of public policy or of the prestige of the parties, should not be publicly discussed, and sometimes, to avoid the hardening of transient differences into permanent hostility, even withdraws cases, especially witchcraft cases, from the jurisdiction of the *khoro*. The queen has an unshakable reputation for integrity, and acts independently, if she likes, though often she consults trusted advisers, some of whom at present are not her councillors.

The role of the queen is not unconnected with the institution of 'mothers' of districts. 'Mothers' are appointed by the queen or with her approval, and are usually her relatives, living at the capital and having direct access to her. Generally they report in the first instance to the councillors, especially to the son of the queen's mother's brother, who is the greatest councillor. The office of 'mothers', though hereditary, often changes hands because of its responsibilities and inadequate rewards, the opportunities of favourably placed persons and the requirement of residence at or near the capital. Often a widow, familiar with her husband's arrangements, takes over the position, enlisting the help of a relative, who at her death naturally steps into her shoes. Since the fees received cannot meet the needs of taxpayers, usually only old people are 'mothers', but inability to cope with long journeys forces them to entrust some of their work to available sons or relatives, who in turn may succeed to the position. 'Mothers' are often related to, but may be only fortuitously linked with, the heads of districts under their charge. A foreign chief or headman may be introduced at the capital by a friend or relative or stranger, who thereupon becomes his 'mother'. In 1910, when a colony of settlers from Basutoland came, Madumeli, who had no previous association with them, took the message of their arrival to the queen and henceforth acted as their 'mother'. Independent foreign chiefs also have their 'mothers', who sometimes live far from the capital.

'Mothers' have politico-legal and other functions. They receive their 'children', the district heads or foreign chiefs, and act as intermediaries whenever formal relations with the queen or great councillors are involved. When it is impracticable for a district head to bring beer to the queen, he may send measles, which are deposited at the 'mother's' and there converted into the tributary beer. The arrival of beer from a district is always reported to the 'mother', who receives one calabash. 'Mothers' are the messengers or ambassadors of the queen sent to settle disputes among their 'children' or to represent her, for instance, at the formal installation of a district head. Important links in politics, they are the master links in the legal system. Some 'mothers' supervise the legal interrelations of many districts with the capital. As some districts are far off, eight to ten miles, they may delegate the work, in respect of some districts or of some of its aspects, to others, such as sons, wives, sister's sons, or wife's brothers. Thus Khidima, 'mother' of Maculana, Mazaga, Madumeni, Gobizeni, Mumgududzi, and a European-owned farm, sometimes puts cases coming from the first three districts in the hands of his sister's son, but, since Khidima's own son has reached years

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responded to the order to weed the queen's field, *makhwala* went to collect 693
a fowl from each 'rebel'. They collected seven fowls, because most of the 681
delinquents could offer excuses which showed, to the satisfaction of the *makhwala*, that they had repented. In 1938 Mahubusana complained that the residents of his district despised him. They had successively ignored his order to make *marula* cider first for himself and then for the queen and also to bring the 'money for the petrol of the queen's car'. *Makhwala*, the councillors said, would be sent to exact one goat from every household. Nothing happened. Later Mahubusana brought the five main culprits to the capital and there they were told to pay 5s. each to their district head and to leave the district after having gathered in their harvest. 'You have despised the district head and the queen,' it was said. 'Go, then, and live where there is no chief, for here you worry the queen.' There was no trial; and a year after the 1938 harvest the rebels were still living in the district. *Makhwala* are also sent to exact the fine due in those 'blood' cases that are reported to the queen. Despite apparent exceptions, *makhwala* are not and never were deputed to execute upon a decision of the *khoro*, for the *khoro* is concerned with private delicts, wrongs between individuals who, in the last resort, are left to arrange restitution among themselves.

At the village of each district head there is also a *khoro*, the arrange- 692
ments of which resemble those at the capital; but, of course, there are many variations. Its competence is in practice determined by the presumptions of the district head; and the law it applies is not necessarily the law of the capital. Some district heads, having sub-districts under them, attach 'mothers' and *makhwala* to the *khoro*, but usually these are only messengers for calling defendants. *Khoro* trials are usually held in 695
the district of the defendant, and the messenger or 'mother' is entitled to the 'fee of the feet', but not all district heads charge for 'opening' the *khoro*. The district head may have a special *duna*, often his elder brother, who is entrusted with legal matters and 'presides' in his absence; women who are heads do not appear in the *khoro*, but confirm decisions. Sometimes the district *khoro* is better organized and controlled than that at the capital, there may be regular judges and assessors, the word is 'passed' (*ku nama*) from the junior to the senior members, contempt is strictly dealt with, and so on. But this is unusual, the organization being much more haphazard and the procedure much less regularized. Mostly the district head intervenes at the request of one party to see whether he can effect a reconciliation: he sets out with the plaintiff to the village of the defendant rather than summons the defendant to his *khoro*, or he goes as an intermediary (*makhwaxadi*) of the one party to persuade the other to accept the settlement offered. Full-dress *khoro* trials are often like heated family consultations. *Khoro* cases in which the fine of restitution is a head of cattle must theoretically be reported to the capital, not for confirmation, but for directions as to the disposal of the fine; but in practice this rule is often not observed. 'Blood' cases not reported to the capital are dealt with by the district head, whose function is something between that of an intercessor and a judge. In theory 'blood' cases are not tried, and in practice district heads do inquire into and often finally settle such cases.

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627 691 the mother and the brother of Mabula went to the parents of Magoba, who, however, refused to allow the scraping of their daughter's teeth on the grounds that it implied that they were witches.

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[See cit. 582+583 --Ana/456]

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692 562 appeals, and they rely upon her to suggest a solution and to guarantee its being put into effect. Old women, sitting on the fringes of the court, are sometimes heard to mumble, as if impersonally, about the tortuous ways of the men when such-and-such is the simple solution; a man within earshot overhears the remark and applies it to the case; and more often than not, as you see the men 'jump upon' the happy phrase or formula suggested, you realize that men do not have the monopoly of wisdom. Women are the strongest pillars of the social structure and without their support there can be no guarantee that the adjustments in the superstructure will be lasting or effective; and, in a society that relies on compromise and not on coercion, this role becomes even more important. Women appear as plaintiffs or defendants as frequently as men; we have never heard either the *khwe* or a party object that an opponent was a woman unassisted by her guardian; but we have heard an old woman, the defendant, refuse to proceed in a case where the plaintiff was a young man of twenty-five years. It was a divorce case, in which the young man presumptuously had handed *mayondo* cattle, not to the mother of the bride, but to the bride's former husband. The mother took back her daughter and the young man sued for the return of his goods. The mother said in the *khwe*, 'I scorn to discuss the matter with you, a mere child. You know nothing about cases. Bring your father. I do not understand your complaint.' The *khwe* agreed. Of course, the *khwe* is the province of the men, and their place and function in it have been institutionalized; by contrast, only a few women have an institutional hold upon the *khwe*, but they are firmly entrenched in the social structure, which is the *raison d'être* of the *khwe*.

694 We cannot do more than give a general picture of a few aspects of the practice and procedure of the *khwe*. There are the usual preliminary processes. A creditor, going alone directly to the debtor, complains (*ku vela*) once, twice, perhaps many times; the complaint is not made through the village head. The debtor may ask his district head or another to intercede as his *mukhumadi*. But if nothing happens, the creditor warns the debtor that he will proceed to *ku ghela*, the formal complaint to the district head, not the village head, which begins the case. The dispute may still be settled privately with the district head appearing in the role of an intercessor rather than a judge, probably at the defendant's village. If this fails, the assistance of the 'mother' of the district may be called in, as already described, or there may be a full-dress *khwe* trial, with its 'opening' fees and 'fees of the feet'. Should the district head be 'overcome', the case may go to the capital. The parties are summoned to appear on a certain Sunday and there are present some fifty men, all of them potential arbitrators. It is difficult to distinguish judges, litigants, and visitors, and, though there is some one presiding, now one, now another of the men, even though they have been found guilty in a previous case the same day, may take the lead and decide the case.

695 The *khwe* is not unlike a family council: there are no set forms or formulas or procedures, no precise order in which cases are called or matters are discussed. While the parties to one case, unable to reach agreement, retire to the 'dung of the dogs' along the fence of the court-

confidence in the *khoro* and its methods, but some men increasingly 496
resort to a mixture of the supernatural, the 'sending back' of the evil, and the pressure of the European courts.

'Blood' cases and disobedience to tribal authorities, as well as witch- 497
craft, are dealt with by procedures essentially different from those so far 497
described. Homicide, especially accidental killing (*gwa*), is usually restituted by *ba Mamelwa* and by converting the criminal to a kinsman, without the intervention of the *khoro* or payment to the queen. But other procedures were also used: a murderer might be killed in the heat of the moment by a relative of the victim, and in such a case that ended the matter; or he might be executed by order of the queen unless he could escape to one of the recognized sanctuaries in the country; or he might be dealt with as a witch. Homicide in its manifold aspects is too large a subject for treatment here, but since it is, in regard to aspects of law dealt with in this book, adequately illuminated by our next subject, viz. procedure in 'blood' cases, we may content ourselves with the remark that homicide apparently did not involve a *khoro* trial.

'Blood' cases to-day present a curious mixture of different procedures 498
of the past. One old element of the procedure, being incongruous with 499
the disapproval of self-help, has completely disappeared. Old men told 497
us that 'blood' cases were settled by the kin, not submitted to the *khoro*. That, but no doubt also the reluctance to appeal to the European, to-day explains the emphasis on reconciliation and the encouragement of *ba Mamelwa* in these cases. If a 'blood' case comes to the *khoro*, the victim gets nothing and the assailant pays heavily; if the matter is privately settled, the victim gets something and the assailant pays less. In the old days, if private settlement failed, the kin of the victim went to attack the assailant's village: they reported to the queen, but she exacted no fine if in the attack a man was killed. Though this method of execution is unknown to-day, it is still said that a man who kills an aggressor pays nothing, not even to the queen, for 'He who dies on the road is not to be cried for. Let the aggressor kill himself' (*mufo-dzilwi a u lifwi, mudala u dzilwi*). This precept is also invoked to justify 'revenge' by means of medicines, but here, as in the case of aggression, it is regarded as self-defence, not self-help, just as killing an adulterer caught in the act—in which case also no blood-money is paid, even to the queen—is thought of as killing a thieving dog. These conceptions leave intact the aversion from vengeance: there is no blood revenge, no vendetta, no trace of the *lex talionis*, though a limb for a limb is known not very far off. Self-help, even in cases where it is admitted among tribes with more highly developed legal institutions, is frowned upon: one may neither kill a pig of another that damages one's crops nor drive cattle that have entered one's gardens into the fields of their owner. A man, provoked or assaulted by another, has no right to retaliate; and it is doubted whether the provocation will mitigate his offence, for no man may take the law in his own hands. Phedulì's relative had been killed by Magwale's sorcery, and in anger Phedulì struck Magwale's cow, which subsequently went lame; yet he was ordered by the *khoro* to pay the usual compensation.

How has the old procedure merged with the new conceptions? We

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602 can give only part of the answer. The exaggerated abhorrence of self-
602 help and the insistence upon *ku khumelwa*, side by side with the
627 tendency to regard blood as belonging to the queen (phrased as 'the head belongs to the chief'), has not driven the old procedures wholly out of the field. Old men say that 'blood' cases cannot be submitted to the *khoro*, yet they are second in number to *manyanalo* cases. In theory, the procedure is that the victim, having notified his district head, runs to show his blood at the capital, messengers (*maharula*) of the queen are sent, not to institute an inquiry or conduct a trial, but to collect one goat from every married man in the district of the victim; and each *leharula* takes two goats for himself and gives the rest to the queen. We have never seen this procedure applied in practice; the danger of European intervention makes it wholly impracticable. Instead, the wounded person reports immediately to the district head, sometimes to the queen, or if the wound is not serious the parties settle the matter by *ku khumelwa*. The district head often arbitrates successfully; but he can neither try nor fine nor exact court fees. If the victim goes to the queen, she sends a *leharula* (and often more than one) who exacts one goat (the 'fee of the feet') from the assaulter and one from the victim (the 'stick for roasting meat') and should he settle the matter informally, for he cannot conduct a full-dress trial, he receives one further beast (the fine) from the wrong-doer. The latter is given to the queen; the goat given by the victim is killed for the *leharula*, who takes a hind leg to the queen's *khoro*, where it is eaten chiefly by the councillors; and the victim gets nothing. But if the *leharula* fails in his mission, which in practice means that the assaulter refuses to submit to him or denies his guilt, he is summoned to the *khoro* at the capital. There is no 'opening' fee, for 'blood' opens the *khoro*; sometimes the parties are ordered to settle the matter between themselves and sometimes the offender is fined one head of cattle, which goes to the queen, and one goat, which is killed for the *khoro*. Sometimes, however, a victim reports to the queen merely to obtain a letter to the Native Commissioner.

692 These general principles are subject in individual cases to many
693 variations which reflect the transitional nature of the procedure and the adjustments that are being made by the society. We have been able to observe the cases that came before the *khoro* far more closely than those settled privately. In one case where a father intervened in a fight between his son and his son's wife, the son in anger stabbed the father; the *khoro* ordered the parties to become reconciled by *ku khumelwa*, the son to beg pardon with a goat. In similar circumstances, where a stranger intervened, the husband was ordered to clear the grass in the queen's garage. In another case the husband wounded the mother of a youth whom he found with his wife, because the mother interfered in the ensuing quarrel between the husband and the yough; the *khoro* told the youth to beg pardon with three goats but fined the husband one head of cattle and one goat. While the *mizidjani* (whistling ancestors) were performing at a religious ceremony, one of them, very much intoxicated, blew his whistle in public and tried to drag one of the women away to the bush. A district head, an initiated man, forcibly ejected the offender, who next

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morning assaulted him, but was wounded; the offender then reported his 692
wound at the capital. A *lekwale* was sent to collect the blood fine from 683
the district head, but, not finding him, left a message summoning him to the *khwo*. There the case was discussed with only initiates of the *gwamo* present. The men could not decide upon their course of action. They said, 'Let no one be angry. The district head did right, but we cannot carry out the law of the "school" (the man who reveals the *digwa* secrets must die). We cannot even impose a fine; no one knows what the fine should be. Let the matter rest.'

Khashani, working on a European farm, called his wife, whose baby was ill, to come to him. The baby died and Khashani, seeing 'medicine' on the fireplace, suspected and severely beat his sister's daughter as well as his sister. The case came to the *khwo* of the queen, which pointed out that if, as Khashani thought, his sister was a witch, he also probably was one. This did not satisfy Khashani, but his sister demanded back her cattle, and the *khwo*, attempting to isolate the struggle, said, 'We are discussing the "blood". You, Khashani, must pay your sister one head of cattle.' Khashani replied, 'That I agree to do. I shall even drive away my wife, so that I can return my sister's cattle.' The *khwo* was not much perturbed, since it thought that Khashani's threat was either bluff or the raving of a madman.

In the last case it was the victim, not the queen, who was awarded the head of cattle. The argument sometimes used by Lovedu men against such an award is better known in other tribes: it is that, if the victim is benefited, all he need do to become rich is to provoke others to fight him. And the theory held by those advancing this argument is that to spill blood is 'to break the queen's calabash', and therefore 'blood' cases must be submitted to the *khwo*. This is the view gaining ground, so that *mahwale*, going to collect the blood fine, become messengers summoning the parties to the queen's *khwo*, without, however, ignoring the position of the district heads. The whole procedure is in a state of flux, but we can see in outline how the blood feud has gradually receded as the kin groups become submerged by the district organization and how, as a consequence, the procedure of reconciliation gained so firm a hold that it maintains its stand against the forces making for centralization.

Not long ago the procedure appropriate to cases of witchcraft and 695
sorcery was the ordeal (*mwen*); and though the *mwen* has given way in 683
Ulovedu to smelling out by the diviner (*mugwa*), it can still be seen 754
further east among the Phalaborwa. The test takes various forms; [124]
drinking poison, usually an extract of *nwanana* (*Datura stramonium*), licking a medicated stick or a heated hoe, removing a stone from boiling water, floating the kernels of *mupani* (*Oncoba spinosa*) in water and observing whether they separate or come together, sometimes accompanied by an oath or followed by the washing of hands or the squirting of water (*ku phasa*). All these are well-known in the lowveld, though the Lovedu used only or chiefly the first; but on the highveld, where witchcraft and sorcery are treated as private matters, there is no legal but only a magical method of dealing with them: the evil is sent back by a doctor privately employed by the victim. The Lovedu no longer rely upon the *mwen*,

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powerful jurisdictions, the *khwi* and the *magwai*. The *magwai*, great though his powers be, holds a precarious position in the modern world. His fees are not fixed, but the usual amount is £1 10. 6d., though it may be 5s. or more for each person of the party. Much of his technique is directed towards preventing the counsellors from giving him away to the European authorities. 'If you say I am a liar,' declared one *magwai* to the parties, 'take back your money and go elsewhere. I even challenge you to take me to the Europeans; they will agree with me, as I have a licence to divine.' In another case a *magwai* refused to find any one guilty. 'You force me,' he said, 'to smell out the witch, but you have left him at home. The other diviners who smelt out this man [the challenged person] are all wrong. And you [the challenger], if you wish to settle the dispute, must place a head of cattle as a sacred beast to wake up your grandfather.' But this finding did not persuade the parties to withdraw their case from the *khwi*, and the *khwi*, ignoring the finding, settled the matter in its own way. 695 791

Secondly, the wager is not made by way of an oath, but it is sometimes reduced to writing: 'They bet four head of cattle' (*ba bejile khomu je ma*); that is all. The tiny slip of paper is kept by the 'ears'. The use of the term *ba bejile* shows, as the people say, that the wager is a new conception. But we cannot be certain that the wager has been borrowed from Europeans. It fits the whole complex of judicial process: its essence is consent of the parties to be bound by their wager and by the findings of the *magwai*. If one of the parties disagrees with those findings, he is entitled to demand back the money paid to the *magwai* and ask the party to go further to another *magwai*. The *khwi* may, however, vary the bet. The victor comes to the *khwi* and blows his horn; and the women ululate and dance (*ba pelela*, which by extension also means to be acquitted or declared innocent by ordeal or *magwai*). Meanwhile the vanquished party goes home and, if he is contrite, he says that he could not help doing wrong. Next day he might appear in the *khwi*, ask for time to pay or *khumelisa* or send an old man to plead for a reduction of the bet. The victor pretends to refuse, but in the end, if the *khwi* presses him, he will agree. Or the *khwi* may, on its own initiative, reduce the bet. Everything depends on the circumstances. Where the mother of a man was alleged to have killed the wife of his elder brother (the challenger), the *magwai's* verdict was against the mother, but as he had said that she was not a born witch, but had only purchased the medicine from another, the *khwi* awarded the challenger two head of cattle instead of the six actually wagered. The bet is often not paid in full, while sometimes nothing at all is exacted as the 'cutter of the tongue' of the slanderer. But we have seen cases in which the *khwi* has, at the suggestion of one party, raised a wager from four to six head of cattle. 695 787

This is not the place to discuss the interrelations of the tribal and the European systems. For one thing, the subject requires a volume to itself. But it is necessary to insist that in criminal matters the system of Native courts is by European law essentially an integral part of the European structure. In 1934 Mujaji was given criminal jurisdiction in respect of offences punishable under Native law, but fines are limited to two head 692

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692 of cattle or £1; and so many offences, including grievous and indecent assaults, arson, and pretended witchcraft, are excluded that, when the queen received the letter granting jurisdiction, she exclaimed, 'Is there anything left to us?' In practice, as we have seen, a good deal is not so much left as quietly taken. Moreover, fines imposed can be enforced only by the process-in-aid also available in civil cases. Civil jurisdiction, as granted by the European, is more generous; it includes civil claims arising out of Native law brought before the chief by Natives against Natives resident within the area of jurisdiction. But, it need hardly be said, the alien conceptions of civil law and criminal law and their distinctions are only faintly understood. The chief has no power to proceed to execution against the wishes of the judgement debtor, for where the judgement debtor (or others at his instigation) resists execution, and seizure in the opinion of the messenger might lead to a breach of the peace, the messenger must report to the judgement creditor and it is he, not the chief, who if he so desires may apply to the Native Commissioner for process-in-aid. The *khoro* is not a court of record, but there are provisions as to appeal to the Native Commissioner, whose functions in hearing the case, as if it were a case of first instance, are not merely to determine the appeal, but also to act as a court of first instance for purposes of recording evidence.

This is a bare outline of the formal aspects of the situation. The sociological implications are fortunately infinitesimal compared with what they might have been if Native Commissioners had not been wiser than the law they administered. Their policy has been not to interfere. Moreover, the procedure of the *khoro*, by its insistence upon agreement and compromise, not only does not rely upon, but is inconsistent with, execution or the sanction of force. Compromise and physical coercion are contradictory principles which cannot co-exist. Litigants sometimes reluctantly resort to European courts and their processes-in-aid, not because European law has castrated the *khoro*, but because culture contact has cut some of the sinews of reciprocity.

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strengthens the tendency towards cunning and duplicity (which safeguard the secrecy of the rain charms) and has given rise to the impression among Europeans that the Lovedu are cowardly and deceitful, lacking the manly qualities of their neighbours, the Shangana-Tsonga. Foolish valour is discredited, for 'It is at the home of the coward that the porridge bowl is not thrown away': he lives to eat another day. The prestige of a queen as ruler also maintains the high status of women in a patrilineal society. Nowhere else are so many women heads of districts or in such important political positions. Women own cattle, have wives and may aspire to headship of large villages; and in the social system the main forces are oriented from the pivotal position of the cattle-linked sister. A wife or mother is queen of her establishment, as its *ndi* Khilovedu name, *mulungu*, indicates: *ku lungu* means to control like a leader, while *le lungu* describes the expansive control of some overwatchful kraal heads. 157 562

Agriculture is not important as a field of achievement, for crops cannot be accumulated; immoderate success is suspect and a man cannot establish or alter his status by economic means. 'Yours is what you eat; what you set aside is another's', means both that expending energy upon accumulating goods is lack of balance and that the 'haves' cannot be magnanimous to the 'have-nots'. Nor is the royal complex of institutions, except in so far as it interpenetrates the social system, a field of achievement for ordinary men. It is the social system which, besides being one of the great pillars of security, provides the scheme in which man seeks self-expression and recognition. There are wide avenues of achievement for men, especially in the *khwe*, and women may aspire to influence within the *mungunda* complex and its 'houses'. There are other fields of achievement: men may find satisfaction in the circle of the hosts of their wives, women in spirit possession, and both men and women may become doctors, district heads, craftsmen, or story-tellers, while the adventurous may seek expression in the fantasy of manipulating the forces of witchcraft. 556 585

But all these avenues are available only within the arrangements of the social structure, which on the whole are designed to eliminate competition and to reward co-operation. The activities of the *khwe*, in which men seek and display their highest self-expression, throw into bold relief the qualities and traits that are most esteemed in the society: mature wisdom, appeasement, reliance, not on force, but on agreement, and confidence in the effective operation of the long-run reciprocities of the social system. The task of the *khwe*, the most honourable and most arduous of all tasks, is successfully achieved only if the disputants can be guided towards reconciliation and acceptable compromises. Certainty—the idol of security set up by our aggressive society, the fetish worshipped by legalistic practitioners and the obsession impelling our courts to adjudicate upon conflicting rights according to strict law—is not a feature of the *khwe*. The *khwe* is oblivious of the fear that hard cases will make bad law, for it need not, as we do, steel itself against tenderness for the hardship of the unwitting offender, lest exceptions upset the certainty of the law and that elegant symmetry which, as we conceive, guarantees security. In 591 642

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the *khwe* the exigencies of personal adjustments may overrule the decrees of the law. In the setting of the *khwe* we thus see emphasis upon compromise and informality, faith in muddling through rather than in meticulous certainty, and reliance upon the pressure of the social reciprocities, not upon the sanctions of force. We may, in the context of European society, call them care-free standards, but that is to fail to see their place among the Lovedu.

These characteristics are faithful reflections of what one finds in the society and what is proper to the social structure as a whole. This structure provides the pattern of long-run reciprocities which, without the support of sanctions of force, ensures mutuality and co-operation. The reciprocities are motivated by inevitable necessity: 'The well-doer does well unto the well-doer; it is only his despoiler that the despoiler despoils'. Side by side with insistence upon give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness in limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as strenuously striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. Co-operation is essential to life and its tasks, for, says the proverb, 'One leg cannot dance a *gwara*'.

It is striking how the culture by re-interpretation prevents the struggle apparently inherent in the objective situation, such as when there are limited prizes or resources. The Reserve is overcrowded, the population presses hard upon the natural resources, and land is scarce; yet the people act as if the old abundance of land still prevails. They attribute ordinary shortages, not to scarcity of land, but to the indolence of the modern generation, thus explaining their difficulties in a manner which is congruous with social values, reduces the possibility of competition and permits of the resolution of the difficulties by human effort. And, generally speaking, economic resources and especially the *mayuwalo* cattle exchanges cannot be manipulated to acquire wealth or status or position. There is no special prestige attached to possessions and no socio-economic stratification of classes; for a great man, whether he be poor or rich, is first and foremost a royal relative, and the purpose of economic activities is self-sufficiency and independence. What particularly struck us was the absence of competition in craftsmanship: we have often seen one potter appraising the pots of another; we have always found it useless to urge expedition upon one worker by hinting that otherwise we would place our order with another; and it seemed to make little difference that the money was badly needed for tax purposes. Lucrative trade, calculation instead of mutuality in the work party, and display, both of possessions and of personality, are intensely disliked.

To the same pattern of values as non-competitiveness belong the disinclination to make comparisons and the aspiration towards equality with others. The role of these attitudes is not merely economic. The former reflects lack of interest in analysis as well as the absence of graduated yardsticks for comparing quantities and performances. Linguistic devices for expressing comparison—adjectives have no comparative or superlative forms—can hardly cope with our distinctions. It

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integration that has taken place has been a response of the culture itself 177
to the challenges of the new order. Therein lies the greatest difference from the manner in which Christianity has influenced the culture. Since 1938 the policy has changed somewhat, and there are more active though still not conscious interferences with custom; but among the Lovedu the effect as yet has been negligible.

The labour migration to towns and farms, necessitated by taxation, is reluctantly undertaken. The Lovedu are not easy prey to recruiters, who have to give assurances regarding, not only labour and other conditions, but also immunity from arrest for arrears of tax. The ideal is to return home, for 'The only place one never returns to is the womb'. The migration has not had the great effect that is reported in other parts of Africa: very little that is brought back is incorporated into the culture, even the accent men acquire in towns being rapidly discarded: marriage ceremonial does not require the presence of the man, his bridal visits being often undertaken by others; the pivotal position of women in the social structure minimises disturbances; and, since during the whole suckling period a husband should partially avoid his wife, his absence for six months or so in town is not a serious problem as far as sexual adjustments are concerned. The absence of the men creates difficulties in holding the initiations and in economic dispositions. But the salient fact is that the energies liberated by the use of the plough exceed the strain caused by the labour migration. Old men, who no longer pay taxes, conduct the political and legal affairs of the tribe, and women, who do not migrate, control religion and ritual.

In legal arrangements there have been changes. But the deprivation 177
of the power to enforce decisions means little to the old culture, which 692
never relied upon force, though it may mean something when the sanction of reciprocity has become undermined. The force of the law is being destroyed, not by the limited jurisdiction allowed, but by the interference of solicitors and the multiplication, so it is believed, of criminals acquitted or protected by the European. Witches, they say, escape punishment by Europeans, because Europeans neither have witchcraft nor understand its workings. We have elsewhere noted some readjustments in legal procedure. Here we need add only a few further points. The *khosi* must be careful lest dissatisfied litigants report procedures or decisions that are illegal by European standards; but, on the other hand, it sometimes threatens recalcitrant debtors with the dire consequences of being sent to the European, and such is the disinclination to be judged by the European that the threat is generally effective. The *khosi*, for instance, takes care not to order an expulsion (which is illegal) before the crops are reaped, so the victim is then more liable to appeal, while many cases may be quoted in which the threat to send a litigant to the Native Commissioner has led to a solution by agreement. The weakening of the sanctions of reciprocity has led to increasing resort, not to the European courts, but to 'sending back' the evil.

The *khosi* has more and more to deal with written evidence, such as 177
cattle lists, letters between the parties and from farmers, and pieces of 695
paper on which had been noted the marriage cattle that have passed.

428 given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted
[587] him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *letsapa*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.
[587] The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The
[746] division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the
428 relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for
429 the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's
[587] brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

429 When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation
634 with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a
429 district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a
562 widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died,
[593] the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a
[692] widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting

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the court cases. Later, when the heir came of age, a new homestead was built. When Mabulana died in the 1940's his daughter, a married woman who does not live in the area was made official district head. Her mother's brother came specially from the Capital to live in the area and help her by conducting cases.

The mother's brother is considered to be eminently suitable as adviser to a ruler. The queen, too, traditionally has a mother's brother as chief councillor. A mother's brother has no claim to succession yet is deeply interested in the welfare of his sister's child. He will see to it that the sister's child gets his rights. The position of the son of the *khadi* who is acting as regent is somewhat different. There is a Lobedu proverb saying '*Bya thaga maye ho dula mudukulu*—where a master is lacking there sits the nephew'. And it is true that the son of a woman regent is often ruler in all but name. In the 1930's there were two blatant cases in which the rightful heirs of district heads who had long reached man's estate seemed in danger of permanently being ousted. In both cases in the long run when the *khadi* died the rightful heir was installed, in one of the cases on the expressed dying wish of the *khadi*. Right seems to prevail in the long run.

The Homestead Through Time

Basically a homestead consists of a group of 'houses' belonging to the wives of the head or of the head and his half-brothers. Other relatives may attach themselves to it but the core remains the group of agnates.

Many of the smaller homesteads that have all the appearance of being independent are found upon investigation to be portions (a 'house') of a neighbouring homestead, which has become separated in space but still considers itself part and acknowledges the authority and control of the senior homestead near by. The most obvious case of this arises where, owing to quarrels between co-wives, a husband has placed one of the wives in a homestead of her own and visits her there. If a wife has a married son then in the event of serious quarrels there is more likely to be a hiving off, the son moving to a different area with his mother and siblings.

In Figure 5 a very small homestead is shown. Here the

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of the parties objects to the decision of the *khoro*. It is the queen's prerogative to settle disputes between royal relatives, but she also privately settles differences which, for reasons of public policy or of the prestige of the parties, should not be publicly discussed, and sometimes, to avoid the hardening of transient differences into permanent hostility, even withdraws cases, especially witchcraft cases, from the jurisdiction of the *khoro*. The queen has an unshakable reputation for integrity, and acts independently, if she likes, though often she consults trusted advisers, some of whom at present are not her councillors. 692 643

The role of the queen is not unconnected with the institution of 'mothers' of districts. 'Mothers' are appointed by the queen or with her approval, and are usually her relatives, living at the capital and having direct access to her. Generally they report in the first instance to the councillors, especially to the son of the queen's mother's brother, who is the greatest councillor. The office of 'mothers', though hereditary, often changes hands because of its responsibilities and inadequate rewards, the opportunities of favourably placed persons and the requirement of residence at or near the capital. Often a widow, familiar with her husband's arrangements, takes over the position, enlisting the help of a relative, who at her death naturally steps into her shoes. Since the fees received cannot meet the needs of taxpayers, usually only old people are 'mothers', but inability to cope with long journeys forces them to entrust some of their work to available sons or relatives, who in turn may succeed to the position. 'Mothers' are often related to, but may be only fortuitously linked with, the heads of districts under their charge. A foreign chief or headman may be introduced at the capital by a friend or relative or stranger, who thereupon becomes his 'mother'. In 1912, when a [167] colony of settlers from Basutoland came, Mashaveli, who had no previous association with them, took the message of their arrival to the queen and henceforth acted as their 'mother'. Independent foreign chiefs also have their 'mothers', who sometimes live far from the capital. 693

'Mothers' have politico-legal and other functions. They receive their 'children', the district heads or foreign chiefs, and act as intermediaries whenever formal relations with the queen or great councillors are involved. When it is impracticable for a district head to bring beer to the queen, he may send mealies, which are deposited at the 'mother's' and there converted into the tributary beer. The arrival of beer from a district is always reported to the 'mother', who receives one calabash. 'Mothers' are the messengers or ambassadors of the queen sent to settle disputes among their 'children' or to represent her, for instance, at the formal installation of a district head. Important links in politics, they are the master links in the legal system. Some 'mothers' supervise the legal interrelations of many districts with the capital. As some districts are far off, eight to ten miles, they may delegate the work, in respect of some districts or of some of its aspects, to others, such as sons, wives, sister's sons, or wife's brothers. Thus Khidima, 'mother' of Mavulana, Maraga, Madumani, Gabiani, Musugududzi, and a European-owned farm, sometimes puts cases coming from the first three districts in the hands of his sister's son, but, since Khidima's own son has reached years

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693 of discretion—he is now forty years of age—it is to him that the court work has been entrusted. Quite recently (1938) Khidima, too old to walk far, deputed his son to settle a serious dispute at Dithejeni, a sub-district of Mavulana; but the conflict which involved the interests of Mavulana, the maternal uncle of the queen, and Khashani, direct descendant in the senior royal line, 'overcame' the son as it subsequently 'overcame' even the queen's *khoro*. It is thus apparent that 'mothers' have responsible duties and must be men of tact and experience.

'Mothers' often act as arbitrators in district courts. In some districts they regularly preside when important cases are decided, in others they hardly ever appear: recently established districts whose heads are foreigners need some supervision and linking up with the capital, while in old districts much depends upon the pride or prestige or ability of the district head. 'Mothers' are sent to investigate or try cases which are reported directly to the capital without reference to the district head (an irregular procedure which he resents) or which have 'overcome' him either in a *khoro* trial or in his attempt to effect a private reconciliation (*hu khumelwa*). The district head may accompany a deserting wife to beg pardon of her husband, but if the overture fails, she may present her case to her 'mother' or to the queen who usually arranges for a 'mother' or messenger to arbitrate, often quite informally, between husband and wife. Messengers become versed in handling compromises from an early age, at first as envoys (*maharula*) merely registering consents, later as true arbitrators. They accompany the district head to the home of the disputant or sit in the *khoro* of the district, reporting the result to the 'mother', who in turn reports to the queen or councillors. Or if 'overcome', they summon the parties to the *khoro* of the capital. The procedure economizes effort and promotes amicable settlements; it induces a uniform outlook towards disputes, but not uniformity of substantive law, throughout the country. Thus Shangana-Tonga law, where it differs from Lovedu law, remains intact; the 'mother' or messenger or the *khoro* itself is concerned, not with differences of law, but with reaching agreements acceptable to the parties.

As an officer of the *khoro* at the capital, the 'mother' presents cases, summons defendants to appear, is usually present in court and may, if called upon or on his own initiative, explain the antecedents of the case. But these activities are so unostentatious, so alien to our conceptions, that it is very rare that you will notice a 'mother' in the *khoro*. To avoid being suspected of favouring his 'children', he remains discreetly in the background, his presentation of the case is unnecessary as he has already privately reported to the councillors, and the arrangements of the *khoro* are so flexible and its spirit so homely that formally introducing cases or calling witnesses to come nearer is quite out of place. In the midst of a defendant's oration or the 'chewing' of the case by the *khoro*, you may see a 'mother' intervene to say that the defendant has neglected to pay him the goat that is the 'fee of the feet' (messenger's fee) and the case is abruptly stopped, 'hung up' in the *khoro*, until the fee is paid. Lovedu judicial processes are so unlike ours that it is wholly misleading to picture the 'mother' as an officer of the court arranging the roll, marshalling witnesses

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introducing cases like a prosecutor, or advising parties as to the case to be met or the witnesses to be called. 693

The two great councillors are in a pivotal position, since 'mothers' report to them. But in the first place they are not the officials who in other tribes head the panel of assessors or 'remembrancers'. It is not necessary, though it is usual, for one of them to be present or to preside at the regular sessions which are nowadays held for convenience on Sunday morning. On week days, if the other men at the capital feel unequal to the task, the absence of the great councillors sometimes holds up a case; but many cases are tried without them. Their position enables them to do the bulk of the work, but they have no specialized functions. All cases are not reported to or through them, as many 'mothers' have direct access to the queen. Checks and balances of the system even counteract that strengthening of their powers which results from the practice of European officials to deal exclusively with them. Secondly, there are no specially appointed assessors or advisers or 'remembrancers'. Compromises within a broad pattern, not details of law and precedents, are important. The oldest men at the capital are rarely consulted, in our experience only twice in many hundreds of cases; they are the victims of the conflict within the complex of royal institutions. The queen's *khoro* consists of men, generally speaking, drawn from the capital and neighbouring villages. But any one may attend; there is no special privilege and no special appointment. Some are more welcome, some have a higher reputation for integrity or sagacity, than others, some are friends, some enemies of the councillors. The *khoro* is a fortuitous rather than a fixed body of men.

A glance at some of the personalities of the queen's *khoro*, as it was in 1937, will make our general observations more concrete. Muneri, the queen's physiological mother's brother and called 'mother's brother', more often presided than his fellow councillor, Murwatsɛta, the queen's uterine brother's eldest but not chief son. They were both middle-aged men, lived at the capital and were rivals. R., a man in his prime, usually attended, though some years before he had been expelled as a murderer and witch from the district of the capital in which he still lives; he also befriended S., the would-be traitor, and was so much hated that he was once assaulted in the *khoro* by a son of the queen's brother. R. often sat in the centre of the *khoro*, eloquently using his commanding voice to reprimand, cajole, moralize, and even skilfully to guide contestants towards a compromise. Maduludi, in 1937 only about fifty-five years old, but now dead, came from the valley to enjoy the *khoro* discussions. An excitable extrovert, he used to rise from his seat in order to enforce an *ad hoc* argument or to shake his fist in the face of a recalcitrant defendant, and often he prematurely rushed to conclusions, imposing a fine even before the evidence was led, but he was tolerated and gently restrained by the others. B. frequently almost slunk into the *khoro*: emaciated and consumptive, nervous and suspicious, hated and feared by the councillors, suspected of having murdered a royal relative with his witchcraft, he was wholly inaccessible to us, yet in the *khoro* his hoarse, screeching voice, as he now and then interjected a high-pitched but incisive remark, carried

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693 great weight. There was also muddled-headed old Mabungwani, who, as judgement creditor, regularly for two years came from a far-off district fruitlessly to complain that Maake, the debtor, had not yet paid him, but was still 'looking for' the fine; he took a prominent part, muddling the issues, but humouring the men; and it was a real joy to listen to him These were but some of the striking personalities of the fifty men or more who habitually came to the *khɔrɔ*. They attended, some for one reason, some for another, as we would attend a function which is partly an entertainment and partly a responsibility. The *khɔrɔ* is not wholly a casual assembly, since men living in the neighbourhood are expected to give their assistance at the sessions every Sunday morning.

Not the men of the *khɔrɔ*, but only 'mothers' and messengers, are specially rewarded. A plaintiff, resident, say, in the district of Madumani, taking his case to the capital, should go accompanied by a messenger from Madumani to report his complaint to his 'mother', Khidima, to whom he gives three goats or their equivalent, usually £1 and a goat. By this formal complaint (*hu ḑalia*) he becomes the plaintiff (*muḑalii*): the £1 is *hu ḑalia*, serves to 'open' the *khɔrɔ*, and is handed by the 'mother' to the queen; the goat or 10s. is to 'break down the *khɔrɔ*' and will be retained by Khidima if the defendant lives in one of his districts, for then Khidima must summon him; but if he resides in, say, Matsui, Khidima must give the goat to Muneri, 'mother' of Matsui, who is responsible for calling his own 'children'. The 'mother' himself, as was usual in the old days, or a messenger of the 'mother', as is common to-day, receives from the defendant he summons a goat called *budi va bija* (goat of the pot) or *leudu la mudzeḑa* (fee of the feet). In cases of 'blood', or witchcraft, and of offences against the tribal authorities, when they come before the *khɔrɔ*, the procedure is different and these fees are not paid.

All the young men in the district of the capital are *maharula*, envoys of *khɔrɔ* or queen. The usual work of a *leharula* is to call district heads to tribal gatherings (*khiwijɔ*), though much of this is now done by herdboys, who every fortnight drive the cattle to the dipping tanks. The *maharula* also represent the queen at *morula* cider drinks, given to the queen by districts other than the capital, for, except on special and very rare religious occasions (say once in every few years), she does not move beyond her own district. But for our present purpose we shall consider the *maharula* as a kind of police force, though without its powers. Police, prisons, process for executing judgements are alien to the culture, but situations akin to contempt occasionally arise in the *khɔrɔ*, and, if it is a young man or woman who despises the authority of the old men, a *leharula* may be detailed to supervise the execution of a patently absurd piece of work by the offender. The object is to humiliate, the onlookers are amused, no force is used, and usually the prisoner submits before he has started the work. *Maharula* do not specially attend the *khɔrɔ* for this purpose; the *khɔrɔ* usually ignores indignities; and submission, even if merely assumed, is accepted as sufficient.

693 681 Another duty of *maharula* is to collect fines, imposed by custom, not by trial, upon a whole district that has offended. When, for instance, in 1937 none of the young boys and girls of the district of the capital

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responded to the order to weed the queen's field, *maharula* went to collect 693
a fowl from each 'rebel'. They collected seven fowls, because most of the 681
delinquents could offer excuses which showed, to the satisfaction of the *maharula*, that they had repented. In 1938 Mahubusana complained that the residents of his district despised him. They had successively ignored his order to make *morula* cider first for himself and then for the queen and also to bring the 'money for the petrol of the queen's car'. *Maharula*, the councillors said, would be sent to exact one goat from every household. Nothing happened. Later Mahubusana brought the five main culprits to the capital and there they were told to pay 5*s*. each to their district head and to leave the district after having gathered in their harvest. 'You have despised the district head and the queen,' it was said. 'Go, then, and live where there is no chief, for here you worry the queen.' There was no trial; and a year after the 1938 harvest the rebels were still living in the district. *Maharula* are also sent to exact the fine due in those 'blood' cases that are reported to the queen. Despite apparent exceptions, *maharula* are not and never were deputed to execute upon a decision of the *khɔrɔ*, for the *khɔrɔ* is concerned with private delicts, wrongs between individuals who, in the last resort, are left to arrange restitution among themselves.

At the village of each district head there is also a *khɔrɔ*, the arrange- 692
ments of which resemble those at the capital; but, of course, there are many variations. Its competence is in practice determined by the presumptions of the district head; and the law it applies is not necessarily the law of the capital. Some district heads, having sub-districts under them, attach 'mothers' and *maharula* to the *khɔrɔ*, but usually these are only messengers for calling defendants. *Khɔrɔ* trials are usually held in 695
the district of the defendant, and the messenger or 'mother' is entitled to the 'fee of the feet', but not all district heads charge for 'opening' the *khɔrɔ*. The district head may have a special *duna*, often his elder brother, who is entrusted with legal matters and 'presides' in his absence; women who are heads do not appear in the *khɔrɔ*, but confirm decisions. Sometimes the district *khɔrɔ* is better organized and controlled than that at the capital, there may be regular judges and assessors, the word is 'passed' (*hu suma*) from the junior to the senior members, contempt is strictly dealt with, and so on. But this is unusual, the organization being much more haphazard and the procedure much less regularized. Mostly the district head intervenes at the request of one party to see whether he can effect a reconciliation: he sets out with the plaintiff to the village of the defendant rather than summons the defendant to his *khɔrɔ*, or he goes as an intermediary (*mukhumedi*) of the one party to persuade the other to accept the settlement offered. Full-dress *khɔrɔ* trials are often like heated family consultations. *Khɔrɔ* cases in which the fine of restitution is a head of cattle must theoretically be reported to the capital, not for confirmation, but for directions as to the disposal of the fine; but in practice this rule is often not observed. 'Blood' cases not reported to the capital are dealt with by the district head, whose function is something between that of an intercessor and a judge. In theory 'blood' cases are not tried, and in practice district heads do inquire into and often finally settle such cases.

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Highveld. When, after many private consultations with diviners, a man decides to make an accusation of witchcraft, he and the accused will *betcha* or lay a wager of money or cattle on the matter, after which, accompanied by a witness, the 'ears of the chief', supplied by the Head Kraal, they set out to consult a far-away smeller-out, nearly always a Shangana-Tonga who lives too far to know anything of the people concerned. Unless the smeller-out is able to give the totems of all members of the party and successfully find an object that has been hidden beforehand, they will pass on to another until some one suitable is found. The verdict of the smeller-out is taken to court where it is always accepted and the guilty party told to pay his wager, the modern counterpart of the death penalty of old. A distinction between murder and accidental homicide is everywhere found in the Lowveld, punishment for the latter being the handing over of a girl to the injured family. She never returns home, nor does any bride-price pass. 695 [682]

Bantu etiquette, which makes it impossible for a case to be reported to the chief except through a third party, generally among other Sotho tribes one or two specially appointed men, has in the Lowveld given rise to a rather more complicated system whereby each district has its 'mother' at the Head Kraal, through whom reports are made and actions brought. Where a person in one district has a case at the Head Kraal against some one in another district, the 'mother' of the complainant's district will approach the 'mother' of defendant's district to call his 'children' to the court, and various payments are connected with the system. Most of the important men living at or near the Head Kraal are such 'mothers', many having more than one district in their charge. 576 694

FAMILY AND CLAN. There is among Lowveld Sotho no term distinguishing the father's from the mother's side of the family, the word *moloko* being used to denote all relatives whether on the father's side or the mother's; and in practice, whether at weddings or at working parties, both sets of relatives play an equally important, if sometimes different, part. A man inherits his totem and family name from his father, but in his education and social life his mother's people have great influence. Most children spend some years of their life with the 601 611 855

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695 The procedure to-day involved in witchcraft cases can be set into motion and these cases may be settled by district heads. In short, set rules as to competence do not exist and district heads are left to cope with as much as they can manage.

576 627 561 A brief discussion of some quasi-judicial processes will enable us to appreciate better, as it will introduce us to the procedure and spirit of the *khoro*. Firstly, there is the method by which especially old women deal with disrespectful or insulting behaviour of younger women. Should one or more young women play a practical joke upon or be disrespectful to an old woman, or playfully 'dance' an infant child, even their own, or prematurely try to make it sit up or walk or scold or beat it, in the presence of the grandmother or of an old woman, their behaviour is regarded as insulting. The conception is that old women in their role as midwives, rather than young mothers, have brought children into the world and the old, not the young, are the guardians of the babes. If one young woman arrogates to herself rights and privileges which belong to the old women, the latter are entitled to take suitable action. The insulted old woman reports to a few of her age-mates and in consultation they decide to punish the age-mates of the young woman resident in the same territorial unit—for example, a district. There is neither 'trial' nor tribunal. The punishment consists of three elements: the age-mates of the young women (say all those who have one baby) must brew beer with which to effect a reconciliation with the older women; in a rite accompanying the beer drink and resembling that used at initiations, the oldest woman canes her immediate junior, who in turn canes the next, and so on, including the culprits; and, finally, the culprits are read a lesson as to the iniquity of being disrespectful to their elders.

One day three young married women, in circumstances that implied disrespect, sent three old women a tiny quantity of snuff. The older women immediately fined the younger and vicariously all their age-mates living in the Christian settlement, for they were all residents there. They were told to grind snuff and restitute their wrong with beer. Five days later the twelve young married women of the settlement came to the house of the oldest woman, bringing large quantities of nuts, light beer, pumpkins, and other food; their husbands, in addition, sent a large tin of snuff and these 'gifts' were divided among the old women. Then followed the rite and the warning. On another occasion all the young mothers of a district were fined because one of them had 'danced' its baby in the presence of its grandmother. Likewise, it is said, though we have not seen a case, that the old women may fine a young father and his age-mates, if he forgets their privileges in regard to babies. But we cannot speak of regimental courts, the age-grades are not determined by the 'schools', the responsibility is territorial, and the punishment is 'beer of reconciliation' (largely replaced by food among Christians).

627 691 The second procedure, that called *hu khumedwa* (to beg pardon, to reconcile), has an enormous province and a profound significance, not only for legal arrangements, but in the whole culture. The procedure uses a *mukhumedi*, the emissary who intervenes on behalf of one of the parties to beg the pardon of the other. Its essence is not humiliation of

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yard, where they may more freely advance personal considerations, the *khɔrɔ* goes on to the next case. After plaintiff and defendant have spoken, the discussion may become general and heated, or it may peter out or degenerate to *ad hoc* arguments in various quarters, and no crisp decision may be given. There are many interruptions. Yet the men say that *khɔrɔ* work is arduous and requires much concentration—clearly their conceptions are very different from ours. They attach great importance to impartial justice, and bribery in our sense is rare. The danger of partiality arises from relationship and friendship; arbitrators do not recuse themselves, but often show their embarrassment by silence or slipping out of the *khɔrɔ*. We have seen cases in which a district head was fined by his own *khɔrɔ* for assaulting one of the residents of his district. Even the queen may be judged (in private) by her retinue, the nobles (*Varamuhaṭulwa gi valada*).

The problem of the *khɔrɔ* lies, not in sifting evidence or dispensing justice according to law, but in adjusting personal differences within the general framework of the social structure. Success is achieved when personality compromises can be harmonized with the implications of the social system. The *khɔrɔ* is not much concerned with strict law or the details of law. They do not rely upon judicial precedents for authoritative legal material. If precedents are quoted, and that is exceedingly rare, their purpose is to suggest arrangements and adjustments that are effective, not to determine a legal rule. The law is not the law of the courts; it is the 'law' of the institutions and is embedded in the institutions; and the harmony of different institutions and their 'laws' results from the total cultural configuration, not the judgements of the *khɔrɔ*. If the arrangements or 'laws' of two institutions conflict in a case, as they sometimes do, the *khɔrɔ* is powerless to resolve the conflict; for law is not of an autonomous order.

We cannot speak of examination, much less of cross-examination, of witnesses. All the parties are present when evidence is given, for 'Only Europeans conceal what one says from another and allow secret manipulations of evidence behind the backs of others'. The foreknowledge of the *khɔrɔ*, the availability of the weapons of confrontation and publicity, reduces direct perjury to a minimum. Litigants know the art of presenting their cases and of skilfully twisting a story, but a man caught out in telling an untruth readily confesses the truth. Falsehood is dealt with by ridicule and laughter; it is not punished as perjury. There are no rules as to what may be admitted as evidence, but the probative value of different kinds of evidence is well understood. The evidence need not bear upon the issue presented to the court, for that issue may merely reflect a more fundamental conflict, and it is with this conflict and its resolution that the *khɔrɔ* is concerned. Hearsay and irrelevancies may furnish important clues as to the origin or nature of the dispute. Rigid proof is necessary when elementary facts are in issue, as when the sole question is how many cattle have to be returned upon divorce, and then reliance is placed upon the evidence of the two marriage intermediaries. In theft and adultery cases, despite presumptions that supplement the evidence of the senses, the *khɔrɔ* is peculiarly helpless and extra-*khɔrɔ* procedures must be invoked.

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695 Besides the *khosi* fees already mentioned, there is a 'closing' fee, required only where *munywalo* is returned. Theoretically, one of the cattle is slaughtered and eaten by the *khosi*, but in practice this is rarely done. Much more usually does one see, when plaintiff is paid some goats or some cattle and goats as the result of a judgement, that the *khosi* orders one of the goats to be set aside as the 'goat of the shaking of the beards', which is killed for those attending the session, in recognition of all the talking they have done. The queen receives only the £1 exacted as 'opening' fee—required always in *munywalo* suits, rarely in theft, and never in other cases—and the head of cattle paid in 'blood cases' that come before the *khosi* of the capital. What she receives in this way can never enrich her, though it helps her to provide the *munywalo* of her many wives.

696 Fees and fines or restitution raise questions of execution. The *khosi* never levied execution in the past and it cannot do so to-day, but self-help is absolutely forbidden. The *khosi* reluctantly and rarely calls in the aid of the Native Commissioner, and for a litigant to place his case in the hands of a solicitor is an abomination which, whatever his rights, will turn the *khosi* against him. Execution is frowned upon almost as much as intervention by the European authorities; it is so alien that few things in the society arouse such indignation as seizure by the European sheriff. People hate to be coerced, not only in *khosi* proceedings, but in every sphere of activities, including their labour for the queen; just as differences must be settled by consent, so also the queen must solicit labour with entertainments. There are exceptions, some apparent, some real: a disloyal district head may be deposed; a subject who disobeys and does not pay the fine imposed may be expelled; a witch's cattle used to be confiscated. But these are not *khosi* cases and, except in the case of the witch, there is no execution upon property or person.

The enforcement of *khosi* decisions is left entirely to the parties. But they must agree; they cannot resort to force. This does not mean that the values of the society have been irresistibly internalized or that men are supersensitive to conscience and shame. It is the continuous pressure of institutionalized obligations, the impossibility of doing without the tangible day-by-day mutualities, and the disorganization caused by failure of the long-run reciprocities, not a sense of guilt or shame, which slowly but surely force a man to carry out the compromise reached in the *khosi*. A judgement creditor may receive no satisfaction for years; he may complain again and again to the *khosi* that no restitution has been made; yet if the debtor, appearing in the court, says that he is still 'looking for' the payment, it will usually be sufficient. 'Looking for' implies willingness to pay and it rehabilitates the wrongdoer; the *khosi* may even reprimand an impatient judgement creditor, at least if he has no grounds for casting aspersions upon the honesty or sincerity of the debtor. 'The law', in their phraseology, 'does not eat the man-who-says-I-shall-pay'. Culture contact has struck a severe blow at settlement by consent; the *khosi*, in an attempt to regain prestige, clamours for the power to punish; and the parties, reluctant to invoke European aid, bolster up the crumbling reciprocities with supernatural sanctions. Most men still have great

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morning assaulted him, but was worsted; the offender then reported his 692
wound at the capital. A *leharula* was sent to collect the blood fine from 683
the district head, but, not finding him, left a message summoning him to the *khɔrɔ*. There the case was discussed with only initiates of the *gomana* present. The men could not decide upon their course of action. They said, 'Let no one be angry. The district head did right, but we cannot carry out the law of the "school" (the man who reveals the *digɔma* secrets must die). We cannot even impose a fine; no one knows what the fine should be. Let the matter rest.'

Khashani, working on a European farm, called his wife, whose baby was ill, to come to him. The baby died and Khashani, seeing 'medicine' on the fireplace, suspected and severely beat his sister's daughter as well as his sister. The case came to the *khɔrɔ* of the queen, which pointed out that if, as Khashani thought, his sister was a witch, he also probably was one. This did not satisfy Khashani, but his sister demanded back her cattle, and the *khɔrɔ*, attempting to isolate the struggle, said, 'We are discussing the "blood". You, Khashani, must pay your sister one head of cattle.' Khashani replied, 'That I agree to do. I shall even drive away my wife, so that I can return my sister's cattle.' The *khɔrɔ* was not much perturbed, since it thought that Khashani's threat was either bluff or the raving of a madman.

In the last case it was the victim, not the queen, who was awarded the head of cattle. The argument sometimes used by Lovedu men against such an award is better known in other tribes: it is that, if the victim is benefited, all he need do to become rich is to provoke others to fight him. And the theory held by those advancing this argument is that to spill blood is 'to break the queen's calabash', and therefore 'blood' cases must be submitted to the *khɔrɔ*. This is the view gaining ground, so that *maharula*, going to collect the blood fine, become messengers summoning the parties to the queen's *khɔrɔ*, without, however, ignoring the position of the district heads. The whole procedure is in a state of flux, but we can see in outline how the blood feud has gradually receded as the kin groups become submerged by the district organization and how, as a consequence, the procedure of reconciliation gained so firm a hold that it maintains its stand against the forces making for centralization.

Not long ago the procedure appropriate to cases of witchcraft and 695
sorcery was the ordeal (*mureu*); and though the *mureu* has given way in 683
Vulovedu to smelling out by the diviner (*mugɔme*), it can still be seen 754
further east among the Phalaborwa. The test takes various forms; drinking poison, usually an extract of *zavazava* (*Datura stramonium*), [824]
licking a medicated stick or a heated hoe, removing a stone from boiling water, floating the kernels of *muṭuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) in water and observing whether they separate or come together, sometimes accompanied by an oath or followed by the washing of hands or the squirting of water (*ku phasa*). All these are well-known in the lowveld, though the Lovedu used only or chiefly the first; but on the highveld, where witchcraft and sorcery are treated as private matters, there is no legal but only a magical method of dealing with them: the evil is sent back by a doctor privately employed by the victim. The Lovedu no longer rely upon the *mureu*,

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695 because it involves too great publicity and danger of European interven-
683 tion, though they say, perhaps by way of rationalization, that the doctor
754 of the ordeal could manipulate the test. As this procedure is merely of theoretical interest, we need refer only to its salient features.

The victim or his relative privately consulted a bone-throwing doctor, whose verdict he had confirmed by perhaps two or more other doctors before he or an intermediary on his behalf made a public accusation. The ordeal or test took place at the capital and was public. Lineal relatives of accuser and accused or, according to some, two strong men chosen by them, were given an intoxicating drink by the official 'doctor of the ordeal', the spectators watching to ensure that equal quantities were administered. Those who had drunk were put in the sun and he who began moving about or became dizzy, drunken, or incoherent was in the wrong. The witch was usually executed at once, at the orders of the queen, being strangled at the river; but if she was a woman, one of the executioners first had sexual intercourse with her; and the body, tied to a weight, was sunk into the water to be eaten by animals. But the witch was sometimes delivered to the victim to undo his evil work (*hu mu ɓulla*), and if the illness left the victim the witch was released. Sometimes, also, suspected witches were beaten, tied up (nowadays, as we have seen, handcuffed and submitted to ridicule and abuse), and left without food or tortured with velvet stinging-beans until they confessed; this was sometimes done privately, and it was possible also to kill them without the public ordeal, the killing being reported to the queen; but usually they were merely banished.

683 The property of a witch who was killed was not all confiscated, but
754 *baza*, consisting chiefly of his cattle, was taken by the queen for division between herself and her nobles. No one else could appropriate *baza*; even the village head, if he did so, was regarded as a thief. The witch's gardens reverted to the district head, the crops were taken, not by the queen, because she could not eat the 'dirt of the witch', but by the messengers of the queen, for they were so busy in her service that they could hardly cultivate their fields. Residents in the district surreptitiously during the night took the witch's crops, but it was regarded as disgraceful to do so openly during the day. The wife of a witch was taken by a classificatory brother, and his children were adopted by the queen, who received *mumɩwalo* when she married the girls to her nobles (in more recent times, to commoners, because the girls often deserted). In the days of the kings, all the relatives, or, as some say, only those on the mother's side—the mother's uterine brothers and sisters especially—were killed. The queens had only a uterine brother or sister killed if they failed to leave the country. The witch, unlike a murderer, could not find sanctuary in the forest of Ḍaja; and only a witch's, not a murderer's, property was *baza*—confiscable property.

787 Since the beginning of this century submission of issues to ordeal has
695 been replaced by their submission to the smelling-out diviner (*mugɔme*).
[177] The institution of the *mugɔme* has been borrowed from the Shangana-Ṭonga and its whole complicated legal procedure is still in a state of flux, adjustments being constantly made especially to avoid European intervention.

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intervention. The procedure involves, first, private consultations of a doctor, followed by an accusation directly or through an intermediary, a wager by the parties, publicly made often in the *khɔrɔ*, then a journey in the company of the 'ears' (official witness) of the chief to a distant smeller-out, the actual smelling out, at which the victor may be given a buck's horn to blow on his way home, and, finally the report to chief or district head and the adjudication of the *khɔrɔ*. We are here concerned only with the legal aspects, but we must at the outset remark that the procedure, primarily used in witchcraft cases, is relied upon whenever there are evidential difficulties and, paradoxically, it has rendered theft, adultery, and other wrongs, not less, but more amenable to some form of *khɔrɔ* control. Publicity and centralized control in the phenomenal, periodical *mureu* proceedings at the capital in the old days guaranteed their effectiveness, but men could privately execute self-confessed witches. To-day, amid conflicting tendencies, *mugɔme* proceedings are less public and hardly the prerogative of the queen. Witchcraft is not conceived necessarily to strike at the whole society; it is often dealt with privately; and even, after resort to the *mugɔme*, agreement by the parties in the district courts may end the matter.

The *mugɔme* procedure lends itself to fixing responsibility when a whole district feels threatened, just as in the old days the *mureu* was used whenever the whole country wished to ward off danger. When, at a certain district gathering, it was decided to send delegates to a *mugɔme* concerning the occurrence of many deaths in the district, one young woman objected, saying, 'It is nonsense; we know the sickness is not "sent". If you go to the *mugɔme* and he "beats" (points out) members of your family, the whole district will be quarrelling.' The *mugɔme* pointed out the young woman who had objected, but she demanded that, if any one accused her, he should go with her to another *mugɔme*, and when she appealed to the capital for appointment there of the official witness, no one came forward as a direct accuser and for that reason the case broke down. Subsequent cases in which the young woman was involved reflected how the proceedings had not relieved, but aggravated, the sense of insecurity in the district. Shall we conclude that the remedy is worse than the disease? We cannot do so, because where there are no *mugɔme* proceedings, as on the highveld, the incidence of witchcraft and sorcery is not less. Moreover, *mugɔme* proceedings are believed to, and do often, remove grave threats to the community. In 1938 the tributary *morula* cider was being made at the village of the head of a sub-district. On the second day the cider frothed suspiciously and after a meeting of the sub-district, money was collected and representatives of every family went to the *mugɔme*, who found that the headman had poisoned the cider, and in truth everything pointed to the use of cattle-dip or locust poison. The matter was reported to the capital, where, without formal trial, the headman was ordered to leave the district. In our opinion a dangerous criminal had been successfully dealt with, but, what is more important, the feeling of security of the people had been restored.

We may now shortly examine some aspects of *khɔrɔ* control over *mugɔme* proceedings. The challenge, supported by a wager to submit the truth

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695 787 of an accusation to the *mugɔme*, is made before, during, or even after *khɔrɔ* proceedings, but if the dispute is dealt with by the *khɔrɔ*, the findings of the *mugɔme* can be accorded recognition only if the official witness, the 'ears', has been previously appointed by the *khɔrɔ*; the results of a private consultation cannot be given in evidence before the *khɔrɔ*. The 'ears' is sometimes appointed by the district head of the person challenged, but the theory is sometimes advanced that only the capital has jurisdiction to do so. His integrity is an important factor, for he must relate to the *khɔrɔ* the details of the wager, the competence of the *mugɔme*, the method by which the decision was reached and its nature, and whether or not the parties consented to the decision. The 'ears' must be a disinterested person, to avoid accusations of corruption and favouritism, as well as to guarantee that there is no manipulation of the fees entrusted to him by the parties for defraying the expenses of the expedition. Integrity and impartiality are best guaranteed where the capital appoints the 'ears'.

Often enough the findings of the *mugɔme* are accorded no recognition at the capital when the parties have gone forth from a district *khɔrɔ*. This does not mean that the parties cannot agree to the verdict of the *mugɔme* at the district *khɔrɔ* where the 'ears' has been appointed; nor is there any great desire to centralize control, which is sometimes encouraged, sometimes feared, and sometimes more or less an inevitable consequence of the need to obtain passes at the capital for the journey to a distant *mugɔme*. The practice of appointing 'ears' in the districts is not unconnected with the danger of implicating the capital with the European authorities. It sometimes happens, when the parties come for a pass and a report is made at the capital, that the queen's councillors disclaim any interest or concern in the matter. Wherever the 'ears' may be appointed, he is given the *phitho* (thing to be hidden), any small article such as a snuff box or coin which is concealed and must be named and found by the *mugɔme* as a test of his competence before the divination begins.

Khɔrɔ control is evident also in the manner in which it may refuse its assistance or dissuade the parties from going to the *mugɔme*, even though it can come to no decision in the dispute. The attitude of the *khɔrɔ* may be manifested in many ways, and its aim in refusing assistance is much the same as that of the queen when she intervenes behind the scenes in the interests of reconciliation by forbidding the publicity of *mugɔme* proceedings. We shall refer to a few only of the cases we have witnessed. A recruiter used to pay all labourers recruited £2, which had to be paid into the tribal fund before the tribal 'secretary' issued a pass to the labourer. For reasons we need not detail, the 'secretary' gave the labourer no receipt and the recruiter sued the 'secretary'. This is precisely the kind of case that the *khɔrɔ* finds very difficult to handle and, as the 'secretary' was a Christian, not amenable to *mugɔme* proceedings, the recruiter challenged the labourer to go to a *mugɔme*. But the *khɔrɔ* disallowed the challenge on the ground that the transaction had occurred in daylight, and instead ordered recruiter and 'secretary' jointly to pay the £2.

The *khɔrɔ*, by refusing to appoint 'ears', can prevent submission of a

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dispute to the *mugɔme* or it may send back the parties to their district head for him to appoint the 'ears', the purpose often being to tire them out or to exhaust their resources, so that they will more easily come to an agreement. But the opposite often happens: the *khɔrɔ*, tired of the obstinacy of the parties, may tell them to submit their differences to a *mugɔme*. Mudali complained that Uumme, mother of Muloi, was spreading rumours that he had caused Muloi's illness. Muloi was known to be a witch who had killed two of her brothers-in-law, sons of Makhulu, and Makhulu had with the aid of a great specialist 'sent back' a terrible illness which was rotting great holes in Muloi's body. But Uumme could not proceed against this legitimate revenge and, as it was rumoured that Mudali was a lover of Muloi, Uumme attempted to inculpate Mudali. These facts were generally known, but were not disclosed in the *khɔrɔ*. Mudali said that his accusers knew that he had no medicines and to clear his name he challenged Uumme to go to a *mugɔme* with him. Uumme retorted that she resented the insult from an adulterer, and the *khɔrɔ*, fearing that the conflict would spread, advised the disputants to go back to their district head and there arrange to go to the *mugɔme*. 'Ears' was appointed and early one morning we all stood ready at Mudali's village, with food for a long journey, perhaps 100 miles; messages and counter-messages passed to and fro between the villages of Mudali and Uumme, but nothing happened; and the following Sunday the case was again in the *khɔrɔ* of the capital. Uumme's people said that, as they had made no direct accusation, they refused to go to the *mugɔme*, but the *khɔrɔ* retorted, 'If Muloi dies, you must not blame Mudali. Now pay him the "cutter of the tongue" (which silences the mouth), for if Muloi dies the Europeans will come.' Uumme refused, and Mudali, satisfied that his name had been cleared, allowed the matter to be dropped.

The *khɔrɔ* or the queen may dissuade the parties from resorting to the *mugɔme*. Siga accused Maidi—they were co-wives—of having removed a tooth from Siga's child, who died, and of inserting it into the mouth of Maidi's baby. Maidi's relatives advised her to challenge Siga, but the queen, calling Maidi to her, said, 'I cannot support you. The witchcraft may be that even of your mother. Let the matter be.' And her advice was accepted. Similarly the *khɔrɔ* discourages unfounded accusations among members of the family, curbs the inclination to squabble, and in various ways attempts to prevent the challenge which so readily rises to the lips of angry relatives. A young married woman, accusing her mother-in-law of harassing her with familiars, fled to her parents, who, when the mother-in-law came to call her back, imputed to her the death of the children of a relative of theirs. The mother-in-law brought an action, but, as is usual when there is danger of *munywalo* and family entanglements, the *khɔrɔ* quashed the case as nonsense (*zwitshele*) and sent the parties home to compose their differences by *hu khumelwa*. Tsezi, instigated by his mother-in-law, who had a family quarrel with Dali, accused the latter of sending the lightning which had struck down a tree near his village, but the district head stopped the challenge from being submitted to a *mugɔme* by dismissing the case as unfounded gossip. Sagani, whose

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695 787 adultery with his father's young wife was exposed by her, accused her of causing his son's death; but the *khɔrɔ* told him to beg pardon with a goat, which would also serve as the 'cutter of the tongue'. When uterine sisters challenged one another before the *khɔrɔ* the men ridiculed them, saying, 'Who has ever heard of uterine sisters bewitching one another'—not a very conclusive argument, but sufficient for the purpose in hand. When Mabula, the cattle-linked sister, was called to squirt water (*ku phasa*) for the sick child of her brother, she construed the summons as an accusation of witchcraft, for to call another (not a close relative) to perform this rite is one method of imputing witchcraft; but Mabula's husband intervened in the *khɔrɔ*, explained how his wife and her brother by their quarrels were breaking up his home, and suggested that they beg pardon of one another. The *khɔrɔ* agreed and averted the challenge.

Even if the parties had been to the *mugɔme* with the official witness the *khɔrɔ* is not absolutely bound. In the old days, it is said, the *khɔrɔ* allowed argument as if the divination of the *mugɔme* was not infallible and if the parties were not satisfied the *khɔrɔ* could on the initiative of one of them send them to a second *mugɔme*. To-day, despite the theory that the *mugɔme* is infallible, the old practice persists. We have seen many arguments on the merits and many reversals of the findings of the *mugɔme*. These findings may be attacked on the grounds of irregularities in the procedure, such as separation of the parties when they were on the journey, corruption of the 'ears', incompetence of the *mugɔme* who failed to find the *phitho* or to indicate correctly the group or totem names of all the parties, dissatisfaction of the one party with the findings at the séance, confusion of the bones by medicines 'thrown' at home, and many others. When there is a conflict between the evidence or a presumption (such as, in adultery cases, the presumption that a woman's evidence is almost as reliable as the bones) and the findings of the *mugɔme*, there is no telling which way the ultimate verdict will go. The cases in which these conflicts have occurred are too complicated for adequate handling here, largely because the primary object of the *khɔrɔ* is appeasement of the parties and reconciliation of what appear to be incongruous institutions.

There are other aspects of the procedure that have great legal interest—for example, the principles governing vicarious representation of challenger and challenged before the *mugɔme* and the right of the person vicariously smelt out to appeal for a second expedition of which he is a party, the rule as to the conduct of the parties on the journey, the requirement of the *khɔrɔ* that it can take cognizance, not of gossip or general rumour, but only a specific accusation by a specific challenger, and many others. We shall touch upon two further points only.

695 791 Firstly the *mugɔme* is always a Shangana-Tonga and lives far away. Litigants from other tribes come to Ŭulovedu, but the Lovedu generally say that they are going to Phafuli, on the borders of Portuguese East Africa. The theory is that the more distant the *mugɔme* the more reliable his verdict will be. But distance also safeguards the diviner from the vengeance that neighbours might take, shifts the incidence of distasteful responsibilities from the *khɔrɔ* and eliminates strife between the two

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XIII. AT THE CAPITAL

(a) RE-BUILDING THE COURTYARD OF THE CAPITAL

(b) THE COURTYARD (KHORO), WITH A CASE IN PROGRESS

[facing p 208]

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powerful jurisdictions, the *khɔrɔ* and the *mugɔme*. The *mugɔme*, great though his powers be, holds a precarious position in the modern world. His fees are not fixed, but the usual amount is £1 2*s*. 6*d*., though it may be 5*s*. or more for each person of the party. Much of his technique is directed towards preventing the consultants from giving him away to the European authorities. 'If you say I am a liar,' declared one *mugɔme* to the parties, 'take back your money and go elsewhere. I even challenge you to take me to the Europeans; they will agree with me, as I have a licence to divine.' In another case a *mugɔme* refused to find any one guilty. 'You force me,' he said, 'to smell out the witch, but you have left him at home. The other diviners who smelt out this man [the challenged person] are all wrong. And you [the challenger], if you wish to settle the dispute, must place a head of cattle as a sacred beast to wake up your grandfather.' But this finding did not persuade the parties to withdraw their case from the *khɔrɔ*, and the *khɔrɔ*, ignoring the finding, settled the matter in its own way.

Secondly, the wager is not made by way of an oath, but it is sometimes reduced to writing: 'They bet four head of cattle' (*va bɛjije khomu je nne*); that is all. The tiny slip of paper is kept by the 'ears'. The use of the term *ku bɛja* shows, as the people say, that the wager is a new conception. But we cannot be certain that the wager has been borrowed from Europeans. It fits the whole complex of judicial process: its essence is consent of the parties to be bound by their wager and by the findings of the *mugɔme*. If one of the parties disagrees with these findings, he is entitled to demand back the money paid to the *mugɔme* and ask the party to go further to another *mugɔme*. The *khɔrɔ* may, however, vary the bet. The victor comes to the *khɔrɔ* and blows his horn; and the women ululate and dance (*ku pɛbɛla*, which by extension also means to be acquitted or declared innocent by ordeal or *mugɔme*). Meanwhile the vanquished party goes home and, if he is contrite, he says that he could not help doing wrong. Next day he might appear in the *khɔrɔ*, ask for time to pay or *khumchwa* or send an old man to plead for a reduction of the bet. The victor pretends to refuse, but in the end, if the *khɔrɔ* presses him, he will agree. Or the *khɔrɔ* may, on its own initiative, reduce the bet. Everything depends on the circumstances. Where the mother of a man was alleged to have killed the wife of his elder brother (the challenger), the *mugɔme's* verdict was against the mother, but as he had said that she was not a born witch, but had only purchased the medicine from another, the *khɔrɔ* awarded the challenger two head of cattle instead of the six actually wagered. The bet is often not paid in full, while sometimes nothing at all is exacted as the 'cutter of the tongue' of the slanderer. But we have seen cases in which the *khɔrɔ* has, at the suggestion of one party, raised a wager from four to six head of cattle.

This is not the place to discuss the interrelations of the tribal and the European systems. For one thing, the subject requires a volume to itself. But it is necessary to insist that in criminal matters the system of Native courts is by European law essentially an integral part of the European structure. In 1934 Mujaji was given criminal jurisdiction in respect of offences punishable under Native law, but fines are limited to two head

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integration that has taken place has been a response of the culture itself to the challenges of the new order. Therein lies the greatest difference from the manner in which Christianity has influenced the culture. Since 1938 the policy has changed somewhat, and there are more active though still not conscious interferences with custom; but among the Lovedu the effect as yet has been negligible. 177

The labour migration to towns and farms, necessitated by taxation, is reluctantly undertaken. The Lovedu are not easy prey to recruiters, who have to give assurances regarding, not only labour and other conditions, but also immunity from arrest for arrears of tax. The ideal is to return home, for 'The only place one never returns to is the womb'. The migration has not had the great effect that is reported in other parts of Africa: very little that is brought back is incorporated into the culture, even the accent men acquire in towns being rapidly discarded: marriage ceremonial does not require the presence of the man, his bridal visits being often undertaken by others; the pivotal position of women in the social structure minimizes disturbances; and, since during the whole suckling period a husband should partially avoid his wife, his absence for six months or so in town is not a serious problem as far as sexual adjustments are concerned. The absence of the men creates difficulties in holding the initiations and in economic dispositions. But the salient fact is that the energies liberated by the use of the plough exceed the drain caused by the labour migration. Old men, who no longer pay taxes, conduct the political and legal affairs of the tribe, and women, who do not migrate, control religion and ritual.

In legal arrangements there have been changes. But the deprivation of the power to enforce decisions means little to the old culture, which never relied upon force, though it may mean something when the sanction of reciprocity has become undermined. The force of the law is being destroyed, not by the limited jurisdiction allowed, but by the interference of solicitors and the multiplication, so it is believed, of criminals acquitted or protected by the European. Witches, they say, escape punishment by Europeans, because Europeans neither have witchcraft nor understand its workings. We have elsewhere noted some readjustments in legal procedure. Here we need add only a few further points The *khɔrɔ* must be careful lest dissatisfied litigants report procedures or decisions that are illegal by European standards; but, on the other hand, it sometimes threatens recalcitrant debtors with the dire consequences of being sent to the European, and such is the disinclination to be judged by the European that the threat is generally effective. The *khɔrɔ*, for instance, takes care not to order an expulsion (which is illegal) before the crops are reaped, as the victim is then more liable to appeal, while many cases may be quoted in which the threat to send a litigant to the Native Commissioner has led to a solution by agreement. The weakening of the sanctions of reciprocity has led to increasing resort, not to the European courts, but to 'sending back' the evil. 177 692

The *khɔrɔ* has more and more to deal with written evidence, such as cattle lists, letters between the parties and from farmers, and pieces of paper on which had been noted the marriage cattle that have passed. 177 695

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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177 695 The handling of this evidence is woefully unskilful, but important distinctions must be made. Where the writing takes the place of the notches that used to be cut on sticks to indicate the cattle that had passed, it tends to be accepted if there is other supporting evidence; statements in a letter of the amount of money sent with the letter are generally given credence; but sentiments expressed in letters and written accounts of the circumstances of a case are usually completely ignored or dismissed as unimportant. In one case where a husband wrote that he had definitely deserted his wife, the court ignored the letter on the ground that, unless the husband gave his evidence in person, he might well reverse his attitude and appeal to the Native Commissioner. The subject of the development in the handling of written evidence is a large one; but to what we have said we would merely add that the recording of evidence in writing has been attempted, since 1932, in only fifteen cases all told. The attempt has miserably failed. The usual record reads approximately as follows: 'Andrew Malopo *v.* £19. 5 Jim Malate 2/8/32', and to that cryptic statement nothing is added by way of such embellishment as the nature of the case, whether the date refers to the day of trial or retrial or payment, whether in fact there has been payment, and so on. Native Commissioners have sometimes tendered advice about how cases should be decided and recorded, but it is beyond their province, and the results have been precisely nil.

177 642 Political institutions have suffered no fundamental change. External relations are maintained through the wives the queen still receives from, and the rain she still gives to, foreign chiefs; the suppression of military exploits and cattle raids has not affected the Lovedu. Relations with European authorities have modified initiative and control over large spheres of policy, for the tribal authorities receive instructions rather than discuss suggestions, though consultation is nowadays a recognized preliminary to the introduction of an innovation. The tribal gathering (*khivij*) never was important in Ulovedu; now it discusses perhaps more tribal matters than in the past, as well as European proposals and demands, but it has little power. The councillors, presenting European matters, sometimes give a distorted version, finding it difficult to justify either the measure proposed or their inability to bring about modifications or to circumvent it; and very often they do not mention important points at all. The widespread tendency to justify a desired action by saddling the European with responsibility for it reappears again and again. The people may be told by the councillors (who have a car) to mend the road, because, they say, an official who broke the spring of his car upon it has complained to the Native Commissioner; the administrative admonition to maintain better control over young boys going to work without their parents' consent was presented to the tribal meeting as a warning that boys not carrying tax receipts would be arrested if found at beer parties. (By traditional standards, now maintained with difficulty, beer parties are only for adults.) The justification or circumvention is upon the pattern that is known, and that pattern, despite the intervention of the European, remains intact.

177 231 656 Measures taken to protect national (South African) interests, such as

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

634 characteristic of Lowveld political organization. Districts are still of
624 great importance, and the district head is a busy and important man, both socially and politically. Contact with the European has resulted in two diverse tendencies observable in our area: among small tribes,
634 such as Phalaborwa and Sekhopo's Lobedu, there has been increased
624 centralization, the chief taking over functions, such as allocation of
178 land, which used to be the province of headmen; elsewhere, especially in the large kingdom of Modjadji, district headmen are in many respects becoming more independent, exacting from underlings labour to which they are not entitled and even controlling other districts to which they have no right.

624 Women may here, as among Venda, be heads of districts,[1] and, though the proportion of women to men is never high, they are often
562 the most important district heads in the tribe. Women become headmen in a variety of ways: among Lobedu a woman of the royal family may be appointed head of an area (generally, nowadays, over newly-bought tribal land) and though in practice her husband may do most of the work, she it is who is recognized and approached in the last resort. A daughter of the chief house succeeds her father even if there are sons of other houses; a woman may succeed her husband when the children are too young, and though, strictly speaking, she is only a regent in this case, she often continues to rule until her death and long after her son has attained his majority. Or a *rakhadi* may be asked to act as regent for her nephew, in which case she very often secures the succession for her own son, ousting the rightful heir.

● 695 LAW AND JUSTICE. The Lowveld was the land of the ordeal, the only method by which witchcraft could be discovered or difficult cases of theft and adultery, where evidence was inconclusive, be decided. Boiling medicated water which scalded only the hands of the guilty might be used or a concoction be drunk which intoxicated the culprit, leaving the innocent unaffected. Except for occasional use among the Phalaborwa, however, the ordeal has been completely ousted by the Shangana–Tonga smeller-out and a modern method of dealing with witchcraft has developed over the whole of the Lowveld, which has spread not only into Vendaland but also into portions of the

[1] Except among Phalaborwa, Tsubye, and the people of Tswale and Sekhopo.

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

Highveld. When, after many private consultations with diviners, a man decides to make an accusation of witchcraft, he and the accused will *betcha* or lay a wager of money or cattle on the matter, after which, accompanied by a witness, the 'ears of the chief', supplied by the Head Kraal, they set out to consult a far-away smeller-out, nearly always a Shangana–Tonga who lives too far to know anything of the people concerned. Unless the smeller-out is able to give the totems of all members of the party and successfully find an object that has been hidden beforehand, they will pass on to another until some one suitable is found. The verdict of the smeller-out is taken to court where it is always accepted and the guilty party told to pay his wager, the modern counterpart of the death penalty of old. A distinction between murder and accidental homicide is everywhere found in the Lowveld, punishment for the latter being the handing over of a girl to the injured family. She never returns home, nor does any bride-price pass.

Bantu etiquette, which makes it impossible for a case to be reported to the chief except through a third party, generally among other Sotho tribes one or two specially appointed men, has in the Lowveld given rise to a rather more complicated system whereby each district has its 'mother' at the Head Kraal, through whom reports are made and actions brought. Where a person in one district has a case at the Head Kraal against some one in another district, the 'mother' of the complainant's district will approach the 'mother' of defendant's district to call his 'children' to the court, and various payments are connected with the system. Most of the important men living at or near the Head Kraal are such 'mothers', many having more than one district in their charge.

FAMILY AND CLAN. There is among Lowveld Sotho no term distinguishing the father's from the mother's side of the family, the word *moloko* being used to denote all relatives whether on the father's side or the mother's; and in practice, whether at weddings or at working parties, both sets of relatives play an equally important, if sometimes different, part. A man inherits his totem and family name from his father, but in his education and social life his mother's people have great influence. Most children spend some years of their life with the

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

881 established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on either
794 side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dajane* or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, wailing manner.

794 An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tendency for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools, to set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where they are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they are a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Highveld have no *komana*; but a Narene man who has come to live in the area has brought *komana* drums and holds schools to which many Dikxale go.

836 Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowveld
837 tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa in having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved of by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adultery, which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in any way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widows, especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even though
[684] they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attached to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness is better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where there is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act will
[695] send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the bare word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepted.
[684] Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adultery, with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head of cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more than a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in the fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the parties concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a boy whose people they do not consider suitable.

582 Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution of
[171] preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu-Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully 40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with the

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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695 Besides the *khɔrɔ* fees already mentioned, there is a 'closing' fee, required only where *munywalo* is returned. Theoretically, one of the cattle is slaughtered and eaten by the *khɔrɔ*, but in practice this is rarely done. Much more usually does one see, when plaintiff is paid some goats or some cattle and goats as the result of a judgement, that the *khɔrɔ* orders one of the goats to be set aside as the 'goat of the shaking of the beards', which is killed for those attending the session, in recognition of all the talking they have done. The queen receives only the £1 exacted as 'opening' fee—required always in *munywalo* suits, rarely in theft, and never in other cases—and the head of cattle paid in 'blood cases' that come before the *khɔrɔ* of the capital. What she receives in this way can never enrich her, though it helps her to provide the *munywalo* of her many wives.

696 Fees and fines or restitution raise questions of execution. The *khɔrɔ* never levied execution in the past and it cannot do so to-day, but self-help is absolutely forbidden. The *khɔrɔ* reluctantly and rarely calls in the aid of the Native Commissioner, and for a litigant to place his case in the hands of a solicitor is an abomination which, whatever his rights, will turn the *khɔrɔ* against him. Execution is frowned upon almost as much as intervention by the European authorities; it is so alien that few things in the society arouse such indignation as seizure by the European sheriff. People hate to be coerced, not only in *khɔrɔ* proceedings, but in every sphere of activities, including their labour for the queen; just as differences must be settled by consent, so also the queen must solicit labour with entertainments. There are exceptions, some apparent, some real: a disloyal district head may be deposed; a subject who disobeys and does not pay the fine imposed may be expelled; a witch's cattle used to be confiscated. But these are not *khɔrɔ* cases and, except in the case of the witch, there is no execution upon property or person.

The enforcement of *khɔrɔ* decisions is left entirely to the parties. But they must agree; they cannot resort to force. This does not mean that the values of the society have been irresistibly internalized or that men are supersensitive to conscience and shame. It is the continuous pressure of institutionalized obligations, the impossibility of doing without the tangible day-by-day mutualities, and the disorganization caused by failure of the long-run reciprocities, not a sense of guilt or shame, which slowly but surely force a man to carry out the compromise reached in the *khɔrɔ*. A judgement creditor may receive no satisfaction for years; he may complain again and again to the *khɔrɔ* that no restitution has been made; yet if the debtor, appearing in the court, says that he is still 'looking for' the payment, it will usually be sufficient. 'Looking for' implies willingness to pay and it rehabilitates the wrongdoer; the *khɔrɔ* may even reprimand an impatient judgement creditor, at least if he has no grounds for casting aspersions upon the honesty or sincerity of the debtor. 'The law', in their phraseology, 'does not eat the man-who-says-I-shall-pay'. Culture contact has struck a severe blow at settlement by consent; the *khɔrɔ*, in an attempt to regain prestige, clamours for the power to punish; and the parties, reluctant to invoke European aid, bolster up the crumbling reciprocities with supernatural sanctions. Most men still have great

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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confidence in the *khɔrɔ* and its methods, but some men increasingly resort to a mixture of the supernatural, the 'sending back' of the evil, and the processes of the European courts.

'Blood' cases and disobedience to tribal authorities, as well as witchcraft, are dealt with by procedures essentially different from those so far described. Homicide, especially accidental killing (*gozi*), is usually restituted by *hu khumɛlwa* and by converting the criminal to a kinsman, without the intervention of the *khɔrɔ* or payment to the queen. But other procedures were also used: a murderer might be killed in the heat of the moment by a relative of the victim, and in such a case that ended the matter; or he might be executed by order of the queen unless he could escape to one of the recognized sanctuaries in the country; or he might be dealt with as a witch. Homicide in its manifold aspects is too large a subject for treatment here, but since it is, in regard to aspects of law dealt with in this book, adequately illuminated by our next subject, viz. procedure in 'blood' cases, we may content ourselves with the remark that homicide apparently did not involve a *khɔrɔ* trial.

'Blood' cases to-day present a curious mixture of different procedures of the past. One old element of the procedure, being incongruous with the disapproval of self-help, has completely disappeared. Old men told us that 'blood' cases were settled by the kin, not submitted to the *khɔrɔ*. That, but no doubt also the reluctance to appeal to the European, to-day explains the emphasis on reconciliation and the encouragement of *hu khumɛlwa* in these cases. If a 'blood' case comes to the *khɔrɔ*, the victim gets nothing and the assaulter pays heavily; if the matter is privately settled, the victim gets something and the assaulter pays less. In the old days, if private settlement failed, the kin of the victim went to attack the assaulter's village: they reported to the queen, but she exacted no fine if in the attack a man was killed. Though this method of execution is unknown to-day, it is still said that a man who kills an aggressor pays nothing, not even to the queen, for 'He who dies on the road is not to be cried for. Let the aggressor kill himself' (*mufa-dzileni a u lɛlwi, mulala u ibolaɛlɛ*). This precept is also invoked to justify 'revenge' by means of medicines, but here, as in the case of aggression, it is regarded as self-defence, not self-help, just as killing an adulterer caught in the act—in which case also no blood-money is paid, even to the queen—is thought of as killing a thieving dog. These conceptions leave intact the aversion from vengeance: there is no blood revenge, no vendetta, no trace of the *lex talionis*, though a limb for a limb is known not very far off. Self-help, even in cases where it is admitted among tribes with more highly developed legal institutions, is frowned upon: one may neither kill a pig of another that damages one's crops nor drive cattle that have entered one's gardens into the fields of their owner. A man, provoked or assaulted by another, has no right to retaliate; and it is doubted whether the provocation will mitigate his offence, for no man may take the law in his own hands. Pheduli's relative had been killed by Magwale's sorcery, and in anger Pheduli struck Magwale's cow, which subsequently went lame; yet he was ordered by the *khɔrɔ* to pay the usual compensation.

How has the old procedure merged with the new conceptions? We

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

5. The Lovedu asked them how they managed to live without fire. The Kheoga said : " What is fire ? what does it do ? " The Lovedu said : " We warm ourselves by the fire and cook the food with it." Then they gave them cooked food. When they had eaten they found that it tasted sweet. So they asked the Lovedu for fire. They wanted to cook with it and to warm themselves. When it went out they returned again to ask for fire. Then they began to work with it. 173

6. Now the Lovedu desired the country and its wealth. They wanted to take possession of it. But they were unable (to do so), as they found that it had its possessors. So they planned to fight and to drive the Kheoga out of the country. 173 726

7. Now they thought that their weapons could be the fire. So they ordered the young men to seize fire-brands. They surrounded the villages of the Kheoga to set fire to the country that the fire might burn the villages together with the people. The young men did so. The fire burnt everywhere and laid the villages in ashes. The Kheoga were in great distress. They left their villages and fled. But there was no spot for them to get away, for the fire surrounded the whole country.

8. Some ascended the hills, they were protected by the large rocks, where the fire could not come. Others climbed upon trees. These burnt altogether, for the grass was very tall, for it had not been burned since the beginning. Many people died a terrible death. Only very few escaped. Even to-day these people have not yet become a tribe again. Their kin has not yet increased similar to others.[16]

9. So the country became property of the Lovedu until to-day. The Lovedu gained their country by fighting for it with fire. 173 773

10. Furthermore they say that on their journey from Mashonaland the Lovedu were in great troubles, when they found a dried-up country —a country without water. The large rivers were far from them. They were looking for much water and did not find it. It is said that their chief chose young men to look for water for the tribe. He himself went with them. They were searching but they missed it.

11. They say that the chief had taken with him the calabash which his father had given him to produce rain. So he tried to make the rain fall where they were. After a little while there fell a heavy rain and filled all the rivers and watercourses. When they returned to their shelters, they arrived wet to the skin. The people got water for drinking and cook-

[16] They have inter-married with the Lovedu and other tribes.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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legitimate, for men rely upon their labours and place their faith in the rain, the making of which is the prerogative of the queen.

Failure of one's crops is attributed, not to witchcraft, but in a bad year to the heat of the sun and in normal seasons to indolence or bad soil. In the last resort, however, when every one suffers equally, or when there is a major drought, the calamity is regarded as a punishment by the gods, who 'hold the arms of the queen', or by the queen herself, who is displeased in her heart. Diseases and pests are not magical visitations. Though called 'the witch of the mealies' because it saps their strength, witchweed (*Wormskioldia longipedunculata*) is neither sent by witches nor combated by supernatural means. Destructive insects and parasites, such as stalkborers, weevils, and caterpillars, are regarded, not as being 'sent', but as perfectly natural results of untimely planting or unseasonal rain. Birds, monkeys, rats, and mice are, generally speaking, combated by the practical means at the disposal of man, such as trapping or scaring. Numerous other precautions are taken: one does not plant millet unless one's neighbours do likewise, because when there are many fields, all, not merely one, will be at the mercy of predatory birds; people favour bird-proof corns, though they are harder to thresh; late-maturing crops, whatever their productivity, are discarded in favour of those ripening early, because they cannot be reaped before the cattle start their unrestricted grazing; and a much-favoured peanut, which is also easy to reap, is liable to sprout unless special precautions are taken. In short, the problems of agriculture are tackled in a practical manner.

This does not mean that a practical demonstration of the superiority of new methods will always have the desired effect. Agricultural demonstrators have made very little impression. It is often thought that this is due to the improvidence, lack of ambition, and innate conservatism of the 'savage'. A farmer will tell you that, after years of experience on his farm, his Native labourers go home to practise their primitive, wasteful methods. The trouble is not savage incapacity, but the incongruity of our ways, our technology, and our ideals with theirs. The demonstrator is like a teacher speaking a foreign language and working with material and concepts which do not exist in the society. He often is wholly ignorant of the background of belief. His education makes him unduly scornful of savage superstitions, instead of using them to advantage. In agriculture, among the Lovedu, there is one practice we might call superstition. It is *hu upa*, a method of safeguarding crops with medicine against the depredations of birds and monkeys. It is quite harmless, absorbs little of the time or energy of the few children who scatter the medicine, and does not preclude the use of other, more empirical methods. There is no need to waste eloquence upon eradicating a practice which strengthens the interest of the children in agriculture, causes no slackening in their scaring activities from the platforms erected in the fields, and, in the last resort, is an effective psychological device; for it equalizes the struggle of man against nature and maintains at the requisite intensity the confidence which enables him to strive hopefully against his difficulties.

Practical knowledge is undoubtedly the weapon with which demonstrators should combat progressive degeneration in agriculture; but it is

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824 protective medicines (*dipiaba*) of the village. The fruits are eaten by herdboys, January to March. The first appearance of its flowers (October) indicates the time when chickens must not be hatched or bought, because of the danger of sand fleas (*madzedzi*). There are, incidentally, many other plants which indicate the approach of the seasons or the correct time for certain activities, e.g. when *musoso* (*Terminalia serecea*) blossoms, edible termites get their wings and children go out to catch them.

Muvizi (*Colocasia antiquorum*). Planted at home—in the old days also [262] in river gardens—to provide relish from August to November. The leaves take only a few minutes to cook, compared with an hour or more for many other relishes. The bulb is cooked separately, like sweet potatoes.

Muɔbyani (*Lanna edulis*). A soft wood used for milk pails and bowls. [262] The fruit, which is eaten by children and adults, ripens in November-December. The wood is not suitable for hut rafters, as it is attacked by [283] weevils, but the bark serves as a rough, unworked string for tying together the poles of such structures as pig pens. Water in which the leaves are crushed is used as an eye lotion.

Muvola (*Parinarium curatellifolium*). The fruit, called *grysappel* (grey [262 apple) in Afrikaans, is liked and of very great value in times of starvation. 73[It is said to have saved the people in the years 1894–6, when drought, locusts, and cattle diseases overwhelmed the country. At such times the fruit is prepared, like *morula*, in the form of a cider (*vureba*), which is yellowish and sweet. It also has economic uses.

824 We have in our list over a hundred different kinds of wild edible fruits 262 and berries, many of them, it is true, eaten chiefly by herdboys. But numerous wild fruits are relished by adults, such as wild figs (of which there are seven different kinds), *muukhoma* (*Burchemia discolor*), of which a tasty, if heavy, cake is made, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), *muṭazwa* (*Pouzolzia hypoleuca*), *munnthu* (*Syzygium cordatum*), *mucbc* (*Anona senegalensis*), and many others. The *morula* is, as we have seen, an important national beverage with valuable anti-scorbutic properties. There are also wild bananas (*muvva*), long ago brought from the north, but now practically eradicated by animals. Not much reliance is placed upon cultivated fruits, but there are oranges, some pawpaws, and mangoes, planted by the early Christians; these have not subsequently been added to to any extent and they are very much neglected.

For relishes, without which porridge cannot be eaten, people rely largely upon nature. Apart from the leaves of pumpkins and beans, which are available from February to June, they use a great variety of wild spinaches, chief among which are blackjack (*Bidens pilosa*), *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*), and *thccbc* (*Amoranthus Thumbergi*). In our list we have forty-five greens or relishes. But not only plants provide relishes. In September and in the winter months, when greens are scarce, *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swaziae*), fatty black male termites, are a great standby. The female of the same species (*dinnṭwa*), which swarm from December to March, the rainy season, are so important in the national diet that they must be ritually 'bitten' (*hu luma*) and sent to the queen from every district. They are roasted, winnowed, and eaten as

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly, 643
ritual suicide is not conceived to have any relation to the welfare of the 762
country. People do not say that the country will suffer if the physical 731
powers of the queen fail. But ritual suicide does elevate the queen to a divinity; only by her act, not because of susceptibility to the weaknesses of man, can she die. Age neither increases nor decreases her powers. She is the 'soil'; her death 'heals' or 'dries up' the soil in the double sense of defiling it (as twins do) and scorching it (as the sun does); and as they phrase it, the 'country dies with its owner'. Consequently, after the queen's death, famines come, cattle and people succumb, and many flee the country. When Mujaji II committed suicide in 1894, there followed the *matshɔna*, the three years of unprecedented drought and pests, during which, according to contemporary European observers, practically all the cattle and a third of the population died. After the death of Mugɔdɔ, likewise, there was a great famine. The only other famine vividly recorded by tradition was during the reign of a chief who, being a usurper, was unable to make rain. Though the death of a chief presages death of the country, there is no great hurry to appoint a new queen. To the unfolding of a plan that guarantees abundance, immediate needs, even the need for the life-giving rain, must be subordinated.

For an account of succession to the throne we have to rely upon the 643
memories of men who were adults forty-five years ago. The practical 762
and the ideal are confused in their minds. The generalized account we give is thus not specifically related to the death of Mujaji II unless otherwise indicated. Shortly before her death, the queen calls together her great men, sits silently looking at them for a while, and then retires to her hut. She will not see again the young boys who have gone to the *vudiga*. Long before this, Mujaji II and her inner 'council' had named the daughter of Leakhali, who was her 'sister' and great wife, as successor; she had driven both mother and daughter with their brothers from the country, but was secretly receiving and instructing the daughter. None but a small circle of close relatives knew of these arrangements; and a little later she took poison (*khitaba*) [278] in which the fatal ingredients are said to be the brain and spinal cord of the crocodile. There is a rule that the killer of a crocodile is for ever debarred from entering the capital, a prohibition patterned [784] upon the taboos against bringing into a village the wood of trees with which shrines and protective charms (*dithugula*) are made, for these trees 'reveal', and so render useless, what they create. The poison is not conceived to kill instantaneously; the queen dies in the presence of those who know the secrets, but the death is not made public. Those who pass the royal hut still greet her; even cases are still submitted as if for her final decision. Deception of the people is the aim emphasized in descriptions and in phraseology. In the old days many cattle were killed 'to deceive the people', but neither this killing, which provided at least for the funeral feast and the skin for the dead body, nor the other arrangements, had this function only. The spirit of the deceased continues, as it were, to preside over the country and no one could take over the reins 643
of government. 766

The body decomposes, it is ritually rubbed (*hu fɔrɔla*) to remove skin 789

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643 physical imperfections, not susceptible to the ills that befall ordinary men; that she cannot die a natural death but departs only by her own volition; that succession to the throne is uncertain since the choice of a ruler must in the last resort be made by the spirits of the tribe; that though she may not have a husband, lest political control become concentrated in him, yet she must bear the heir by a secret consort (a royal classificatory brother) specially chosen to maintain untarnished the purity of the royal blood; that she ensures the regularity of nature and the changing of the seasons; and, more 643 particularly, that her death dislocates the rhythm of nature, bringing drought and famine, the abrogation of law and order. People today still 731 speak with horror and fear of the years (1894–6) following the death of the previous queen, Majuji II. They were years, as we know from documentary sources, when drought, locusts, rinderpest and, in their wake, unprecedented famine and desolation, wiped out practically all the cattle and perhaps a third of the human population.

643 The preservation of the queen's sanctity requires that her life be subject to observances which shield her from the public eye and restrain her movements. She is 'the huckster in the hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) who sells her rain-medicines from the seclusion of her abode, and may not move about freely or leave the district of the capital. She was the only chief in the Union who, a few years ago, could not go to the Native Commissioners' Office to exercise the vote of her people in the election of a representative to the Native Representative Council. She cannot attend large assemblies of men, and is generally inaccessible except to her close relatives and great councillors. But otherwise her activities are not restricted, nor is her life a continuous ritual and, unlike other Divine Kings, there are no elaborate safeguards surrounding her every movement.

Tradition decrees that chiefs may have no physical defect, but not that [762] they must die while still young and strong. Ritual suicide of the queen is by Lovedu conceptions not a means of guaranteeing a timely death lest failure of physical powers should upset the regularity of nature, but rather a symbol of her divinity, for it proves that she is not heir to the weaknesses of ordinary man. It is mystically connected with the fourth circumcision school in her reign: she must see the boys going in but not coming back. The Lovedu queen is believed to be immune from disease, but age does not diminish—it even increases—her mystical powers over nature. The only disqualification to rule is inability to make rain in the early period of her reign. Once she [789 has demonstrated, by her ability to make rain, that the rain-charms have 821] been entrusted to her and that she has been divinely chosen, irregularities in the seasons are attributed not to weakness of her powers but to some extraneous factor, such as contraventions of rules associated with keeping the country cool, disobedience to the chief, and the anger of the ancestor spirits.

643 Arrangements connected with succession of a new queen also emphasize 766 her mystical relations with the cosmic order. The death of her predecessor 789

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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season pro-
821 pitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gɔmana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time,
821 people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken
789 to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district
731 heads may formally pay homage (*ku lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle, or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lesugu*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[754] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale disperses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with
821 her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digɔma

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
784 of man consists of *digɔma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *gɔma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
821 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-vuhwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *gɔma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *gɔma* which is said to 'bite'

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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421 ance against future want by building up relations of friendship
571 and goodwill with kin and neighbours whom you can call upon for assistance in time of need. Nor does property, as in Western society, command the services of others to any appreciable
[476] extent. The core of helpers in a work-party are there primarily
[273] because of ties of kinship and neighbourhood; the beer that is served may be enjoyed by any passer-by who wishes to join in. Traditionally, then, property is of value to the Lobedu only in so far as it can be consumed or meets an immediate need on the one hand or, on the other, is used for creating and maintain-
[177] ing social relationships. This is changing now under conditions of culture contact but the change is still largely confined to Christians.

431 There is not a great deal of exchange and what there is takes
571 the form most frequently of gift exchange[1]. Property in the
431 form of a gift is a tangible sign of a social relationship. A new
571 bride speaks to no one in her new homestead until given a small
602 gift in token of her new social relationship to the giver and the same holds for a newly-initiated boy or girl. Ties with one's maternal kin and with affines are also kept alive by gifts and gift-exchange. It is significant that agnatic ties are the only ones that do not require continuous gift-exchange. Yet even
421 here a service rendered seldom goes unrewarded. Property and
571 human relationships are, then, closely interlinked. That it is not possible always to separate economic and social relationship among the Lobedu is shown by the following examples.
431 Just after the 1895 rinderpest Khidima, a royal relative, went
931 to the queen, who is traditionally responsible for giving succour
643 to orphans and the needy, to ask for money to buy mealies.
571 She gave him some. A few years later he sent a messenger to her to say he 'had a baby daughter'. The queen accepted the gift and when the girl reached puberty presented her with a
[588] *theri* goat according to custom. Cattle followed and the girl, Myakwane, was duly 'married' by the queen. This was the beginning of a permanent bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship, for in 1950 the queen sent a messenger to the widow of Myakwane's brother who had used his sister's cattle, to ask for her daughter in marriage. '*Ge lada dikhomo tja ka. Ge nyaga masafi a de a athidele*—I am following the tracks of my cattle.

[1] Krige, E. J., 1941.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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476 calculation, no supervision. The adjustments in the situation rely upon
571 no pre-organization; there is practically no leadership or direction; and
461 yet an effective interaction is attained. The total pattern is a part of the social system; it is not as if two or more people have casually encountered one another and have by trial and error to discover how to co-operate [184] effectively in performing the task. Christians, whose standards of organization, performance, and efficiency are derived from those of the white man, attempt to submit the workers to discipline. They sometimes constitute themselves as foremen, they attempt to apply the available energy systematically, they have a system of rewards and penalties. The result is, not co-operation, but service; there are few, if any, songs and the occasion is no longer a gala social event.

The workers at a *lejema* usually adjourn after one and a half or two hours to refresh themselves at about 11 a.m., when a pot of beer, euphemistically called 'the knife-sharpener', is brought to the field. The interval is of indefinite duration and is so much out of harmony with modern ideas, that 'the knife-sharpener' is often regarded with disfavour; instead of sharpening, it blunts the edge of activity in the modern situation, in which the *lejema*-giver thinks of himself as an employer and the workers are concerned to avoid being exploited. Neither employer nor employee is equipped by his background of culture and training to achieve success in these new roles; and the result is that tensions arise. Fortunately, however, the *lejema* is still overwhelmingly a collective social event. There is as yet no need to buoy up labour with dignity and moral worth; it is sufficient to submerge it in the sociability of beer. For the real nature of the *lejema* appears when the workers go to the home of the *lejema*-giver. The situation there instantly dispels any preconception [574] we may have of special rewards for the workers. There are visitors, dubbed *vahobedi* (solicitants) and as such are distinguished from the *vashumi* (workers). In our society they would be called 'gate-crashers' or 'beggars', but they are not in needy circumstances and do not ask for favours; they are entitled to join in. Individually they not only imbibe calabash for calabash with the workers, but far outnumber them, not unusually by as much as four or five to one.

[735] To judge the situation correctly, we must remember that begging, one of the traits of the Lovedu we might regard as most irritating, is not socially disapproved. He who has and does not give is the offender, not he who asks for what he needs. The case is different, however, when the beggar is a loafer and sponger, roaming about in search of beer without doing any work; and if, as is not unlikely, he is disliked, his presence during the exhilaration caused by the beer is liable to cause a breach of the peace and he might be turned away. Generally speaking, *vashumi* are not given special beer; the beer is not a reward for their services, but a feast transforming work into recreation and reflecting the emphasis upon liberality. To-day the *vahobedi* are sometimes looked upon as parasitic beggars, and measures are taken to reconstitute the *lejema* so as to make it a more economical method of co-operation. Fundamentally, all the arduous work is still done by *lejema*, though every one knows that, for, say, 4*s*. worth of salt, more workers could be obtained and better

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the 357
family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a 736
derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munywalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

Rather like the *mulada* was the *muruiwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other 735
animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was 178
given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ṭuḍa* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or 437
woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'.

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services 464
or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. 476
But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilebe* arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or [465]
cattle of others. The standard payment is 10*s.* per acre ploughed. The advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined 855
custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the 431
mother's brother, cares for (*hu lela*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maledi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration 231
passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufisiwa*, uses the 465
cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

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437 wealth; and the rewards of the society do not go to those who can manipulate the trading situation. Land cannot be traded, and cattle, the only other recognizable form of wealth, are completely absorbed in the *munywalo* exchanges. For the rest, the economic unit is as nearly as possible self-sufficient. There are occasional shortages, but usually they affect everybody more or less equally. The volume of internal trade, apart from gift exchange, was and still is insignificant. There are no markets, and skilled workers do not usually produce articles in anticipation of the needs of others. Hoes were, and pots still are, exchanged for agricultural products. The small interchange of agricultural products in normal times never unduly benefited one man at the expense of another. Animals constantly died, but only those people who had little consideration for their relatives—for elaborate rules exist as to the distribution of the various parts of an animal—thought of selling the meat. In abnormal times people sold and still sell cattle: the instinct of self-preservation overrides the sentiments against tampering with one of the main pillars of the social structure.

The Lovedu are in this respect wholly unlike their neighbours, the Shangana-Tonga, who undertook commercial journeys and had companies of carriers with elaborate organization and sharing of profits. The earliest Europeans constantly mention the begging propensities and topsy-turvy economic conceptions of the Lovedu. And even now it is useless to attempt to buy a valuable thing from them. You may succeed in getting it by begging or appealing to sentiment or showing how much you need it. With a Shangana-Tonga you may bargain; with a Lovedu bargaining arouses suspicion, the suspicion that you are making a profit out of his ignorance, and it is considered better to give than to sell. Begging is not [735] socially disapproved; it is contrasted, not with self-reliance, but with theft; and a man, it is said, should always ask for, not steal, the things of another. Begging is really the counterpart of mutual helpfulness, of the feeling of dependence on one another. Where such sentiments have a right of existence, even in royalty itself, the only consideration that evokes a sympathetic response in the trading situation is the need of the person who wishes to transact the exchange. A man does not sell for his personal gain and the price is not a matter of great moment; either goods have their fixed price or they have no price at all. The situation is always an embarrassing one. The Lovedu, in short, have no commercial instincts; they have been conditioned to mutual helpfulness and non-competitive trading.

437 They distinguish sharply between trade carried on in the traditional
577 manner and what they call 'bizmis' (business), which generally involves
795 money transactions and is associated with subterfuge and personal gain. 'Bizmis' is beyond the pale of decency; it is specially debased in the hands of those upstarts who hold initiation schools for their own personal profit. The most depraved people are the few Christians, who, in league with Europeans or on their own account, constitute themselves as middlemen and exploit their fellow men. They are *dibava*, deceivers and breakers of promises, comparable only with prostitutes who 'are eaten on the road'. The Christian Church, with its fees and collections, falls,

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476 is upon the sharing of tools rather than upon that sharing of services
571 which characterized the old *khilcbc*. But in the old institution hoes were
241 borrowed from one another and the differentiation of to-day was not unknown, though it took a different form. The organization implies a person-to-person adjustment rather than institutionalized leadership, except that he who provides the animals sometimes tends to dictate whose lands have first to be ploughed. No payment passes, however unequal the contributions or needs of the partners, and sometimes an old widow is a partner who can contribute nothing at all. The essence of the whole institution is a complete disregard of the exact equivalences of the contributions or of the services.

476 This form of co-operation, in which mutual helpfulness and reciprocity
571 and not economic advantage are stressed, finds expression in many activities. Among Christians there are potters who club together; usually they are kin who live in the same settlement. The only work they share is the excavation of the clay; each works quite independently of the other, though advice is exchanged. Men often build *ga khilcbc* instead of *ga lejema*, but in this case the association is a very loose one, consisting merely of the available friends or relatives in or near the village; and though some small gift is given by the owner of the hut built, the main feature of the co-operation is a sense of mutuality and reciprocity. The conception of mutual helpfulness recedes before that of profit when, as is becoming more common, the person for whom the work is done pays a reward in money. Curious anomalies occur, because sometimes less, sometimes more, consideration is given to the exact money equivalence of the services rendered. Where a man considers that he is paying wages for services, he usually models his behaviour upon his conception of the European employer and the whole pattern of reciprocity falls to the ground. But this model is very unpopular, though for the employer it has distinct advantages; as he contracts for the labour, he can requisition it when he wants it and can control its execution. He is no longer an equal partner, but a foreman.

One development of the *khilcbc* which is seen in townships is the 'stock fair'. It is practicable only where each of the partners periodically receives cash wages. Every month one of the partners, taken in rotation, is entitled to a fixed amount from each of the others, the purpose being to make available to every one in turn a fairly large sum of money. Though the partners wear some distinctive dress, the association is very unstable and many as a result suffer loss. The 'stock fair', far though it be removed from the *khilcbc*, is thus based on a generalization from past experience in which social ends are attained by the application of rule-of-thumb principles, with little resort to trial and error and little dependence on organizing ability or on individual leadership.

357 With the various forms of co-operation, we may briefly contrast solitary occupations and services. It is somewhat unusual for any one alone to undertake a large task, and among heathens it is rarer still for an
357 individual to hire out his services. There is no real domestic service;
736 even in the royal household, *vulada* is very different from service in our sense of the term. The *mulada*, usually an orphan, is the ward of his

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munywalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

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602 son (whom she has always with her). The mother's side of the family, no doubt because of this love, are thought to be peculiarly suited to the [736] rearing of a child whose mother has died. Such a child is, in Lovedu society, never left in the hands of a fellow wife of its mother, but goes to its mother's mother, if she is alive, or its mother's brother or even a mother's sister—any one, in fact, an the mother's side who is kind-hearted enough to wish to rear an orphan.

604 In constrast to Shangana-Tonga, there is in Lovedu society no joking relationship between a man and his mother's brother. Your mother's brother may be kind to you, but you have to show him respect: if he asks you to go on a message or to help him in the fields you cannot refuse; while, if he needs you, you may be sent to herd for him or help nurse his small children. Moreover, he may one day be your father-in-
605 law and his wife your mother-in-law. The people whom one is privileged to tease to one's heart's content, and with whom one may exchange ribald jokes, are one's cross-cousins, the children of one's mother's brother and father's sister or their children, cross-cousins once-removed, a generation below. When very young, a child may be conditioned to this type of easy relationship by being given a stick and told, 'Go and beat your cross-cousin. Show him your cousinhood,' whereupon he is expected playfully to beat his cousin. If the cousin cries, they will pacify him, saying, 'Gracious! How can you cry? Don't you know it's your cousin? You too can beat him some other time.' Or they will give him a stick and say, 'Go and avenge yourself.' Whenever one finds people behaving uproariously in each other's company or calling out vulgar jokes, one can be quite sure they are cross-cousins. Cross-cousins marry each [582] other; but while cases of a man marrying his father's sister's daughter sometimes occur, specially in the royal family, they are regarded as not quite regular and mother's brother's daughter marriage is by far the most usual. When a man tries to make love to his father's sister's daughter, she may tease him, saying, 'Away with you. We marry you, not you us. We are the husbands who find wives in your family.' The joking relation-[584] ship between a man and his cousin gives place, immediately marriage negotiations are begun, to one of strict avoidance between prospective bride and groom and a certain amount of respect even between the boys in the two families. Men say they can often tell by the attitude of their cross-cousin that there is an understanding between him and their sister even before negotiations have begun.

602 Relatives-in-law are quite as important as relatives by blood. Where marriage with the mother's brother's daughter has taken place, the marriage strengthens an existing blood link, giving far greater meaning and intimacy to the bond. The importance of relatives-in-law lies in the fact that there is conceived to be a lasting bond between the two families for generations to come, since where a man has married there his son will find a wife. The bond is kept alive by various social usages, not least among which is the beer that is always passing (about once a year, unless the harvest is bad) from the village of the wife's family to that of their son-in-law. Moreover, a man's relatives-in-law become to his children the mother's side of the family, which plays so important a part

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esent. Here was a legitimate human interest—not merely the idle 602
riosity of a European or the recording of customs that might end in 123
olice intervention.

The kin share your joys and sorrows, give support in your hour of need
d advice in the affairs of life. When you are in trouble and have to pay
fine which you do not possess, it is your brothers who will come to your
d. On the marriage of your children, your brothers are called to hear
e matter and to give their advice; when there is death your kin rally to
ur side. A widow is never faced with destitution; her husband's [736]
other will care for her, and to-day, when, as among Christians, this
metimes entails help in training the children for a career, it is often a
avy liability. In working parties or when meal has to be stamped for
er-making, it is the relatives living near who are most relied upon for
eir help. A woman whose husband is in town depends on her male kin
help her in the yearly renewal of storage receptacles, hut-building and
oughing. She will, where possible, reward them with beer, but this
by no means always done. People like living near their kin. An elder
d a younger brother, one living near Tzaneen, the other in Vulovedu,
th died. Then the grown-up son of the younger brother called the
ife and family of the elder brother to come and build near them, saying
at the children of his *ramuhulu* would not know him if they lived so far
ay. Kinship, as we point out elsewhere, knits together the political system.
t it is worth repeating that the kin are the core of the district and the
nds between districts; that, in general, the father's relatives live largely
the same district, the mother's or the wife's in some other area and
sits and gifts of beer serve as an introduction to the districts in which
ey live; and that all the heads of districts, by virtue of having to send
daughter to 'marry' the queen, are linked to the capital by a kinship bond.

One would expect that, in a society like that of the Lovedu, with a 602
ong sense of kinship obligations, the position of orphans would not be 736
ry different from that of other children. Yet the Lovedu feel the
sition of an orphan, any one wholly dependent on relatives for food
d shelter, to be a peculiarly sad one. Hence the riddle, 'Little fountain [524]
ll of muck', and its answer, 'The heart of an orphan'; hence also the
overb, 'It takes a woman with a generous heart to keep an orphan
ell'. The smoky side of a fire is called 'the side where orphans sit', and
you sit chin in hand, people always say, 'Why are you so sad? Are you
orphan?' Even old women, those skilled and inveterate beggars, think
at a sure way of enlisting your sympathy is to plead that they are
phans with no one to give them things.

It is said that orphans have to do harder work than other children and 736
ve many a time to hear complaints that they eat too much. When
e children of the house receive clothes as presents from relatives, the
phan gets little or nothing; and nowadays, while the children of the
use may be sent to school, the orphan remains at home herding.
one of our own personal contacts with orphans bore out these tales,
d when we cited them as examples contradicting their statements,
formants admitted that those cases did not bear out the general prin-
ple. Indeed, what impressed us most were the conscious efforts made,

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736 and the universal approval of these efforts, to be kind to orphans. The chief trouble, it would appear, comes from the other children, who tend to lay the blame for all their wrongdoings on the orphan, who has no mother to champion him; they will quarrel with and tease him, goading him into fighting till even a well-disposed mother finds him a source of trouble in her home. It is significant that in a story much liked by children it is an orphan boy who succeeds in making rain when the rest of the country has dried up, and who receives many hundreds of cattle as a reward.

The concepts associated with orphans, the sad intonation that creeps into the very pronunciation of the word *tsiwana*, indicate that, though there may be little basis in fact for the ill-treatment associated with them, just as in our own society few stepmothers really ill-treat their step-children, on the whole the Lovedu feel as we do that not even the best treatment at the hands of relatives can make up for the loss of father or mother. We well remember how, one day at a strange village, a small boy burst into tears because we asked him which of the men of the village was his father. He was an orphan.

736 643 That on the whole it is only the closest relatives who are willing to undertake kinship obligations which offer no reciprocal advantages is shown by the fact that it is looked upon as the duty of the queen to look after orphans who have no near relations. They are brought to the royal village (as they were to a far greater extent in the last reign), where they are looked after and, in the case of boys, given cattle to obtain a bride. Similarly, when an old man or woman without near kin dies it is the queen who undertakes the responsibility and defilement of burial.

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

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with joy' (*u pebede*); if not, there are no ululations of joy and, though 753
to-day the child is allowed to live, it must be treated by a doctor. When 826
several children have been brought, beer must be made by their mothers for the older women, the queen attends, and there is much joy. If a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order is not killed, he is called a *leshega*. He must be most careful never to bite any one, for the wound will not respond to healing treatment. But it is believed that matter taken from the teeth of the *leshega* may be applied as an antidote. It will be remembered that in the case of *Mabula* v. *Magosha* the parents of a *leshega* who had bitten her co-wife were ordered to beg pardon and to allow the 'scraping' of the teeth of their daughter. They had denied that she was a *leshega*, but the court decided that, *leshega* or not, neither she nor they could refuse something that might help the wound.

Muridi is, on the whole, dangerous, not to its primary intermediary 753
host, but to others. Its source is conceived to be usually a person, but 751
it may also be places, such as cross-roads and large rivers which become infected owing to the number of people crossing them. Nor is all *muridi* equally dangerous. Precautions are taken to protect the sick against its influence; a sick person is smeared with medicine or a stick is placed to bar entrance to his hut, its warning against entering without permission being a function also of the stick barring the door of the hut of a new-born child. Allied to but not the same as *muridi* are *leridi* (monstrous shadow) and *leṭala* (sinister spoor, the word for an ordinary track being *muṭala*). A warrior who has killed an enemy has *leridi* and, unless purified, he stands in grave danger of becoming mad or extremely quarrelsome (one of the worst social sins). If two men have had sexual relations with the same woman and one of them is ill, the other must on no account come near lest his track (*leṭala*) cause him to die. Similarly, the husband's mistress should take care to remain away from the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth.

Makhuma, from *hu khuma*, to mix together, is a conception similar to 753
muridi, but the evil, a kind of illness, infects the immediate host, who cannot transmit it to others. Critical changes especially constitute the source of the evil which mingles with or contaminates or infects the person who has just undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baleful emanations. In all the initiations strengthening medicine is given the novices as an antidote to the *makhuma* to which they are subject after the initiation: for instance, the initiates in the boys' circumcision lodge are given black medicine just before the change from west to east to protect them from being injured (*hu khuma*) after entering the ordinary world. One may *khuma* if, after an absence from home during which a death has occurred, one eats food without some precautionary measure, such as chewing a piece of ant heap (*khiṭhoni*). The treatment given after a death is chiefly to prevent the onset of *hu khuma* among relatives. A woman who has lost a child will cause her next child to *khuma* if she allows it to drink before her breasts have been doctored. Cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if women enter the kraal, and measures to fortify them are always taken

[See cat. 116, pp. 195-96 -- Analyst]

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the complaint is either given or required; and frequently no special spirit is mentioned. It is enough to know the cause of the trouble and what rite is necessary to placate the gods. Even complaints of neglect are usually put positively: 'He complains that you should give him (his shrine) a libation'. The ancestors desire mainly to be remembered: they want their beads worn, their name revived, a beast or goat dedicated to and named after them. They also like to be told about journeys undertaken or marriages, in much the same way as the living, and to be approached with a libation. Yet, unlike the Nguni, they never complain of being hungry; nor are the gods said to drink the libation or even its spiritual counterpart, but are merely pleased to be given their due. There is no such thing as resting secure because you have done all that is necessary for the gods; there is always some ancestor who can cause trouble, and it is best to wait and see what is wanted. Moreover, the ancestors are wayward; there is no knowing what they may desire. Mambeuli asked to be buried at Khikhuti, but after his death he caused sickness, saying, 'Why did you bury me in the valley in the sun' (instead of in the ancestral grove), and a black sheep had to be sacrificed on his grave. Similarly, Mulogwane, brother of the queen, who in 1934 became a Christian on his death-bed, withheld rain in 1935 because they had buried him in a Christian cemetery. Religious rites among the Lovedu tend, therefore, to be addressed to those spirits that cause trouble and in the absence of illness there may be no rites at all.

Certain objects which were once in the possession of the ancestors are used in religious ceremonial and are thought to have special powers of protection and healing. These objects, consisting of ancient beads of glass or native-worked iron or copper, native-wrought assegais, hoes, axes, iron rods with spiked heads, are handed down in the family and carefully cherished. Very often when a daughter leaves to be married, she is given a few beads to take with her for use when she is ill. Such charms are called *thugula*. Illness caused by an ancestor can generally be cured by a ceremony known as *hu phasa*: a mixture of ground grain and water is poured over beads or other *thugula* objects in the presence of the patient while a prayer, scolding the spirits and asking for health, is made. The beads are then worn by the patient till he recovers. After *hu phasa* on beads for any one, he may wear them at any time with protective results, and small children generally wear many old beads. Maseriba called hers 'my hospital' (*spitele aa ga*) to illustrate their powers to us in European idiom. Patzere says, if he does not wear the crocodile bone that was his father's, he gets ill or dreams much of dead people. Association with the ancestors, not anything inherent in these objects, gives them their powers, for we have seen an old Boer gun brought out as a *thugula* at an offering. Yet for a charm to heal it is not essential that it should have been in the possession either of the complaining ancestor himself or of his family. Sometimes the gods, through the dice, mention beads or other objects not known in the family at all. It is then concluded that they have been lost and steps are taken to procure them from some one else or from the queen, who has many. Then when they pray, it will be mentioned: 'We are replacing the lost bead.'

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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife. 783 753

Makhuma (from *hu khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figchela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*hu thuswa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold. 751 783 [304 846] [768]

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'. 783 787 789

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on 783

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classification. Practice is characterized by vagueness and a very wide and 753
loose, instead of a specific, use of many of these terms. The term *khitshipidi* denotes primarily a swelling or tumour containing white matter. In practice we have found it applied to scrofula or glandular swellings below the ear, which were cut open and squeezed, to slime coughed up and said to be internal *khitshipidi*, and to general aching of all the teeth or tenderness of the gums with no sign of matter. Similarly the term *ŋɔbɛ*, bleeding of the nose, is often applied when there is no bleeding, but general debility, in which case the trouble is thought to be caused by blood in the body that should, but has not, come out. Such false correlations are due not merely to wrong conceptions of cause and effect—any evidence suggesting the presence of blood suffices to incriminate that arch enemy of health—but also to careless observation and loose reasoning. This laxity in medical conceptions is in marked contrast to the logic and coherence of other arrangements of the society. Inaccurate observation [787
and undeveloped symptomatology must be attributed to the extensive 755]
reliance, firstly, for diagnosis of all but the most everyday illness upon the divining dice, and, secondly, for curing upon what in the last resort is the psychological rather than the physical.

Lovedu therapeutics includes a number of treatments that have un- 757
doubted curative value, but many more are based on purely magical assumptions. On the whole, those which we should consider to be of some medical value are chiefly home remedies of the humble non-divining herbalist. The higher one goes in the medical scale, the more divorced from scientific principles become the treatments. Simple ailments are dealt with very much as among Europeans: sniffing up water is used for colds, the milk of a certain euphorbia is supplied to draw out deep-lying thorns; splints of strips of wood are used for broken limbs or 752
sprains; teeth are extracted by being levered up by means of an instrument like a poker, which is inserted between the roots, a method said to be no more painful than the clumsy use of European forceps. Very detrimental to the speedy recovery of wounds is, however, the practice of scraping or washing off all matter before each application of healing powders. This destroys the new young tissues, delaying for months the healing of sores that normally takes weeks or even days. Use of enemas is 757
unknown and emetics are not nearly as common as among the Zulu. With the Lovedu as with us the commonest treatment is the drinking of medicines. Instead, however, of the bottle of medicine we receive, a Native is given a small bundle of roots or twigs cut into even lengths to take home and boil in water which is drunk or used for making a soft porridge. Sometimes the medicine is bruised and a cold infusion made. There is none of the careful measurement of quantities characteristic of the mediaeval apothecary or of prescriptions found on Egyptian papyri, but the amounts used are not wholly undetermined, for in practice the smallest pot is used and 1 to 2½ pints of water are added; the dose seldom exceeds a few mouthfuls taken once or twice a day for a few days only. If this is not effective, something else will be tried. Wet cupping is a common home remedy, as the numerous scars on head and shoulders of people testify. After scarification, a cupping horn is applied, the narrow

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 230 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopœia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 789 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical 824 757 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason [753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are [753] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 192 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognise the similarity of plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants might receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadua* of the plateau (*kha naha*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadua* of stony places (*kha makhacarsi*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *mudzwo*, *mudzwatsi*, *mudzwatishi*, and *mudzwohisiga*, all containing the root *dze-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugwei*, *mubuidi*, and *mubokela thudu* are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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593 is the interest of a sister in the house established by her cattle that she may on occasion even exercise some control in her brother's choice of a wife. Dwagu wanted to marry Mabula, who was already married. His sister's husband then said, 'We shall not allow you to use my cattle to marry that woman. She will bring nothing but trouble.' If the wife obtained by means of the sister's cattle is badly treated by her husband, she may run to his sister, who will intervene on her behalf, or even in extreme cases arrange for her to live permanently away from her husband, who could then never claim a return of the bride-price from his wife's parents. Muhale, whom we knew well, had, under the influence of his second wife, chased away his chief wife, who ran to his sister. She advised the wife to make some pardon beer and take it as a peace-offering, but when he refused this his sister arranged for the woman to live with a widow in the village next door to her. Now, when Muhale's second wife quarrels and refuses to cook for him, he takes refuge with the wife he chased away till the storm is over!

The influence of a sister is reinforced by her religious position. At [782] the annual harvest offering to the gods, it is always the eldest sister in the family who has to officiate. She is the one best able to intercede with the spirits. Any displeasure or secret grievance against her brother on ● [753] her part may have the effect of stirring up the spirits to cause illness in his household, especially among his children (certain other relatives also have this power, but one hears most often of the sister). Hence it is said, 'The sister should roast pips; if she roasts the village [is angry] it will go up in flames' (*khadi e hadiga dithaga; ya hadiga mutse u ya ma*). Some- [428] times a sister may threaten her brother, saying, 'If I complain, nothing will be good in your village.' On the death of the father, it is the eldest sister who, together with the father's brother, divides out the inheritance, and, at the only installation of a district head that we were able to witness, the emblems of office were handed over to the young heir's sister for him, though he was already in his twenties. In view of all these facts, a man's sister has great influence over him and may be called to remonstrate with him, more especially in matters affecting his own household when even his parents have been unsuccessful. But she has no right to interfere without just cause and, if she were to make needless trouble, her brother would very soon ask her to leave his village in peace.

Not all sisters play the role that has been ascribed in general terms to a man's sister. Though every sister is potentially priestess and guardian of her brother's household, in practice all these offices are seldom combined in one person. In religious ceremonies affecting the family as a whole, the eldest daughter of the chief wife would officiate; in case of illness, a man's uterine sister might be asked to officiate. If the sister whose cattle has been used is younger than her brother, she may have little influence as compared with her elder sister; furthermore, where the sister is a woman of no personality, her influence may be negligible. It is a man's uterine sisters that play the biggest part in his life, for in this, 605 as in everything, the individual family is always asserting itself as against 595 the larger, polygynous family group. A classificatory sister, one by the mother's sister or father's brother, or one by a wife of the father other

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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense 581
marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the 837
maḓavu institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of completely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the purposes of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suckling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried people who have their lovers (*vaḓavu*). Nevertheless, a European finds it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grandmothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our preferences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should as often as not be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient 831
of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their 848
spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the 684
other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the *vyali*) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Tongs. The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men, but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy and was proudly worn by her younger sister; if not, the girl's people had to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity 831
be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. 848
Girls are still examined, especially at the *khoba*, but the matter is private; 847
and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sins 753
of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*ḓive* or *vulwaḓi vya vasadi*). A man gets *ḓive* from intercourse with a woman who has had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death from *ḓive* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter. 573

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[827] internal snake believed to be intimately bound up with fecundity and
842 childbirth. Every one is said to have a snake in his stomach. It is not a real snake, yet it is conceived of as having a head and of being able to
753 crawl up to a man's neck (causing what we call indigestion) and running back again when he coughs. When a person has stomach-ache it is often said, 'The snake is biting,' while dysentery is referred to as 'red' or 'white snake', according to the stage of the disease. The most important function of this snake, and one that forms a common subject of conversa-
842 tion in connection with barrenness, is, however, its reproductive one. It is believed that semen comes from a man's snake; if his snake is 'no good', a child will not be born. The snake of a woman is sometimes identified with the womb and for conception it is necessary that this snake should accept the semen. There are two possibilities which prevent conception: either the snake's head may be wrongly oriented or it may catch up the semen, but spit it out again. In the first case the remedy is to 'turn round' its head by medical treatment, in which very often the womb of a scapegoat is used. In the second case, since the snake rejects the semen unless the bloods of husband and wife agree and the snake of the man may be as much at fault as that of the woman, it is usual to include both husband and wife in treatment for barrenness. If six to nine months elapse after marriage without conception having taken place, steps are at once taken to set the matter right.

826 Though the Lovedu have no knowledge of the circulation of the blood,
753 they assign to it properties which lie at the basis of their medical theory. Blood is so generally believed to be the root of most ills that a Native describing his symptoms always says, 'I am pierced by blood.' Rheumatism, stiffness after exercise, a pain or swelling in any part of the body, is attributed to blood that has collected there or blood which is 'boiling', making the body hot and feverish. Swellings of all kinds, including goitre, are therefore always cupped to get rid of surplus blood, and blood-letting as a cure for headache and other ills is as popular with the Lovedu as it was in Europe not so long ago. The beating of the heart is not
827 believed to be continuous: it is associated with sudden fright and with illness; but, though it is known that often the heart beats loudly when one is not ill, they have no idea why it should do so. Veins contain blood, but go by the same name as sinews and muscles, all of which are believed to give strength to the body. Occasionally, though infrequently, individuals are to be found who have other ideas. Thus David, a Christian who has often worked in towns and has a mind of his own, has his own theory as to the function of the heart, a deduction from his observations on dying fowls. He believes that the heart beats, not to circulate, but to exclude the blood, and the moment the heart stops beating the blood enters it, causing death to the fowl or person.

753 A considerable list of terms for different diseases indicates that distinctions are recognised, but it is easy to be misled into believing that the Natives' knowledge is greater than it really is. Some terms are peculiarly Native without any corresponding category among us, but many, like smallpox, measles, mumps, fever, consumption, migraine, syphilis, epilepsy, show appreciation of causes or symptoms which fit into our scheme of

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classification. Practice is characterized by vagueness and a very wide and 753
loose, instead of a specific, use of many of these terms. The term *khitshipidi* denotes primarily a swelling or tumour containing white matter. In practice we have found it applied to scrofula or glandular swellings below the ear, which were cut open and squeezed, to slime coughed up and said to be internal *khitshipidi*, and to general aching of all the teeth or tenderness of the gums with no sign of matter. Similarly the term *ŋɔbɛ*, bleeding of the nose, is often applied when there is no bleeding, but general debility, in which case the trouble is thought to be caused by blood in the body that should, but has not, come out. Such false correlations are due not merely to wrong conceptions of cause and effect—any evidence suggesting the presence of blood suffices to incriminate that arch enemy of health—but also to careless observation and loose reasoning. This laxity in medical conceptions is in marked contrast to the logic and coherence of other arrangements of the society. Inaccurate observation 787
and undeveloped symptomatology must be attributed to the extensive 755
reliance, firstly, for diagnosis of all but the most everyday illness upon the divining dice, and, secondly, for curing upon what in the last resort is the psychological rather than the physical.

Lovedu therapeutics includes a number of treatments that have un- 757
doubted curative value, but many more are based on purely magical assumptions. On the whole, those which we should consider to be of some medical value are chiefly home remedies of the humble non-divining herbalist. The higher one goes in the medical scale, the more divorced from scientific principles become the treatments. Simple ailments are dealt with very much as among Europeans: sniffing up water is used for colds, the milk of a certain euphorbia is supplied to draw out deep-lying thorns; splints of strips of wood are used for broken limbs or 752
sprains; teeth are extracted by being levered up by means of an instrument like a poker, which is inserted between the roots, a method said to be no more painful than the clumsy use of European forceps. Very detrimental to the speedy recovery of wounds is, however, the practice of scraping or washing off all matter before each application of healing powders. This destroys the new young tissues, delaying for months the healing of sores that normally takes weeks or even days. Use of enemas is 757
unknown and emetics are not nearly as common as among the Zulu. With the Lovedu as with us the commonest treatment is the drinking of medicines. Instead, however, of the bottle of medicine we receive, a Native is given a small bundle of roots or twigs cut into even lengths to take home and boil in water which is drunk or used for making a soft porridge. Sometimes the medicine is bruised and a cold infusion made. There is none of the careful measurement of quantities characteristic of the mediaeval apothecary or of prescriptions found on Egyptian papyri, but the amounts used are not wholly undetermined, for in practice the smallest pot is used and 1 to 2½ pints of water are added; the dose seldom exceeds a few mouthfuls taken once or twice a day for a few days only. If this is not effective, something else will be tried. Wet cupping is a common home remedy, as the numerous scars on head and shoulders of people testify. After scarification, a cupping horn is applied, the narrow

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comparison between the instructions of Native doctors at consultations and 758
the actual manner in which these were carried out showed great discrepancies between the two. There are certain general principles known to all and on the whole people trust to their knowledge of these and the powers of the medicines themselves rather than slavishly following instructions.

The sick like to be in the open or in the sun, but it is for comfort and warmth, not because the curative power of nature or the need for nursing is recognized. An invalid generally spends the day lying wrapped up in his blanket in or near the courtyard or in the sheltered storage enclosure. This open-air sick-room, sunny or shady as the needs of the body dictate and protected from wind, is, in the absence of light, well-ventilated rooms, the best possible place for the health of the patient. At night, however, or when the patient is too ill to move, the sick-room is the kitchen hut, where the evening meal is cooked, and it is generally foul with smoke and full of people. A patient suffering from a bad cough is given a potsherd of sand to spit into. If at all possible, a patient goes outside to relieve himself, but if he is too weak to walk a broken pot is provided as a commode. Very sick people are given soft porridge without meat or relish, and great pains are taken to persuade patients to eat lest they lose strength and waste away. The treatment in diseases such as smallpox, measles, 757
and chickenpox, which one generally gets once only, is peculiar and shows how values and procedures used in other spheres of culture may become interwoven with medical practices. The illness is dealt with as if it were a stage in life like puberty or circumcision. When the first symptoms appear, the patient is isolated and a stick, placed across the hut door, warns people off, for *muridi* (shadow) will aggravate the illness if the patient comes into contact with certain people. After some days, when the rash has disappeared or the pustules no longer contain white matter, he is smeared with fat and ochre, whether he feels better or not, and allowed out. The treatment is called *hu cha*, the term used for going through the circumcision initiation. But there is another aspect of the treatment. The pox pustules are scraped daily with soaked bark of *mutsere* (*Bridelia sp.*), the purpose as phrased being to cause the white matter to come out and to prevent the pustules from going deeply into the endodermis, thus leaving pock marks

'Transition' diseases, as we may call those dealt with upon the pattern 753
of *hu cha*, lead us to consider some general conceptions underlying Lovedu medical practice and causation of disease. These conceptions remind us of the Greek theory of humours which long dominated European medicine and were at the basis of mediaeval physiology. Physical and mental qualities and dispositions were attributed to the four chief fluids or cardinal humours of the body, viz. blood, phlegm, choler, and melancholy or black choler. Choler, probably derived from the Greek word for bile and from which we get our word 'cholera', was, for instance, the humour causing irascibility of temper. The Lovedu attach less importance to temperament and have based their cardinal categories, not upon physiological fluids, but upon conceptions associated with shadow (*muridi*), mingling (*makhuma*), heat (*hu fesa*), and sex. These do not

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753 constitute an exhaustive list, and their application extends over a wide field, which we might call the magico-religious.

Murudi (shadow) is conceived of as an evil power, but of its many properties the most emphasized is the property of aggravating disease. It is as if certain real evils cast a shadow which may infect those upon which it falls. If they are normal, healthy people, generally speaking they suffer no discomfort themselves, but they may act as carriers of the shadow, and by contact with others, especially those who are ill, they may transmit the evil as if they were intermediary hosts, weakening the patient and aggravating his illness. The host may transmit the shadow to both persons and things. A person who has attended a funeral or who has lost a close relative is infected by the shadow of death. Twins have [845] such great shadow that if they come near a sick person he will die: hence twins must be killed and are still generally killed, despite European law and the example of Christians to whose grown-up twins no specific evil can be attributed. A woman who has had a miscarriage has *muridi*. [843] Pregnancy up to but not after the end of the third month infects a woman with *muridi*, for a clear distinction is drawn between the two stages of pregnancy: before the end of the third month the foetus is amorphous, not a human being; after it, the foetus takes human form, the woman 'has grown', and a miscarriage is regarded as a death, so that people come to condole and there is a mourning period ended by the [removal of] 'dirt' rite (*khitshila*), just as for the most important adult. After childbirth a woman has *muridi*, but this is not the reason for her isolation. She remains in the hut till her child is strengthened, lest she bring to it shadows from outside. Girls over puberty and non-suckling, childbearing women, though having no definite *muridi*, are a potential source of danger to the sick, and men have not infrequently refused to allow us to wash their wounds with water drawn by such women. It is not at all clear, however, whether it is menstruation that is feared or the danger of possible early pregnancy. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife brings about a [832 mild form of *muridi*; hence, if a very young child is ill, husband and wife 843] sometimes abstain from intercourse. *Muridi* from sexual intercourse is believed to affect the meat of slaughtered cattle or goats unless certain precautions are taken, and causes stomach trouble to those who partake of it. Men who are sleeping with their wives are therefore not allowed to approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced or to help skin it without first smearing their hands with leaves of *thcebe* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) or other medicine. Here again, so it seems, the danger is not the actual intercourse, but the possibility of an unformed foetus in the womb. Thus, in the early stages of his wife's pregnancy, Nagambi was forbidden to approach slaughtered animals, but later, when pregnancy was advanced, the restriction fell away, even though he was still cohabiting with his wife.

753 A person whose upper teeth appear before the lower or whose molars 826 appear first is full of *muridi* and should be killed. In the area surrounding the royal village every child is brought to the queen for examination on the appearance of its first teeth. The mother carries with her a small basket of eleusine and, if all is well, it is said that the child has 'danced

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with joy' (*u pebedi*); if not, there are no ululations of joy and, though to-day the child is allowed to live, it must be treated by a doctor. When several children have been brought, beer must be made by their mothers for the older women, the queen attends, and there is much joy. If a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order is not killed, he is called a *leshega*. He must be most careful never to bite any one, for the wound will not respond to healing treatment. But it is believed that matter taken from the teeth of the *leshega* may be applied as an antidote. It will be remembered that in the case of *Mabula* v. *Magosha*[1] the parents of a *leshega* who had bitten her co-wife were ordered to beg pardon and to allow the 'scraping' of the teeth of their daughter. They had denied that she was a *leshega*, but the court decided that, *leshega* or not, neither she nor they could refuse something that might help the wound. 753 826

Muridi is, on the whole, dangerous, not to its primary intermediary host, but to others. Its source is conceived to be usually a person, but it may also be places, such as cross-roads and large rivers which become infected owing to the number of people crossing them. Nor is all *muridi* equally dangerous. Precautions are taken to protect the sick against its influence; a sick person is smeared with medicine or a stick is placed to bar entrance to his hut, its warning against entering without permission being a function also of the stick barring the door of the hut of a new-born child. Allied to but not the same as *muridi* are *leridi* (monstrous shadow) and *leṭala* (sinister spoor, the word for an ordinary track being *muṭala*). A warrior who has killed an enemy has *leridi* and, unless purified, he stands in grave danger of becoming mad or extremely quarrelsome (one of the worst social sins). If two men have had sexual relations with the same woman and one of them is ill, the other must on no account come near lest his track (*leṭala*) cause him to die. Similarly, the husband's mistress should take care to remain away from the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth. 753 751

Makhuma, from *hu khuma*, to mix together, is a conception similar to *muridi*, but the evil, a kind of illness, infects the immediate host, who cannot transmit it to others. Critical changes especially constitute the source of the evil which mingles with or contaminates or infects the person who has just undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baleful emanations. In all the initiations strengthening medicine is given the novices as an antidote to the *makhuma* to which they are subject after the initiation: for instance, the initiates in the boys' circumcision lodge are given black medicine just before the change from west to east to protect them from being injured (*hu khuma*) after entering the ordinary world. One may *khuma* if, after an absence from home during which a death has occurred, one eats food without some precautionary measure, such as chewing a piece of ant heap (*khiṭhoni*). The treatment given after a death is chiefly to prevent the onset of *hu khuma* among relatives. A woman who has lost a child will cause her next child to *khuma* if she allows it to drink before her breasts have been doctored. Cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if women enter the kraal, and measures to fortify them are always taken 753

1 [See cat. 116, pp. 195-96 -- Analyst]

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining [787] bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figchtla*) [789] unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than 826 *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ɖɛre* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to 766 rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ɖɛre*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are 754 sometimes called *mashəthɔjɔ*, because they *rəthɔja* (cause to be cool,

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against 754
sorcery: when the doctor made Nagambi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *khileso* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*hu phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they 782
stand up (*ɔa ɛmɛ*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. 833
Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain 753
circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*levoya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*hu gɔba*). The *levoya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *levoya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Pheduli, whose wife's death was attributed to *levoya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *levoya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstruating woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafa*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafa*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *ɖɛre* or *vulwɛdɛ vya vasadi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 30 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose [845
child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless 847]
cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *ɖɛre*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Ɖɛre is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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833 753 *ḍere* if the circumstances of the personal relations of the patient justify such a diagnosis. People thought that Maḍaradani's cough was *ḍere*, but when he insisted that he had no lovers it was diagnosed as *khileso*; Mulada's debility was probably due to chronic malaria, but his friends suspected that he had taken no precautionary measures before resuming co-habitation with his wife, who had miscarried after seven months. *Ḍere* is distinguished from *lefiha* (consumption) by its rapid course and the fact that *lefiha* (*hu fiha*, to breathe) is not caused by women. *Ḍere* [847] can be cured only in its earliest stages, an ingredient of the medicine being a portion of the abortion or, in the case of intercourse with a woman who has lost a child, can be prevented by steaming and mutual inoculation. The prevalence of *ḍere* suggests that abortions are common and that effective abortifacients are in general use. In reality, however, innocent women are accused as soon as a lover falls ill, and rather than be thought murderers, they often give him medicine purporting to be a portion of the abortion mixed with sand to be used as a cure.

753 769 Disease and healing are in the last resort connected with the guardianship of the ancestors. If they are annoyed and relax their vigilance, their descendants may be rendered susceptible to disease, or medicines used cannot have their full effect. Ancestors, however, do not merely ward off disease or assist cure; they also actively cause illness. The crying all day of a baby may be due to the spirit of a grandfather pinching it in order that it should be given his name; sore eyes in children are often, and in adults sometimes, attributed to ancestors; barrenness or difficult birth is laid at their door, and sometimes they seize the whole body of a person because they wish to 'possess' him. But ancestors never cause death: even if at first an illness is said to be due to them, should death supervene, it is attributed to witches. Complaints of living relatives, especially of the father's sister, may also cause illness.

754 By far the most important of all causes of ill-health, however, is the evil work of witches and sorcerers. Certain illnesses, such as *khileso*, are characteristic of sorcery and can be contracted in no other manner. But any disease may be caused by witchcraft and witches may avail themselves of the opportunity offered by any minor illness to enter and aggravate it. Diagnosis depends on the course of the illness. Dysentery is regarded as due to natural causes; but should it not respond to treatment or should the patient suspect an enemy, a witch will be implicated. During the 1938 smallpox epidemic, the head of a district which was more hardly hit than its neighbours called a meeting of residents. Men declared, 'Smallpox kills people here; they merely get ill and recover elsewhere. There is a witch in our midst.' Money was collected, three men sent to a diviner, and, in the end, two women were accused. A specialized cause of illness is legitimate vengeance-magic used against theft and called *khidɔba*, which makes the finger of the thief swell up or the stolen goat bleat in his belly.

753 It must not be imagined that the Lovedu do not recognize a large number of diseases as natural. Many illnesses 'just come'. Such are all minor ailments like coughs, colds, stomach disorders, and also other more serious diseases like dysentery and malaria. Too much beer is

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known to affect the stomach, many kinds of spinach to cause diarrhoea. 753
Epidemics of smallpox, measles, coughs are thought to be brought by 'wind' (*phɛfo e ḍile*) and steps may be taken to combat them by sprinkling with medicines the inmates of the village. Usually an epidemic 'just comes', but on occasion one hears that a witch has 'sent' the wind. Ancestors, too, are thought to exercise some controlling influence over [769] wind; in most libations they are asked, 'Prevent for us these winds'—that is, as we might phrase it in our prayers, 'Guard us from disease.' Diseases are never classified as natural or non-natural solely according to their nature or symptoms. Any natural illness may also be 'sent' and, 753 though natural death is recognized as possible, in practice those closely 754 affected always attribute death to witchcraft or sorcery, though outsiders may give other reasons and some even say of an old man dying, 'The gods have called him to rest.' Of the thirty deaths, including a number of old people, that came to our notice, none were, however, thought to be natural. Contagiousness (*hu fɛdɛla*) of certain diseases, such as venereal diseases, leprosy, whooping cough, measles, is recognized, and it is known that consumption may be transmitted by parents to their children, as one of its names, *lehɔpla la tata-mulɔgɔ* (cough of the family father) signifies.

There must, of course, be a body of professional men and women 759 trained in and practising the art and science of medicine, but there are also many who have an extensive knowledge of home remedies. This is not unexpected in a society in which ordinary mortals live close to, and know a great deal about, nature. Every one is familiar with plants and their properties, which is one of the bases of pharmacology, with the meagre conceptions of anatomy and physiological relations, and with much of the intricate system of causation of disease. There are many men and women who know some special medicines or types of treatment, inherited usually from father, mother, or spouse, and kept secret, not because the knowledge is a source of material benefit, for the remedies are generally given free, but because it lends some recognition and prestige. Mamutho, despite all our efforts, divulged her medicine for inflamed eyes to us only as a parting gift. Madinji treats sprains and fractures; Khiebe specializes in mutual inoculation of the newly wed; and Khapani knows roots for dysentery. These are herbalists, not doctors, but some herbalists are so well-known for the efficacy of a medicine they have that even diviners send patients to them. Knowledge of these remedies, however important, does not make one a doctor (*Ḍaga*): that appellation is accorded only to those who are initiated bone-throwers or as herbalists have achieved general recognition as dispensers of many medicines and treatments. Muhale's wife, though no bone-thrower, is a good midwife and wields expertly a blood-letting awl. But a herbalist, even if called *Ḍaga*, remains *Ḍaga-tshubya*, a doctor without horns (power), because he does not divine; he can prescribe for recognized diseases, but he cannot diagnose in other cases for which the divining dice are necessary. From our point of view, the herbalist diagnoses and prescribes along scientific lines; to the Native he is a novice unable to deal with witches or the more serious diseases.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Ancestral caprices and complaints and rites to appease them—the universe of the ancestors a replica of the everyday world—relations of magic, morality, and religion—possession by spirits as a religion and socio-psychological phenomenon.

NATURE spirits and hero-gods have no place in the Lovedu scheme of things. There is, however, Khuzwane, the creator, who made all things, including men, and left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when these rocks were new and soft. But no one knows what has happened to him and no one ever thinks of him. The gods of the Lovedu are their ancestors, deceased fathers and mothers who guard one in death as they did in life. Each family has its own ancestors, and religious observances are thus peculiarly a family concern.

Ancestors have various attributes. They are one's protectors and no harm can befall one unless they, the ancestors, are neglectful. Witches, powerful as they are, can neither enter the village nor cause sickness without their connivance; hence the procedure in divination, even in the clearest case of witchcraft, of inquiring whether the spirits should be appeased. Disease cannot enter nor epidemics break out if only the ancestors are watchful enough and well-disposed. Again and again one finds this idea expressed in prayers; 'Protect us from epidemics [winds]', they say; while the queen in a prayer at her harvest ceremony put it even more positively: 'As regards life, we have been very well, but now we are being killed by that epidemic which you have allowed to come', referring to smallpox. There can be no success without the co-operation of the ancestors. Medicine cannot help nor doctors heal if the ancestors are not with one. This idea, reminiscent of our 'By the will of God', is expressed in the phrase, 'We do not say our doctor, [will heal]; we say our doctor and the ancestors'. It appears also in a prayer we heard on behalf of an absent son working in town, when a goat, dedicated to his grandmother (father's mother), who had made him ill two years before, was being given the new corn: 'Here is the child; here he is, mother. We ask that you let him be happy and cool (give him health). Tell all the other spirits [certain names mentioned], and we who remain, *we say our thing with the gods*.'

The phrase '*vadimo lalane*' (spirits, sleep) which rounds off so many prayers, and the constant fear of waking up (*hu dzosa*) the ancestors, causing them to stand (*hu ema*) and cause trouble, appear at first as a peculiar contradiction, as though people do not wish their gods to be watchful. The term *lala* is, however, idiomatic, expressing peace, things being as they should be, as in the phrase, '*Ha va mulao; shago la lala*' (There was order; the country slept), implying that the rains were good and all was well; while *hu dzosa* in this sense means stirring to anger rather than waking up from sleep.

The ancestors are responsible for the fertility of the crops. True, nothing could grow without rain, for which the queen is responsible and

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for
[788] an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*mudimo wesu*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me ox liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious
753 (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite un-
788 expectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of the girl, *phasa* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognized as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phasa*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Hu phasa* in these circumstances recognizes psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mabudu* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not

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771 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-
794 Tonga and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion.
177 Among Shangana-Tonga, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult
753 is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body' and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolatela was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthwasa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature.
[828] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwasha in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudomma* (*Diospyros n.espiliformis*), or *munchchche* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit
755 wishing to manifest itself, a *lelɔpɔ* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known in the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the
794 spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.

755 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to
535 enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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It need hardly be said that the reciprocities are not precisely calculated 181
equivalences, nor a series of exactly balanced obligations. People do 626
not consciously think of the long-run result of their behaviour, and they know that social duty done is not always sure of its reward. 'Hard as the axe chops, it cannot eat the honey it extracts', they say to warn those who expect that their efforts will inevitably be rewarded.

The traits, motivations, and attitudes of the Lovedu become more and 182
more intelligible in the context of the culture as a whole. Whether they are so delicately integrated that we can speak of the culture as an articulated whole, is not a question we shall try to answer. The tribal boundaries are certainly not the boundaries of the culture, which both in its forms and in its attitudes very gradually merges into the culture of a larger area, the limits of which cannot be exactly determined. In view of the increasingly great variations as one goes further and further from the nucleus, the degree of integration can be regarded relatively only to the area one chooses. Lack of integration is often more apparent than real. With regard both to recently introduced elements and to old elements which in their forms or purposes lag behind the changes of the whole culture, the process of integration is proceeding apace, but can never be complete. Thus the cult of possession is shedding those elements that are incongruous with the culture. There are also apparent inconsistencies in the divergent forms allowed in the districts and in principles of behaviour which are contradictory. Thus, for instance, revenge is permitted in the magico-witchcraft sphere, but is outlawed in the legal sphere. We may compare this contradiction to our approval of killing an enemy in war, which is conceived to be in the interests of national security, and our condemnation of killing a fellow man in peace, which is a crime against the security of life. Cultures often segregate contradictory aspects of social experience into logic-tight compartments, and there is no conflict as long as the contradictions can either be kept distinct or be reconciled. If they are embodied in the cultural system, no pressure is brought to compare them, and there is no lack of integration either in the mind of the individual or in the culture.

Men feel insecure chiefly in the face of disease and death, dissension, 181
drought, and the disruptive danger of European intervention. The 153
Lovedu attribute their fears to witchcraft, aggressiveness and quarrelsomeness, wrong burials, and the 'spoiling' of the country by the white man. We shall deal briefly only with two of these sources of insecurity: disease, which is one of the most constant preoccupations of the Lovedu mind, and the European, whose meddling has changed the shape and meaning of life and has upset the standards of right and wrong.

There is abundant reason for the perpetual anxiety about health, for disease is rife and even minor illnesses provide the occasion for the entry of the witch. Read against the background of their imperfect knowledge of anatomy and of the causation of disease, experience warns men that almost anything, from a simple scratch to the dreaded 'coughing disease', may cause death; in every case, not germs and poisons, but witches and sorcerers, may enter the body and take advantage of the weakness of the patient. Disease is combated, and susceptibility to disease is guarded against, at

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181 every step in a man's life. The infant is saturated with medicine:
753 he is made to grow by means of medicine, he is steamed and strengthened, and every upset of the stomach, every sign of disorder, every major change in his life is treated as if it were a grave danger. The child is often inoculated against the 'poisoned shaft', the 'last, fatal arrow' that a malicious enemy might 'hurl' at him. Medicines by anticipation protect those who after their initiation ceremony might be weakened (*hu khuma*) when they resume contact with the world. Even adults in perfect health periodically consult their doctors to discover whether, unknown to them, some one is not planning an attack upon them.

To a European nothing is more amazing than the number of medicines that are tried, rejected, and changed when a man is or supposes that he is ill, unless indeed it is the contradiction that is implied in their preoccupation with their ailments as contrasted with their care-free attitude to life. The Lovedu are always telling of their illnesses, yet they seem to worry as little about them as the Englishman about the weather, although he can hardly converse without complaining about it. It must, therefore, not be imagined that life is weighed down by this interest in ailments; the Lovedu are seldom really depressed. They do not feel at the mercy of a capricious power, for their safety is ultimately in strong hands. They can use medicine to combat witchcraft and, though death is inevitable, their faith in the superiority of the good forces that they can invoke to control evil remains unshaken; for death is only the occasional triumph of evil, which time and again throughout life is defeated by the power of medicine. The outlook which supports security presupposes an ordered universe in which witchcraft is not merely outlawed, but can be overcome by employing well-recognized techniques.

829 In the face of the danger of the European, the position is entirely
177 different. The white man is conceived to be part of a world which is antagonistic and incomprehensible; its forces are both disruptive, striking at the very significance of life, and capricious, not amenable to control by any known magical techniques. The projection of the danger upon the supernatural is but one aspect of a far wider conflict between European and Native, conqueror and conquered, perpetuated by divergent outlooks and different cultural configurations.

The conflict is an exceedingly complicated one. There is, firstly, the threat to the security of the Lovedu tribe, a threat that strikes particularly at the position of the queen and at the effectiveness of social mechanisms, causing criminals to multiply, encouraging disrespect for parents and for elders, and weakening the force of the reciprocities. Secondly, in the wider contact of Europeans and Natives attitudes have become vitiated by the antipathies that develop between the group of fellow men and the aliens outside it. The loyalties and trust between those within the group become transformed into hatred and suspicion towards those outside it; in the one case the human capacity for self-sacrifice, in the other case the capacity for selfishness, comes into play. Where the whole value system of the one group clashes with that of the other, antipathies are intensified. Moreover, the differences between the groups coincide with pronounced biological distinctions, such as

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855 mother's mother, especially in cases where the next baby has arrived before three or four years have elapsed; and a young motherless child is often sent by his father to his mother's brother's people (where his mother's mother will be) in preference to being handed over to a fellow wife of the mother, for it is generally considered that the mother's people are best able to rear (*hodisa*) a child.

593 A very special relationship exists between a man and his sister, especially his eldest sister, who is or will become the priestess of the family. She is the person who has greatest influence over him, who will be called to reason with him when even his parents are unable to persuade him. The sister whose cattle he used to obtain a wife also has a special interest in his household affairs. This house is the place where she will 'put her things' and make herself at home when visiting her old home; his daughter will one day marry her son; his wife may run to her or her elder sister if he ill-treats her, whereupon she will remonstrate with her brother or even in extreme cases arrange for permanent protection of such a woman away from her husband. [753] The sister's rights are supported by a powerful sanction, for if she 'feels dissatisfied in her heart' owing to bad treatment at the hands of her brother, the ancestors are liable to make his children ill. When this happens, the brother will have to approach his sister humbly to come and end matters, after openly airing her grievances, by interceding with the ancestors on behalf of his children. Not all sisters are, however, in practice able to control and influence their brothers: here, as in all human relationships, much depends on the character and good sense of the parties concerned; and I have seen a 'bad lot' just back from town slap the face of a sister who had been called to remonstrate with him about a loose woman he had brought to his wife's house from town.

613 The clan, if it can be said to exist at all, does so only in a vague way, and there are no functions or usages associated with it. Relatives belong to no clearly marked group but can be traced in ever-widening circles from the individual family just as we trace relationships in our own society. There is no term for clan: *moloko* refers to relatives on both father's and mother's side, while *khoro*, a word most commonly used to denote that portion of any village where the men sit, but also meaning court, clan, or tribe, is too vague in its connota-

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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion.

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vamalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vamukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsezi*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaghuhulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin.

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's

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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her
769 honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cognates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member of the kindred (*mulogo*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to *vofanoni* (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*muduhulu*) and, by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes parent-in-law (*vamakhulu*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and relatives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiating from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies, but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in
641 wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, convert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of subjects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
182

from the supernatural. While anyone who knows a cure for an ailment is manipulating the forces of nature and using *vugaga*, there are doctors who, by virtue of long training, know many medicines, have learnt how to divine and have been imbued with additional perspicacity and powers as a result of a special initiation. Medicine functions by virtue of the properties, actual or ascribed, of matter; the principles underlying the operation of medicines assume mechanical cause and effect and even the divining bones are read according to rule.

There are, however, two types of doctor who fall into a different category: the *lelopo* doctor, directly possessed and guided by an ancestor spirit, who largely confines his activities to curing possessed people, and the *magome* or 'smeller-out' who is generally a foreigner. People using the forces of nature for evil purposes are *valoi* (witches and sorcerers) and are dealt with in another context. *Uvugaga*, it will be seen, is the use of impersonal power inherent in matter, which is extracted by the expert (*gaga*) and applied in the interests of the health and well-being of men; it is also the exercise of personal qualities or skills, either inherited or acquired through spirit possession or guidance.

Ancestors

Ancestors can influence for good and evil the fortunes only of their own descendants, who in the case of the chief's ancestors are taken to include the whole tribe. Their control over the forces of nature is not explicitly formulated; and what is expressly stated is not always confirmed in Lovedu religious practices. The ancestors are clearly conceived to exercise an overall control. A man will always assert that no harm or illness can befall him if his ancestors are watchful enough, for they have power to ward off all evil and misfortune. It is said that even witches cannot, without the will of the ancestors, enter a village or deliver the last fatal blow that kills a man. But in practice the will of the ancestors either is not interposed, for no ascertainable reason, or is ineffective to ward off attacks. If some great sorrow overtakes a man, it is said that 'his ancestors have had an accident' implying that he has been temporarily deprived of their protection and is at the mercy of his enemies. Even medicines are said to be ineffective without the co-operation of one's ancestors, the conception being not merely that their goodwill is essential but also that *vugaga* belongs to the ancestors. In fact, however, the ineffectiveness of medicines is never in any concrete case attributed to the lack of such co-operation.

Ancestors are appealed to and thanked for good crops, fertility, plenty, and all manner of good fortune and success. The desire to be remembered and given tendance is attributed to them, and they may themselves cause harm and sickness to descendants who neglect them; but somewhat inconsistently a man may with impunity neglect them for many years and give them tendance only when misfortune overtakes him. Ancestors may be approached and propitiated or thanked by means of offerings and prayer

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and the use of *dithugula*, objects such as beads which have once been in their possession; but they can also be constrained by medicine or the properties of matter. 769 777

Ancestors are capricious: their complaints as seen in the divining bones are usually about being neglected; but they may cause illness to those they love most in order to receive recognition, have their name perpetuated, or their beads worn. They are said to 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult labour, to afflict children with sore eyes, and even to prevent the queen from making rain. Their complaints need imply no omission or neglect on the part of the afflicted descendant, but merely some special desire that could not have been anticipated. The degree of either neglect or tendance bears no relation to their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, since the ascription of misfortune to the ancestors is always *ex post facto*: hence the paradox that a family that is assiduous in its tendance of the ancestors may suffer more ill health and misfortune than one that has neglected the ancestors for a long time. 753

Dithugula are instrumental in controlling nature not only indirectly through the ancestors but also directly by virtue of the substances used in them. A *thugula* may be a shrine to an ancestor (male or female), an animal dedicated to him, old beads or objects of iron to which, owing to their having once been in his possession, power to influence him is attributed. But a *thugula* may also be any charm of herbs concocted by a doctor and worn for protective purposes. The queen's rain-medicines are *dithugula*. The most important religious ceremony of the year, the annual offering of beer to ancestors as thanksgiving for the harvest, is also called *thugula*. *Dithugula* thus constitute a category of objects, usually closely associated with the ancestors (though they may be made by a doctor), through which they may be approached, and which have special virtue particularly to give health and protection against ills and epidemics. 778

Dithugula are found in every lineage which, through its shrines, dedicated animals, and charms, secures the general welfare of its members. The queen's *dithugula*, her rain-medicines, sacred objects, and shrines through which she intercedes with the royal ancestors, are the ultimate symbols of her power and the safeguards of the welfare of the country; and just as certain medicines (*diphaba*), which are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget their complaints, are pegged round the village by the paternal aunt or sister of its head to protect it against witches, so also the queen may *thugula* the whole country by sending boys to peg medicated sticks on its boundaries as a protection against evil, particularly epidemics that might threaten it from outside. [769]

The queen's control

The basis of the queen's control over nature is her divinity. So bound up is she with nature that her very emotions affect the rain. The complex of royal institutions includes the conceptions that she must be without 643

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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugo*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naba a e lige*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*fgwhela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *fevr*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite predilection for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

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171 The *gomana* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend 778 *gomana* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an 881 outsider. The *gomana* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *swidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and 772 magic (*swaga*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of 821 the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digoma*. The seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digoma*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain 811 concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu. 821 To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: man and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of 772 the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from con- 811 ditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desic- cation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon 821 the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Lesua* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *dere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches. 753 772 811 821

'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mukxhxjo* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death. 772 789 811 821 766 757 831

Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is 783 753

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not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and contagious force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an inviable counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction, including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage (regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor. 'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*. A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi* affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhuma*) to those eating it. Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leshega*) are full of *muridi* and were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings from the teeth of the *leshega*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hosts infects these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long journeys from home.

Muridi is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will

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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife.

Makhuma (from *hu khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figchela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*hu thuwa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold.

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'.

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on

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783 charms or *digoma*. *Makhuma* which arises from critical transitions causes mainly stomach trouble and general debility in men and cattle; but it also causes weakening of the mystical powers concentrated in sacred objects. These ritual forces do not strike down the guilty person: it is, for example, not the husband who will be revenged if the adulterer approaches the hut of his wife; or when a woman has procured an abortion, it is not she but her innocent lover who will be affected with *dere*, the most dreaded disease among the Lovedu. The harmful effects of all these forms of impurity are not sanctions against the acts or events causing the impurity, but sanctions for taking the necessary precautions to remove the impurity and prevent it from spreading to others, or from causing some calamity not necessarily affecting the guilty person. And, as so often happens in Lovedu society, it is generally *ex post facto*, and as an explanation of some illness or evil that these conceptions are invoked and steps are taken to put things right.

784 The concatenations of actions and conditions that must be avoided lest they bring about misfortune and evil to men are wider than what is included in the conceptions of 'heat', *muridi*, and *makhuma*. Many things or natural objects brought into relation with men have evil consequences and must be avoided: they are taboo (*hu ila*). Burning a certain kind of wood in the village causes quarrels; working in the fields the day after the first rain is taboo, not sanctioned by a penalty but the breach of which is a bane (*lesola*) that may portend evil. The breach of these taboos is disapproved but leads to no organized reaction or public indignation even where it affects the welfare of all, as in the case of a wrong burial. A man who sleeps with his wife while she is still suckling a child may thereby cause the death of his child; but it is his own foolish and inconsiderate conduct that causes the mother's breast to *khuma* (become polluted and weakened), and it is not the concern of outsiders. He is a fool rather than criminal.

753 Many things in nature are recognized as directly affecting man adversely; various foods and drinks cause stomach troubles; poisonous weeds may kill cattle which, like men, occasionally die of old age; many minor illnesses are attributed to natural causes, e.g. one may contract malaria by walking in the dew in the early morning. Epidemics may be brought about naturally by the air or wind (*phefo*). 'Ward off from us these winds' is a constant plea [821] in prayers to the ancestors. Hot, dry winds which drive away rain-bearing clouds or dissolve them in thunderstorms or gales are thought to be specially detrimental to the rain, and it is the duty of the ancestors to keep away such winds. Even anxiety or worry wears a man down (*hu seḓa mutho a hom-* [828] *chwa*, lit., scrapes a man thin). A woman who is prone to break her pots is not bewitched; she has *khifyaisa*, a natural propensity for breaking, which can be cured by medicine.

777 The Lovedu also have the conception of natural accident (*gozi*) and of luck (*leshuto*), though bad luck is sometimes attributed to breach of obligations to kin, to malicious gossip, or to the misconduct in one's absence of one's wife.

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An omen or bane (*lesola*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesola*, and so can a *leshega*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *ṭola* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 787 825

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*vusola*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahava*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahava* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahava* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahava*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 777 602 [753] [769]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (*Vulɔi*)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *vulɔi* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Vulɔi* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Vulɔi* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *vulɔi* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *vulɔi* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*vulɔi vya vusiu*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*vulɔi vya matsiare*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 754 [577]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts. 777

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*ruŋaga*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare. 754 789

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *mahava*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the bones, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased. 829 777 753 [821]

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups is the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *gɔsha*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted. 181

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

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in the use of motor traffic. Are not people more important than speed? The need for even a chief to respect the wishes of his subjects upon whom he depends for a following is summed up in the saying, *Vuhosi gi vatho*, 'chieftainship is people'.

The qualities or virtues that are stressed, then, in the moral code of the Lovedu are moderation and temperance, compromise and agreement, humility, respect for the personality and rights of others. Courage is not rated very high in this non-military society. Perseverance is often enjoined and is especially necessary in the monotonous tasks of hoeing, carrying heavy loads of wood, walking up steep mountain slopes; but it is never carried out with the single-mindedness that a European might expect. Theft is condemned and there are ritual sanctions against it. If the object stolen has been magically treated, for example, a painful sore will develop on the finger which defies treatment until guilt has been confessed and restitution agreed to. 'Don't steal, always beg (*hobela*) for what you want', children are exhorted. But theft is not a problem in this economically undifferentiated society, though nowadays cases of theft, even if extremely rarely, do come before the tribal courts. Drunkenness is bad only if it leads to neglect of duties or fights and quarrels. To be drunk is in itself no disgrace, it is merely pleasant and perhaps exhilarating, not a condition to be ashamed of. Indeed everyone looks forward to the *murula* season when all become slightly intoxicated from the cider made out of the fruits.

Right conduct is relative always to the human situation and morality is oriented not from any absolute standards of honesty or truth but from the social good in each situation. Conduct that promotes smooth relationships, that upholds the social structure, is good; conduct that runs counter to smooth social relationships is bad. Courtesy and the respect due to age or seniority are thus of greater importance than truth. A son-in-law who, tired of always being imposed upon by his wife's father, truthfully signified his unwillingness to help him by providing a goat would be guilty, in view of the special mutualities between families related by marriage, of unpardonable behaviour which might jeopardize his marriage. The correct procedure is to agree to help but to be always 'still looking for it' when approached for the goat. It took us a long time to discover that the right way to deal with incessant begging was not to refuse however politely, but to say 'I have none' or 'It is not mine to give'. The polite lie even if palpable is better calculated to maintain smooth relationships than strict adherence to truth. Truth is not good in itself nor is a lie always evil. Lies are objected to when they are socially inconvenient. Yet not only is it expected that a man will lie to get out of difficulties but there are cases in which lying is prescribed, as when children are told to lie to strangers if asked about village affairs. To keep tribal secrets and the secrets of initiation schools is of far greater importance than to tell the truth.

The social orientation of morality is clear in Lovedu sex morality. Sex is not regarded as a temptation to be resisted by painful efforts of will.

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There is nothing morally wrong in sex or the sex act; not only is sex play among small children connived at, but premarital sex relations are institutionalized. It is only having a child before marriage that is immoral. For adultery restitution must be made, yet a husband who is jealous and watches his wife too closely is despised, and most men and women have extramarital lovers (*vatavo*). The Lovedu attitude is less strict than that of the Tsonga living among them, for Tsonga married women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, and the compensation and fine for adultery are far higher than among the Lovedu. The Lovedu attitude to sex is matter-of-fact, and obscenity in ritual does not have a prominent role. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of promiscuity; they learn from their proverb that 'a woman's pubes may break up a family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are undeveloped.

To anyone brought up in the West European culture, where every breach of the moral code is also a sin in the eyes of a God who may punish the wrongdoer either in this life or the hereafter, an arresting aspect of Lovedu culture is that there is only a vague connexion between the ancestor-gods and morality. It has been said for the South Bantu in general, and by more than one authority, that the ancestors 'are the guardians of the moral code, it is they in the first instance who are thought of as visiting on their descendants punishments for some omission or commission'[1] There is among Lovedu a vague idea that failure to carry out one's kinship obligations may bring ancestral displeasure in the form of bad luck, and there may also be some connexion between such displeasure and *mahava*, the force generated by complaints of living kin, which causes illness. But a careful study of Lovedu religious practices over a period of years has brought to light no single instance in which ancestors have complained about anything not immediately concerning their own personal relations with their descendants—their right to tendance, remembrance, and propitiation; the manner of their burial; their desire to be told of major events in the lives of living kin. No ancestor has ever been known to concern himself with the theft, witchcraft, murder, or adultery of any descendant, nor do they trouble about the breaking of taboos which prevent rain and vitally affect the welfare of all. Lovedu ancestors are not upholders of custom in general; they are concerned only with those customs and taboos which affect their own welfare and that of their kin. Even royal ancestors do not concern themselves with the breaking of taboos that lead to drought. This is not a reflection of their carelessness or supineness, for they are quick to complain if, for example their graves are desecrated. On one occasion in 1938, when two men had cut firewood in the bush near the royal burial grounds at Maulwi, the *zwidajani* wailed all night to indicate their displeasure. Again when Mologwane, deceased chief councillor and brother of the queen, 'held her

[1] A. W., Hoernlé, 'Religion in Native Life', in *Thinking with Africa*, edited by Milton Stauffer, 1928, p. 100. See also, W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, 1928, pp. 381–90.

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241 planted, disappear before the advance of European vegetables. This is
178 as yet not a great change, because there are very few of these gardens, and it is far beyond present resources to construct irrigation furrows.

The balance is also upset by other tendencies. Agriculture is still a vital interest, but others are beginning to compete with it, and the various cultural devices by which interests were massed behind the various stages of agriculture are no longer as effective as formerly. Mobilization of energies by the seasonal calendar and their concentration at the strategic points of time and place are only partially effective. The unfolding of nature, the increasing signs of the coming spring, the more and more auspicious banking up of the thunder-clouds used to be like the culmination of intensive propaganda playing upon the emotions of the people. As the first rains fell and the scent of the veld rose to men's nostrils, they seemed to liberate internal secretions which drove men to action; and the example of the first workers in the fields made the impulse irresistible. But to-day, though much of this is in evidence and one still sees an impulsive restlessness canalized into productive activity, the reactions are, according to Native accounts, much weaker. Neither internal secretions, if such there are, nor suggestion in a tense situation have their old overpowering effect.

[461] Translation of the impulses aroused into useful action is to some extent inhibited by enervating listlessness, at least among a proportion of the people. They are people puzzled by the changes around them or caught in the vicious circle of malnutrition and weakened incentives. They seek solutions in smaller exertions, lotus-like inactivity, and excessive beer-drinking; and in the hierarchy of ideals, these values are beginning to become unduly prominent. It would be disastrous if they created a cultural pattern, as the tendency suggests, in which agricultural work is mere drudgery and people concentrate upon easy crops, thus over-simplifying a wholesome simplicity in food and, as a cumulative result,
[146 not fulfilling, but draining the joys of life. Even to-day, weakened by
164 unbalanced nutrition, many more people succumb to tuberculosis,
754 bilharzia, tape-worm, even dysentery and malaria; as disease spreads and shakes the sense of security, sorcery and witchcraft become more common interpretations, and men must rely upon magic to restore their confidence. It is in agricultural practices that some of the greatest changes have occurred in the society. But, as will be seen, the changes are not of a simple nature.

These are the tendencies; but we must remember that the foundations of the society are deeply laid and the tensions are evident only in the upper superstructure. The people have a remarkable capacity for making adjustments, at least when no profound social arrangements are affected. They have adopted new crops, changed from hoe to plough cultivation, and adjusted themselves from unlimited to limited land. Unfortunately, they do not as yet have faith in manure. They have seen, they say, that manure raises an excess of weeds and that for *njugo* beans it is useless, even dangerous. One cannot appeal to the value of medicine, because only witches 'doctor' their fields, not indeed to fertilize them, but to steal the crops of their neighbours. Garden magic is never

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as are also any rights of ownership he may have. A child, who has been given a piece of land of his own to cultivate, will dispose of its produce as he pleases, and he may sell it for clothes or allow it to be used by the household. If he has been given fowls and the father wishes to kill one, he will mention it to the child and promise him another. Among parents one does not find the competitive jealousies that are apt to arise between European mothers about the relative size, weight, or health of their children, and there is little or no comparison of babies or boasting of their ability or cleverness. But a very precocious child is not liked; people may suspect that he is being taught to be a witch; and 'he outwits you obliquely [by way of witchcraft]'. Frightening of children by adults is of common occurrence. Not only are children told when naughty that a Shangana-Tonga or European will come and catch them or that a big elephant stalks about the village at night killing small children who will not go to bed, but mothers take pleasure in frightening them even when they are not naughty. Often a mother would try to force her child to come near us when she saw it was afraid or would tell it that we were about to carry it away in our suitcase. When it ran away crying, she would laugh with great merriment. If a small child refuses to greet a relative in the correct manner, his mother might take a knife and threaten to cut him or take hold of a pot and threaten to cook him unless he obeys. But fear of bogies is not excessive and fear is certainly not the only or most effective means of control.

Children learn the tasks required of adults simply by doing them. They are anxious to imitate their elders, and there is never any compulsory element in the teaching of these skills. Moreover, in their education they have this advantage, that it is not carried on in an institution divorced from everyday adult activities. The child feels that he is an essential part of society; all he does is a direct contribution to the domestic economy. If a small girl of five accompanies her mother to the fountain and returns solemnly carrying a diminutive calabash of water on her head, she feels she is doing important work, for her contribution will be used with that of her mother. 'The stick even of a child helps the adult across' and, in fact, a girl of six is able to fill quite a large pot of water for a busy mother by going to and fro with small quantities at a time from the fountain. One night, while sitting in a hut, we watched a girl of seven learning to cook. Fermented porridge was needed for the baby and this the girl set out to make in a small pot in the presence of her mother and several other girls somewhat older than herself who happened to be there. When the water boiled, she put in some ground grain, twirling the porridge twirler between the palms as she had seen her mother do. She took the comments and criticisms of the company with good grace, even when they smiled at her awkwardness. Meanwhile, her mother mentioned to us how useful it would be to have some one who could cook the evening meal on days when she came home late or tired from fetching wood. To a helpful toddler, its mother might say, 'Thank you, my lady' (*Ahee Khoba ya ga*), praising her by implying that she has already reached the maturity and usefulness of a mature young woman; or she may quote the maxim, 'Bearing children is not the same as gathering

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morning assaulted him, but was worsted; the offender then reported his wound at the capital. A *leharula* was sent to collect the blood fine from the district head, but, not finding him, left a message summoning him to the *khɔrɔ*. There the case was discussed with only initiates of the *gomana* present. The men could not decide upon their course of action. They said, 'Let no one be angry. The district head did right, but we cannot carry out the law of the "school" (the man who reveals the *digɔma* secrets must die). We cannot even impose a fine; no one knows what the fine should be. Let the matter rest.'

Khashani, working on a European farm, called his wife, whose baby was ill, to come to him. The baby died and Khashani, seeing 'medicine' on the fireplace, suspected and severely beat his sister's daughter as well as his sister. The case came to the *khɔrɔ* of the queen, which pointed out that if, as Khashani thought, his sister was a witch, he also probably was one. This did not satisfy Khashani, but his sister demanded back her cattle, and the *khɔrɔ*, attempting to isolate the struggle, said, 'We are discussing the "blood". You, Khashani, must pay your sister one head of cattle.' Khashani replied, 'That I agree to do. I shall even drive away my wife, so that I can return my sister's cattle.' The *khɔrɔ* was not much perturbed, since it thought that Khashani's threat was either bluff or the raving of a madman.

In the last case it was the victim, not the queen, who was awarded the head of cattle. The argument sometimes used by Lovedu men against such an award is better known in other tribes: it is that, if the victim is benefited, all he need do to become rich is to provoke others to fight him. And the theory held by those advancing this argument is that to spill blood is 'to break the queen's calabash', and therefore 'blood' cases must be submitted to the *khɔrɔ*. This is the view gaining ground, so that *maharula*, going to collect the blood fine, become messengers summoning the parties to the queen's *khɔrɔ*, without, however, ignoring the position of the district heads. The whole procedure is in a state of flux, but we can see in outline how the blood feud has gradually receded as the kin groups become submerged by the district organization and how, as a consequence, the procedure of reconciliation gained so firm a hold that it maintains its stand against the forces making for centralization.

Not long ago the procedure appropriate to cases of witchcraft and sorcery was the ordeal (*mureu*); and though the *mureu* has given way in Vulovedu to smelling out by the diviner (*mugɔme*), it can still be seen further east among the Phalaborwa. The test takes various forms; drinking poison, usually an extract of *zavazava* (*Datura stramonium*), licking a medicated stick or a heated hoe, removing a stone from boiling water, floating the kernels of *mutuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) in water and observing whether they separate or come together, sometimes accompanied by an oath or followed by the washing of hands or the squirting of water (*hu phasa*). All these are well-known in the lowveld, though the Lovedu used only or chiefly the first; but on the highveld, where witchcraft and sorcery are treated as private matters, there is no legal but only a magical method of dealing with them: the evil is sent back by a doctor privately employed by the victim. The Lovedu no longer rely upon the *mureu*,

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695 because it involves too great publicity and danger of European interven-
683 tion, though they say, perhaps by way of rationalization, that the doctor
754 of the ordeal could manipulate the test. As this procedure is merely of theoretical interest, we need refer only to its salient features.

The victim or his relative privately consulted a bone-throwing doctor, whose verdict he had confirmed by perhaps two or more other doctors before he or an intermediary on his behalf made a public accusation. The ordeal or test took place at the capital and was public. Lineal relatives of accuser and accused or, according to some, two strong men chosen by them, were given an intoxicating drink by the official 'doctor of the ordeal', the spectators watching to ensure that equal quantities were administered. Those who had drunk were put in the sun and he who began moving about or became dizzy, drunken, or incoherent was in the wrong. The witch was usually executed at once, at the orders of the queen, being strangled at the river; but if she was a woman, one of the executioners first had sexual intercourse with her; and the body, tied to a weight, was sunk into the water to be eaten by animals. But the witch was sometimes delivered to the victim to undo his evil work (*hu mu bulla*), and if the illness left the victim the witch was released. Sometimes, also, suspected witches were beaten, tied up (nowadays, as we have seen, handcuffed and submitted to ridicule and abuse), and left without food or tortured with velvet stinging-beans until they confessed; this was sometimes done privately, and it was possible also to kill them without the public ordeal, the killing being reported to the queen; but usually they were merely banished.

683 The property of a witch who was killed was not all confiscated, but
754 *baza*, consisting chiefly of his cattle, was taken by the queen for division between herself and her nobles. No one else could appropriate *baza*; even the village head, if he did so, was regarded as a thief. The witch's gardens reverted to the district head, the crops were taken, not by the queen, because she could not eat the 'dirt of the witch', but by the messengers of the queen, for they were so busy in her service that they could hardly cultivate their fields. Residents in the district surreptitiously during the night took the witch's crops, but it was regarded as disgraceful to do so openly during the day. The wife of a witch was taken by a classificatory brother, and his children were adopted by the queen, who received *munywalo* when she married the girls to her nobles (in more recent times, to commoners, because the girls often deserted). In the days of the kings, all the relatives, or, as some say, only those on the mother's side—the mother's uterine brothers and sisters especially—were killed. The queens had only a uterine brother or sister killed if they failed to leave the country. The witch, unlike a murderer, could not find sanctuary in the forest of Daja; and only a witch's, not a murderer's, property was *baza*—confiscable property.

787 Since the beginning of this century submission of issues to ordeal has
695 been replaced by their submission to the smelling-out diviner (*mugome*).
[177] The institution of the *mugome* has been borrowed from the Shangana-Tonga and its whole complicated legal procedure is still in a state of flux, adjustments being constantly made especially to avoid European intervention.

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intervention. The procedure involves, first, private consultations of a 787
doctor, followed by an accusation directly or through an intermediary, a 695
wager by the parties, publicly made often in the *khɔrɔ*, then a journey in the company of the 'ears' (official witness) of the chief to a distant smeller-out, the actual smelling out, at which the victor may be given a buck's horn to blow on his way home, and, finally the report to chief or district head and the adjudication of the *khɔrɔ*. We are here concerned only with the legal aspects, but we must at the outset remark that the procedure, primarily used in witchcraft cases, is relied upon whenever there are evidential difficulties and, paradoxically, it has rendered theft, adultery, and other wrongs, not less, but more amenable to some form of *khɔrɔ* control. Publicity and centralized control in the phenomenal, periodical *mureu* proceedings at the capital in the old days guaranteed their effectiveness, but men could privately execute self-confessed witches. To-day, amid conflicting tendencies, *mugɔme* proceedings are less public and hardly the prerogative of the queen. Witchcraft is not conceived necessarily to strike at the whole society; it is often dealt with privately; and [754] even, after resort to the *mugɔme*, agreement by the parties in the district courts may end the matter.

The *mugɔme* procedure lends itself to fixing responsibility when a whole district feels threatened, just as in the old days the *mureu* was used whenever the whole country wished to ward off danger. When, at a certain district gathering, it was decided to send delegates to a *mugɔme* concerning the occurrence of many deaths in the district, one young woman objected, saying, 'It is nonsense; we know the sickness is not "sent". If you go to the *mugɔme* and he "beats" (points out) members of your family, the whole district will be quarrelling.' The *mugɔme* pointed out the young woman who had objected, but she demanded that, if any one accused her, he should go with her to another *mugɔme*, and when she appealed to the capital for appointment there of the official witness, no one came forward as a direct accuser and for that reason the case broke down. Subsequent cases in which the young woman was involved reflected how the proceedings had not relieved, but aggravated, the sense of insecurity in the district. Shall we conclude that the remedy is worse than the disease? We cannot do so, because where there are no *mugɔme* proceedings, as on the highveld, the incidence of witchcraft and sorcery is not less. Moreover, *mugɔme* proceedings are believed to, and do often, remove grave threats to the community. In 1938 the tributary *morula* cider was being made at the village of the head of a sub-district. On the second day the cider frothed suspiciously and after a meeting of the sub-district, money was collected and representatives of every family went to the *mugɔme*, who found that the headman had poisoned the cider, and in truth everything pointed to the use of cattle-dip or locust poison. The matter was reported to the capital, where, without formal trial, the headman was ordered to leave the district. In our opinion a dangerous criminal had been successfully dealt with, but, what is more important, the feeling of security of the people had been restored.

We may now shortly examine some aspects of *khɔrɔ* control over *mugɔme* proceedings. The challenge, supported by a wager to submit the truth

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining [787] bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figthcla*) [789] unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than 826 *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ɖere* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to 766 rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ɖere*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are 754 sometimes called *mashɔthɔ̀ɔ*, because they *rɔthɔja* (cause to be cool,

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against sorcery: when the doctor made Nagambi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *khileso* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*hu phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they stand up (*va ɛmu*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*levoya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*hu gɔba*). The *levoya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *levoya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Pheduli, whose wife's death was attributed to *levoya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *levoya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstruating woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafa*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafa*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *ɖɛre* or *vulwedɛ vya vasadi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 30 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *ɖɛre*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Ɖɛre is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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833 753 *ḍcre* if the circumstances of the personal relations of the patient justify such a diagnosis. People thought that Maḓaradani's cough was *ḍcre*, but when he insisted that he had no lovers it was diagnosed as *khileso*; Mulada's debility was probably due to chronic malaria, but his friends suspected that he had taken no precautionary measures before resuming co-habitation with his wife, who had miscarried after seven months. *Ḍcre* is distinguished from *lefiha* (consumption) by its rapid course and the fact that *lefiha* (*hu fiha*, to breathe) is not caused by women. *Ḍcre* [847] can be cured only in its earliest stages, an ingredient of the medicine being a portion of the abortion or, in the case of intercourse with a woman who has lost a child, can be prevented by steaming and mutual inoculation. The prevalence of *ḍcre* suggests that abortions are common and that effective abortifacients are in general use. In reality, however, innocent women are accused as soon as a lover falls ill, and rather than be thought murderers, they often give him medicine purporting to be a portion of the abortion mixed with sand to be used as a cure.

753 769 Disease and healing are in the last resort connected with the guardianship of the ancestors. If they are annoyed and relax their vigilance, their descendants may be rendered susceptible to disease, or medicines used cannot have their full effect. Ancestors, however, do not merely ward off disease or assist cure; they also actively cause illness. The crying all day of a baby may be due to the spirit of a grandfather pinching it in order that it should be given his name; sore eyes in children are often, and in adults sometimes, attributed to ancestors; barrenness or difficult birth is laid at their door, and sometimes they seize the whole body of a person because they wish to 'possess' him. But ancestors never cause death: even if at first an illness is said to be due to them, should death supervene, it is attributed to witches. Complaints of living relatives, especially of the father's sister, may also cause illness.

754 By far the most important of all causes of ill-health, however, is the evil work of witches and sorcerers. Certain illnesses, such as *khileso*, are characteristic of sorcery and can be contracted in no other manner. But any disease may be caused by witchcraft and witches may avail themselves of the opportunity offered by any minor illness to enter and aggravate it. Diagnosis depends on the course of the illness. Dysentery is regarded as due to natural causes; but should it not respond to treatment or should the patient suspect an enemy, a witch will be implicated. During the 1938 smallpox epidemic, the head of a district which was more hardly hit than its neighbours called a meeting of residents. Men declared, 'Smallpox kills people here; they merely get ill and recover elsewhere. There is a witch in our midst.' Money was collected, three men sent to a diviner, and, in the end, two women were accused. A specialized cause of illness is legitimate vengeance-magic used against theft and called *khidoba*, which makes the finger of the thief swell up or the stolen goat bleat in his belly.

753 It must not be imagined that the Lovedu do not recognize a large number of diseases as natural. Many illnesses 'just come'. Such are all minor ailments like coughs, colds, stomach disorders, and also other more serious diseases like dysentery and malaria. Too much beer is

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known to affect the stomach, many kinds of spinach to cause diarrhoea. 753
Epidemics of smallpox, measles, coughs are thought to be brought by 'wind' (*phefo e ɸile*) and steps may be taken to combat them by sprinkling with medicines the inmates of the village. Usually an epidemic 'just comes', but on occasion one hears that a witch has 'sent' the wind. Ancestors, too, are thought to exercise some controlling influence over [769] wind; in most libations they are asked, 'Prevent for us these winds'—that is, as we might phrase it in our prayers, 'Guard us from disease.' Diseases are never classified as natural or non-natural solely according to their nature or symptoms. Any natural illness may also be 'sent' and, 753 though natural death is recognized as possible, in practice those closely 754 affected always attribute death to witchcraft or sorcery, though outsiders may give other reasons and some even say of an old man dying, 'The gods have called him to rest.' Of the thirty deaths, including a number of old people, that came to our notice, none were, however, thought to be natural. Contagiousness (*ku fedela*) of certain diseases, such as venereal diseases, leprosy, whooping cough, measles, is recognized, and it is known that consumption may be transmitted by parents to their children, as one of its names, *lehoɸla la tata-mulɸo* (cough of the family father) signifies.

There must, of course, be a body of professional men and women 759 trained in and practising the art and science of medicine, but there are also many who have an extensive knowledge of home remedies. This is not unexpected in a society in which ordinary mortals live close to, and know a great deal about, nature. Every one is familiar with plants and their properties, which is one of the bases of pharmacology, with the meagre conceptions of anatomy and physiological relations, and with much of the intricate system of causation of disease. There are many men and women who know some special medicines or types of treatment, inherited usually from father, mother, or spouse, and kept secret, not because the knowledge is a source of material benefit, for the remedies are generally given free, but because it lends some recognition and prestige. Mamutho, despite all our efforts, divulged her medicine for inflamed eyes to us only as a parting gift. Madinji treats sprains and fractures; Khiebe specializes in mutual inoculation of the newly wed; and Khapani knows roots for dysentery. These are herbalists, not doctors, but some herbalists are so well-known for the efficacy of a medicine they have that even diviners send patients to them. Knowledge of these remedies, however important, does not make one a doctor (*Dɸga*): that appellation is accorded only to those who are initiated bone-throwers or as herbalists have achieved general recognition as dispensers of many medicines and treatments. Muhale's wife, though no bone-thrower, is a good midwife and wields expertly a blood-letting awl. But a herbalist, even if called *Dɸga*, remains *Dɸga-tshebya*, a doctor without horns (power), because he does not divine; he can prescribe for recognized diseases, but he cannot diagnose in other cases for which the divining dice are necessary. From our point of view, the herbalist diagnoses and prescribes along scientific lines; to the Native he is a novice unable to deal with witches or the more serious diseases.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Ancestral caprices and complaints and rites to appease them—the universe of the ancestors a replica of the everyday world—relations of magic, morality, and religion—possession by spirits as a religion and socio-psychological phenomenon.

NATURE spirits and hero-gods have no place in the Lovedu scheme of things. There is, however, Khuzwane, the creator, who made all things, including men, and left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when these rocks were new and soft. But no one knows what has happened to him and no one ever thinks of him. The gods of the Lovedu are their ancestors, deceased fathers and mothers who guard one in death as they did in life. Each family has its own ancestors, and religious observances are thus peculiarly a family concern.

Ancestors have various attributes. They are one's protectors and no harm can befall one unless they, the ancestors, are neglectful. Witches, powerful as they are, can neither enter the village nor cause sickness without their connivance; hence the procedure in divination, even in the clearest case of witchcraft, of inquiring whether the spirits should be appeased. Disease cannot enter nor epidemics break out if only the ancestors are watchful enough and well-disposed. Again and again one finds this idea expressed in prayers; 'Protect us from epidemics [winds]', they say; while the queen in a prayer at her harvest ceremony put it even more positively: 'As regards life, we have been very well, but now we are being killed by that epidemic which you have allowed to come', referring to smallpox. There can be no success without the co-operation of the ancestors. Medicine cannot help nor doctors heal if the ancestors are not with one. This idea, reminiscent of our 'By the will of God', is expressed in the phrase, 'We do not say our doctor, [will heal]; we say our doctor and the ancestors'. It appears also in a prayer we heard on behalf of an absent son working in town, when a goat, dedicated to his grandmother (father's mother), who had made him ill two years before, was being given the new corn: 'Here is the child; here he is, mother. We ask that you let him be happy and cool (give him health). Tell all the other spirits [certain names mentioned], and we who remain, *we say our thing with the gods*.'

The phrase '*wadimo laiana*' (spirits, sleep) which rounds off so many prayers, and the constant fear of waking up (*ku dessa*) the ancestors, causing them to stand (*ku ema*) and cause trouble, appear at first as a peculiar contradiction, as though people do not wish their gods to be watchful. The term *lala* is, however, idiomatic, expressing peace, things being as they should be, as in the phrase, '*He na malao; shego la lala*' (There was order; the country slept), implying that the rains were good and all was well; while *ku dessa* in this sense means stirring to anger rather than waking up from sleep.

The ancestors are responsible for the fertility of the crops. True, nothing could grow without rain, for which the queen is responsible and

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CHAPTER XIV

WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY

Techniques and manifestations of day and night witchcraft—distinctions between witchcraft and magic—smelling out of witches by the forensic physician—social incidence and psychological aspects of witchcraft.

T54 *Ubulozi*, as the Lovedu use the word, comprises both witchcraft and sorcery, but the distinction between them, as accepted by many modern ethnographical writers, diverges considerably from the distinctions made by the Lovedu. In order, therefore, to preserve Lovedu conceptions and terminology, it is necessary, firstly, to use a single word—namely, witchcraft (*ubulozi*), and, secondly, to distinguish night-witchcraft (*ubulozi ya usiku*) and day-witchcraft (*ubulozi ya matsiare*). *Ubulozi* is distinguished from other forms of what we should call magic, not so much by the methods employed, though some of them are confined to witches, as by intent and results. *Ubulozi* is anti-social; it is illegal and aims at harming people from motives of jealousy, revenge, frustration, or anger. Though witches are believed to have a kind of compulsion to do evil—their fingers burn to bewitch—they are never unconscious of their own evil deeds and powers, as has been reported by Junod for Shangana-Tonga and Stayt for the Venda. The witch knows his own powers and uses them to obtain his own ends. Knowledge of witchcraft does not inevitably involve its practice; the child of a witch may refuse to kill people while using his powers to increase his crops, and it is even possible for a witch to protect some one he likes against the machinations of others.

There are important distinctions between night-witches or night-witchcraft, on the one hand, and day-witches or day-witchcraft, on the other. The night-witch is a 'born' witch, taught in early infancy by his mother. He works chiefly by night, but can also work by day. The day-witch is any ordinary individual who, by means of medicine obtained from some doctor or witch, tries to kill his enemies. He has no knowledge of witchcraft beyond the medicine obtained for some definite end. There is a certain amount of vagueness about the distinction between day and night witches, and in practice, when any one is accused of witchcraft, there is never any inquiry into which type of witchcraft has been used. Nevertheless, the distinction is essential for an understanding of Lovedu witchcraft.

The night-witch is able directly, and without the aid of any medicine, to effect his evil purposes. He can enter a hut through the smallest crevice. But his absence from home will never be missed, because he will throw his slumbering companions into a deep sleep or even leave a hyena in his own image; but the soul is never sent out to do the work, as among the Azande. When one wakes up from a dream in a sweat or fright, it is a sign that night-witches are near, and in consultations with doctors such symptoms are often described by patients as very relevant to the diagnosis

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of their illness. Night-witches are not often seen by people, but there is 754
certain medicine which can be put in the village fence to keep a night-witch rooted to the spot, unable to move till you come and find him. As soon as he is addressed, he will scurry away. Those who have seen witches, always describe them as naked, perhaps because people always sleep naked wrapped in their blankets. The most effective way of keeping witches at bay is the placing of medicine (*diphaba*) round the village fence, which either makes them forget their errand or makes the village appear like water or a forest.

Night-witches cause all manner of illness in ways unknown to ordinary people. They may pour blood over you, then next day you are ill; your blood is not right and soon you die. They may cut off portions of your body to insert millet or sand, which causes intense pain. If your bones ache and you feel tired without knowing why, it may be that a night-witch has made you hoe in his garden all night or beaten you all over your body with sticks. Sometimes he even makes you ride a bicycle all night. Besides killing, night-witches are fond of causing barrenness in their enemies. They are great destroyers of crops. After you have ploughed, they go into your field and pick up all the seeds so that nothing grows, or they rob your field of its fertility to increase that of their own fields. They also send their familiars at night to milk your cows or let them out of their kraal to cause damage that may bring you to court. Night-witches form a sort of fraternity: they all know one another and meet at night to drum and dance for amusement. They also fight one another: those of an area in which the crops have failed will send wind to break mealies and trees in another area or worms to destroy the crop. The destructiveness of such contests is a reality to some, for in one district in which many worms appeared in the mealies, so we heard, a public meeting was held and one man accused Shangana-Tonga witches, whom he said he had seen the previous night. Often a real battle against foreign witches takes place in which wounds are received that the witch does his best to hide during the day. Witches have even been known to die from wounds received in battle at night, as sometimes admitted by themselves.

Night-witches employ familiars (*dithomya*) such as the hyena, the snake, 759
the *muishond* (*Paralagale albinucha*), and, to a lesser extent, owls and 825
the striped *muishond* (*Ictonyx capensis*): both kinds of *muishond* are polecats or skunks. How the witch tames these animals is not known, but they become so intimate that they come at night to ask for food and call the witch their mother, but there is no sex relationship between witch and familiar as is reported for the Pondo. Two actual cases were reported to the queen while we were in the field in which 'sent' snakes had been killed; one of these had been found to contain porridge and relish, certain proof of its association with a witch. The difference between an ordinary snake which also bites and a 'sent' snake appears from the circumstances: if, for example, others walk along a path before you and escape, but you get bitten, then the snake must be 'sent'. For 'sent' snakes are real snakes; the Zulu practice of smearing medicine on sticks to turn them into snakes when your enemy passes is not known to the Lovedu. The most fearful of all familiars is, however, the *khiphuane*, a 759

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754 human being who has been killed by a witch to be his slave. The *khighuwane* is not an ordinary corpse, though witches do call corpses out of their graves in order to cut off portions of their body for medicine, a procedure that can be prevented by magical protection of the grave. Only a person specially killed for the purpose can be a *khighuwane*; when they bury him, it is only his shadow that goes into the grave; the real person has been enslaved and put in a large earthen pot or in a cave. At night he hoes for his master, cuts poles for building, or goes on nefarious errands. If you meet a *khighuwane*, you faint at the sight, and even after medical treatment your body may feel dried up, as though it has no blood.

That the fear of *mighuwane* is very real to the Native, and backed by what is to him convincing evidence, is shown in the case of Madume. In November, 1937, Madume, a man residing near us, died. Ever since his wife's death he had lived with (*hu gaula*) a woman whom he had never properly married and, after his death, it was rumoured that he had been killed by the mother of his son's wife for the sake of her daughter, who was jealous that her husband's father should be fonder of, and show more favours to, a concubine than to his legitimate daughter-in-law. The mother of the girl had first, so it was said, wanted to kill Madume's wife, but her daughter had argued that it would be better to kill Madume himself, since he might pick up some other woman and they would have the same trouble over again. How much of this story had actually been given by the diviner and how much was sheer surmise we were never able to discover, but a month after the death people began to be afraid to go near his village at night, as he had been seen standing at his gate. The concubine, afraid to remain at home at night, went to sleep with neighbours, whence she would return at dawn to do her household duties. One morning when it was just getting light, she rose to go home. On her way she suddenly ran shouting into the nearest village and fell in a faint at the entrance. People rushed to help her and called in Madume's sister [757] to revive her in the manner usual in such circumstances: by holding smoking chips under the nose to cause sneezing (*hu ctsemudisa*). She told them she had seen three *mighuwane*, a man called Khishweni who had died long ago in the neighbourhood, and two children, dancing and singing on the road. From this evidence the conclusion was immediately come to that Khishweni must have been killed by the same witch as Madume, since both were walking about, and so great was the fear of going out at night that the women of the neighbourhood could not be persuaded to attend a girl's initiation ceremony which had begun before this episode.

775 Contact with Europeans has led to the conception of *khipogo* (spook) which must not be confused with *khighuwane*. A *khipogo* is the ghost of a dead person, but the sight of a *khipogo* does not, like that of a *khighuwane*, make one faint or dry up, it only makes one's heart jump in fright. Such a ghost can be laid by means of medicine (*diphuba*) on the grave. Children often run to their mothers with scared faces and bated breath to say they have seen a *khipogo*, sometimes even in broad daylight.

754 Night-witches can be male or female, but the great majority are female.

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There is nothing corresponding to the witch-substance found in the stomachs of Zande witches. A witch is said to imbibe witchcraft with its mother's milk, yet it involves learning, a process begun on the second or third day after birth, when its mother throws it up against the wall, to which it clings like a bat. On one occasion the anger of a grandmother that her grandchild had been 'taken out' of the hut (*hu thusa*) without her presence or knowledge was construed as due to a sense of frustration because this had prevented her from teaching the child witchcraft. The dullness at school of a certain girl whose mother was said to be a witch was ascribed to the difficulty of simultaneously learning two things: witchcraft and books. Since witchcraft is learnt from the mother (though one sometimes hears that the mother teaches her daughter, a father his sons), brothers and sisters of one mother cannot accuse each other of witchcraft without involving themselves; that such accusations do occur shows how theory often gives way to practical considerations. In one such case, where a woman brought her son to court for beating her and her daughter, the son accused his own mother and sister of killing his child. His sister asked, 'If I and my mother are witches, what about you?' When he replied, 'My mother stinted me, giving only you the knowledge,' the court laughed, saying, 'Boy, you're mad. Where have you ever heard of a man accusing his own mother of witchcraft?' But the boy insisted on going to a *magwes*, though the court warned him of the consequences of breaking his relationship with his cattle-linked sister, whose cattle, if called back because of the imputation, could no longer serve as a bond for future marriages. Night-witchcraft is learnt, but unlike day-witchcraft it can neither be learnt from an outsider nor be bought. Yet one hears of such transactions, more especially among Christians, who aver that payment consists of the blood of a close relative, usually your own child. Jeremiah associated the beginnings of his stepmother's witchcraft with the death of her own child, followed shortly afterwards by that of her step-daughter.

The day-witch is almost always a man, since women cannot easily buy medicines. He is distinguished from the night-witch by his use of medicine and spells. Spells have no fixed phraseology, but consist in telling the medicine what to do, mentioning the name of the person. Very often the medicine works as well without the spell as with it. The day-witch employs no familiars, belongs to no fraternity, does not inherit his knowledge. He is called a day-witch, not so much because he works by day, for he may work at night too, but because of the technique he uses. Whereas the night-witch himself goes out and steals your mealie seeds, the day-witch puts medicine on the soles of his feet and walks through your field; and while the day-witch introduces substances into your body by means of medicine, the night-witch employs a stoat to take up its abode in you and eat all your food. Certain techniques are associated with day-witchcraft, though it is possible for any night-witch to use also all the methods of the day-witch, simply by getting the right medicine.

The day-witch can cause illness or death by *hu lapa*. *Hu lapa* means to try, to tempt, and hence, by extension of meaning, to challenge or to

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754 send misfortune by means of medicine. The witch may mix your footprint with medicine or put a medicated thorn in the path you usually take, to cause pain in the leg, which gradually passes into the rest of the body and kills you. He may cause your death by pointing a medicated finger at you, or using water you have washed in or clothes you have worn. Hair and nails are, however, not much used in witchcraft and only a few people, more especially women, are careful about their disposal. To point at a man in a menacing way, or to say the words, 'You will see' (*u ḓi bona*), suffices, should evil befall him, as ground for an imputation of witchcraft. In a violent quarrel between a woman who had a child by her lover and the lover whom she had jilted because the liaison was causing trouble with her husband, the angry lover flung out the challenge, 'You've got a daughter who is my blood, yet you love me no longer. You will see!' A few weeks later the child became ill and died. The mother, overcome with grief and fury, carried her dead to the lover's house and threw it down, saying, 'Here is your meat. Cook it and eat it.' This phraseology suggests, though no one believes, that witches eat human flesh; it was construed merely as a dramatic accusation and created quite a stir; but it was considered justifiable in view of his threat. The *mugome* to whom the matter was taken pointed out, not the lover, but the woman's own husband as the culprit. When the latter, refusing to accept the verdict and to pay his bet, was required to leave the area, his wife, a staunch believer in his innocence, accompanied him. Use of *malego* by ordinary people is witchcraft, but its use by doctors against one another is legitimate. Doctors often 'try' their skill against one another: one doctor, we were told, turned himself into an elephant for the purpose of attacking his rival; not to be outdone, the latter became a bird and flew away.

754 821 Sending lightning, to cause lightning to strike (*ku tiisa ḓadi*), is a common means of harming one's enemies employed by day-witches. To say of a person, 'He knows lightning', is tantamount to calling him a witch, for, unlike the Zulu, the Lovedu have no socially recognized lightning doctors. The Lovedu distinguish two kinds of lightning—natural or 'lightning of the bird' and 'sent' lightning. The former comes with rain and is caused by the lightning bird, which has blue feathers and looks somewhat like a goose with large feet. These birds get no food unless there is lightning and then their food is the *nakulalu*, the blue-headed tree lizard. When the bird strikes a tree, it leaves its urine as a white substance at the root; then doctors come and take the soil into which it has soaked to be used as medicine to cause lightning or for curing burns. Natural lightning, in theory and according to the diagnosis of the dice, is believed to strike only trees or rocks far from villages, never animals or people; but some say that it is dangerous to men in autumn, when it follows the sweet sorghum spat out on the road. 'Sent' lightning, on the other hand, strikes near the village, killing cattle or people. It comes with little or no rain and is more terrifying than that of the lightning bird. Lightning is judged almost solely by its results: if it does no harm it is natural; if it strikes any one or destroys anything in the village it is *ḓadi ya vathu* or *khiḓadi mathuvane*, 'sent' by people.

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Doctors frequently 'try' one another by sending lightning. A lightning witch may either fly himself or may smear medicine on a dove or a red-winged locust which, when it thunders, is able to 'go with the lightning' and strike where its owner wishes. Use of the lightning bird itself for this purpose is impossible. A man who himself strikes as lightning must be scarified with medicine containing some portion of the lightning bird, and when learning to strike may be taken to a high desolate place where he is taught accuracy by being required to strike one of a number of aloes in a row. An informant once saw a man with black-and-white stripes all over his body and two branches tied to his hips; he concluded that this must be a lightning witch (*cf.* the striped hyena with its mane of upright hair on neck or along back, or the striped polecat, which bristles up its tail in anger). One who controls lightning is able to prevent it from striking him by cutting or piercing the flash with a medicated axe or spear, telling it to go elsewhere. Lightning frequently strikes villages and people in Uulovedu and in many instances some accusation is brought before the court. Huts may be magically protected against lightning. If a witch strikes a protected village, it is believed that he will 'fall', change into a person, and can then be caught. There are no taboos against milking or working during lightning, but the day after it has struck the whole district has a holiday. 754 821

Day-witches use several other techniques. A very common form of day-witchcraft is *ku lesa* (to cause to eat), the introduction of medicine into beer or food, which on being swallowed turns into an indigestible piece of meat or other object that makes one ill. Most people one meets have at some time or other suffered from *khileso*. To pour real poison into food (*ku shela khitaba*) is a modern though still very uncommon method of killing. *Ku fakelcja* (*ku fa*, to die, *ku elcja*, to cause to go for) is to cause a person to leave home, e.g. for European employment, and die far away. This is done chiefly by day-witches, but also sometimes by night-witches; it is, however, neither common nor well-known. Modern conditions, with increased tribal contacts in European towns, have led to a tremendous increase in day witchcraft. New methods and medicines for *ku loga*, unknown in the tribe before, are being introduced. Some even go so far as to say that the sending of lightning is a relatively recent thing from Natal. 754

There are many practices bordering on witchcraft, indistinguishable from day-witchcraft in technique and method of procedure, but considered legitimate and therefore not witchcraft in the true sense. Some of these are so close to, that they are sometimes looked upon as witchcraft. The deciding factor in such cases is always the result: if it causes death it is witchcraft; if it does not, or if it is done with an object that is recognised as legitimate, it is not witchcraft. *Ku dakcha* is essentially legitimate. Its technique consists in changing the nature of things, making medicated pieces of the skin of an animal turn into the animal itself, changing a person's sex, and one of the best-known doctors in Lovedu-land is skilled in *madabi*. It is a technique confined to men, employed to make a woman marry you or to frighten her into coming back to you when she has run away. No one has ever heard of a woman sending 754 789

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754 789 *madabi*.[1] A woman ran away from her husband to live with another. Whenever she was cooking or doing her household duties at her new home, monkeys and other animals appeared at the village till, frightened out of her wits, she ran back to her first husband. *Madabi* are often sent [845] in connexion with childbirth. Sometimes the sending of *madabi* is looked upon as witchcraft. Malaji changed the sex of Muhale's daughter so as to make the birth difficult each time she was about to bear a child, because the child was his, but the girl no longer loved him. We were not allowed into the hut, but the midwives, whom we knew well, testified to a real change, though probably because certain types of difficult birth are conventionally so explained. Eventually the birth took place, but shortly afterwards the baby was dead. This was considered to be witchcraft; the case was brought to court, and a large fine imposed. Only the doctor who used *madabi* can undo or reverse its power by *hu dabekulla*, but other doctors may, if there has been any injury, heal it with medicines.

789 A practice similar to *madabi*, but differing from it in object is *maḑilebɔ*. At the time of the Swazi raids, Ranwagu, instead of hiding in the forests, put his faith in *maḑilebɔ* (marvel, wonder). When the enemy came, his village turned into water and they could not find his cattle, though they heard their lowing. Masia, who was wanted by the police during the whole period of our investigation, was able, when chased by them, to disappear even in the open; he would hang like a bat on a plough to look just like a spanner. When eventually he was arrested, he averred, and many people agreed, that it was because he was tired.

Khidɔba is a technique used against thieves and it is both public and legitimate. Some kinds of *khidɔba* are known as a home remedy; some are obtained from doctors. By means of medicine used on *ledzigeri* grass [Pg] (*Hyparrhenia Tamba*), one can cause a severe and painful itching in the finger of the thief which may compel him to confess. Likewise, by *hu dɔba*, a stolen goat may be made to cry out in the thief's belly, as happened in a recent case, probably of compulsion neurosis, in which bleating was taken as conclusive proof of his guilt. Another method of *hu dɔba* causes the eyes of the thief to protrude till they fall out on to his stomach; if his mother then cries on seeing him, he may die. *Khidɔba* strikes the thief even when he hides or sells the stolen goods. Besides these measures, taken to bring a thief to book after the theft, one may by anticipation pro- [Pg] tect one's property by means of a piece of *letafe* rush (*Marisscus sp.*) split at one end to resemble the mouth of a snake and smeared with coloured medicines. When placed at the hut entrance or on the border of your field, it turns into a snake and bars the entry or exit of a thief. A doctor we knew used to have serious talks with his son about the fortune he would make if he knew this medicine, especially in Johannesburg, where theft is common and victims pay high prices. The only recognized cure

[1] The word comes from *dalo* plus *isbi*; *dalo* (well being), is a noun from *hu lala* (to lie down, to be peaceful), and *isbi* means bad. *Dabi* should be calamity, but it is used only in the sense of excessive rain (causing evil). The plural, *madabi*, means misfortune or pain or disease legitimately 'sent'. The verb is *hu dabeka*, legitimately to send misfortune, and its converse, *hu dabekulla*, means to neutralise or remove the effects of *madabi*.

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of the power and effect of *hu dɔba* is by asking for pardon, when the doctor who gave or used the *khidɔba* will be asked to *dɔbulla*, i.e. reverse the effects of his medicine. He will usually charge a large fee (even an ox), which he shares with his client. 789

Use of medicine on a grave which causes the death, not only of the witch who killed the deceased, but also of other members of his family is not considered to be witchcraft. This is called *hu tsikɛla* or *hu dicla lewigla* (to work on the grave) and is done in various ways: the corpse may be smeared before burial, or the seed of a certain plant from Rhodesia sown on the grave, and when it grows the witch will die, or medicine and the stomach contents of a goat may be poured down a hole to reach the body in its grave. This is the usual sense in which *hu tsikɛla* is used, but sometimes it is conceived of as a kind of *hu dɔba*, against a thief with the purpose of wreaking vengeance, not only on him, but also on all those who have eaten of the thing stolen, whether they are innocent strangers or guilty accomplices. It kills, unlike *hu dɔba*, which merely injures. As in *khidɔba*, this form of *hu tsikɛla* is more or less public, for the villagers and neighbours must be previously informed, so that they will have an opportunity to confess. The other and more usual form of *hu tsikɛla* is directed against witches who are murderers and for that reason it is not public, for it is conceived that the witch might take counter measures or bribe a bad doctor to 'call back' the medicine. It may be sent to a definite person discovered by consultation with the bones, but the name of the person will not be mentioned in the spell lest the witch take counter measures. The spell is not in set terms, but it usually runs as follows: 'You Mufuba (the deceased in the grave whose death is to be avenged), we are to-day working on your grave. We call all those who killed you to follow you to the grave. We do not say only one of them. We mean all who are of them [the whole family]. Do you also call them, so that all of them should follow you.' 789 754

A death is sometimes ascribed by the bones to *hu tsikɛla*; and in one case the suicide of a girl, who was said to have bewitched her husband's people, was found to have been caused by such medicine. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is possible for a witch, who gets a doctor to *tsikɛla* for him, to be struck down by the medicine intended for another. It is curious that, though he knows that the medicine seeks out the true witch, he will risk such a procedure, but the explanation is that, though a doctor might be deceived—his bones confused by the witch's medicine (*khiɣalaɣaga*)—the medicine cannot be, and that the fatal effect of *hu tsikɛla* is diagnosed *ex post facto*. Thus in one case where a woman died, her sister went to a *tsikɛla* specialist; but subsequently the sister herself and some of her relatives died. When a great *magɔma* was consulted, he said that the sister had sent *mutsikɛla* to people whom she hated and that, not finding the murderer there, it returned and struck down the sender. *Mutsikɛla* will continue its deadly effects unless 'stopped' by the doctor who sent it, though there is a medicine (*lesclo*) which may be eaten by all those who think they are in danger of vengeance-magic to neutralize its effects. It is recognised that the witch may retaliate in the case of vengeance-magic, though this is considered unusual and almost always ineffectual. 754

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754 There are many other specialized techniques, but for our purposes it
832 will suffice to refer briefly to love-magic. Love-medicine was not known
789 to the Lovedu, and its use is generally said by the older people to be witchcraft. Nevertheless, this magic, introduced from the towns, where, especially among Zulu and Xhosa, it is common, is used by many young men in Ɓulovedu to-day. One method, scarification of the forehead or use of medicine in your snuff, makes all the girls love you; blowing a medicated pipe of the *mukhure* shrub (*Ricinus sp.*) morning and evening, while calling the name of a certain girl, will make her come to you soon; and there are various other medicines. Love-magic to cause hysteria in girls is known as a Zulu practice, but is not used in Ɓulovedu. It would be looked upon as witchcraft.

754 These borderline methods, sometimes called witchcraft, sometimes
761 not, and often referred to as 'good' *vulɔi*, bring us to a consideration of what constitutes *vulɔi*. All witchcraft is socially disapproved, anti-social, but this criterion is not always sufficient to distinguish between witchcraft proper and practices bordering on witchcraft. Swearing at people, or scolding them violently, when the cause hardly justifies it, is liable to call down upon them forces which lead to death or misfortune to them or their family. It is called *lesola* and is reprehensible; but it is not *vulɔi*; nor is *mahava*, illness caused by the ill-feeling of a father's sister or other relative. The conduct of a woman who, having had an abortion, causes her husband's death through neglecting to give him the medicine necessary to ward off such disaster is strongly disapproved of, but it is not witchcraft, even though it causes death.

Since many borderline practices are judged by their result and become witchcraft when they cause death, it might be argued that this criterion must be distinctive. It is, however, not enough; causing death to a husband by abortion is, as we have seen, not considered to be witchcraft, nor is the murderous *khigevtgwa* a witch, even though he secretly kills people at night and sells parts of their body to doctors. Furthermore, many accusations of witchcraft have arisen where there has been no death, but only sickness or loss by lightning. The only difference between the killing by a *khigevtgwa* and that by a witch lies in the method employed. The killer uses ordinary weapons; the witch kills by means of medicine or some peculiar powers not known to ordinary people. The distinguishing feature of all cases of witchcraft is the use or supposed use of medicine or witch-power. Intent is another feature by which one judges an action. Where a woman causes the death of a husband through abortion, her conduct is anti-social and the act is done in secret, but it differs from witchcraft proper in the absence of intent to kill. Fear of the consequences of adultery is the main force deterring her from correct behaviour; and it is argued that, if she really wishes to kill she need not employ so roundabout a method.

754 The conclusion we may draw is that, for an action to be witchcraft, it must satisfy, not one, but all the following three requirements: it must be disapproved of, anti-social; there must be an intent to kill or to harm; and it must be thought that either medicine or the mysterious forces of night-witchcraft have been used. Secrecy is not peculiar to witchcraft; it is

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not a distinguishing feature, because it is characteristic also of most magic: one does not want witches to know the steps taken to counteract them.

Only a very small proportion of cases of witchcraft lead to an open accusation and legal procedure; for going to a *mugome* involves a long, expensive journey, and *khoro* proceedings do not stop the witch, who may indeed redouble his efforts. In many cases of illness diagnosed as due to witchcraft there is nothing definite said about the person responsible; the disease is cured, the cure itself usually involving magic to 'send back' the illness to its owner. The verdict of the dice is necessarily vague. Usually only the totem and sex are given and the client himself, with his knowledge of his own friends and enemies, decides which of them is meant. The dice may indicate a totem to which none of the client's friends or enemies belong; but even if he thinks he can place the witch, one illness would hardly end in an accusation. Even death need not necessarily lead to an accusation; the grave may be treated to 'send back' death to the witch, but there are many cases in which there is neither accusation nor treatment of the grave.

To cause a witch to desist, the victim or some one on his behalf more often, after consulting a doctor privately for instructions, may resort to *ku tshela*—that is, shout out an indefinite warning from his courtyard, if possible within earshot of the suspected witch. There is no fixed formula, but usually the gist of the warning is as follows: 'People of this village, I want you to know that you must leave my "person" alone; you must not kill him. If you kill him, I shall get a doctor to kill all your relatives. If my "person" has done any harm to you, I will pay for him; if he has done no harm, you have no right to make him ill. To-morrow I want my "person" to walk. If he dies, you will see.' In one case a girl suffered from epilepsy and her father, standing in the courtyard, shouted, 'The person who bewitched my daughter, I know him. I shall kill him with an axe. I speak not to the villages of Phedula, Mungadani, and Ratshegu. I mean this village of ours.' In another case, when a snake appeared at the *nyali* initiation and a diviner had indicated two men as the culprits, an old woman, the herald at the capital, in the presence of the women in the courtyard, called out, 'The person who has sent these snakes will feel pain. The *gosa* of the queen is not to be "tried" (*ku lega*).' Very often there is a threat that, if the sick person is not cured, the injured person will go to a *mugome*. The procedure is said to shame (*nyoma*) the witch, or he may take fright and withdraw the witchcraft he has sent.

Sometimes, when you have a witch in the village, so that strengthening of the fence would be of no avail, you *fira* him, i.e. cause him to forget to act and be 'cool', just as you *fira* the spirits to keep them satisfied. More usually, however, you just move away and establish your own village somewhere else. Thus, when Rasodi's daughter lost her baby and the doctors all agreed that the husband's people were responsible (some said the husband's mother, others mentioned another relative), they quietly moved away, having been warned not to talk much about the removal, lest the witch get to know.

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754 683 787 Accusation of a specific person may lead to *khoro* proceedings,[7] which involve, as described elsewhere, the appointment of the 'ears', who receives a goat or 10*s*. from each party as well as provisions, a wager of a head of cattle, or £1 10*s*. or more, and payment, the vanquished eventually to reimburse the victor, of £1 10*s*. or more, as the fee of the *mugome*. Occasionally in practice, if accused does not demand to have his innocence proved, the accuser does not go to court and the matter is left. All victims of witchcraft do not act in the same manner. One man proceeds to a specific accusation the very first time he is harmed, another only if the same witch has been responsible for many evils; if the witch is a great rival or personal enemy, the victim more readily resorts to action, but a commoner, unless he is prepared to leave the district, will be careful to avoid accusing his district head or a relative of the queen. A victim never makes an accusation without previous private consultation with a number of doctors and often even a *mugome* as well, and the accusation is conveyed to the witch, either directly by the victim or indirectly by his intermediary, and usually in metaphorical language. In case of illness, the witch may be invited to 'come and *phasa* for our patient' or, in case of death, to 'come and shave us', duties which only special relatives can perform; or, more directly, he may be asked 'to come with us to consult the bones'. The accused will then demand to go to a *mugome* to clear his name; if he does nothing, but merely remains inactive, his accuser may proceed further and take the case to the *khoro*.

When proceeding to a smeller-out, the parties have no definite destination. They set out in a north-easterly direction, where *mugome* abound, usually with the intention of going somewhere very far away. After a day or two, however, they grow tired, or the official witness complains of the heat, and they find some one nearer. The witness has on his person an object called *phitho* that has been given to him by the court or at the royal village. This the smeller-out has to name and find, and it is said that, unless, in addition, he is able to give the totem of every one in the party and clearly to distinguish between accuser, accused, and official witness, they will pass on to some one else. How far this is carried out in practice we shall see later. It is sometimes said by Europeans that smellers-out have spies who bring them the information necessary for their divining. This would, however, be impossible: not only do people come from all directions or tribes, sometimes as far distant as Mapulaneng beyond the Olifants River, but it would require an elaborate system of espionage that could hardly be kept secret from the people in the conditions that obtain in Bantu society. Moreover, the methods employed by smellers-out make such a system unnecessary. There is no doubt that *mugome* are clever, and we have ourselves been amazed at the manner in which, under test conditions, a *mugome* was able to name and find an object hidden on our person. But it must be borne in mind that they use a trial-and-error technique based upon the responses of the audience. Of course, the presence of a European is always a disturbing factor, but in our experience, after the first few responses, the *mugome* begins to speak more and more loudly and quickly and a situation of free association of ideas and great suggestiveness arises. The consultants

7 A [Accusation of witchcraft, see Cat. 116, pp. 403-4. — Analysts]

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become less guarded and the *mugome*, skilled in his art, is able to draw conclusions from their reactions. A good deal of vagueness is permissible: the term *mukhalaga*, for example, can refer to a number of different totems: *mukhalaga* proper, *mukhalaga munyai*, *mukhalaga dou* (elephant), and this applies also to other aspects of their divination. An actual example, albeit a case of theft, not witchcraft, will elucidate the methods employed.

Mudana accused Bodie, his half-brother's son, of stealing £9. The case had been tried first at home, and then at the Native Commissioner's, where it had been dismissed owing to insufficient evidence. The parties decided to go to a smeler-out. On the second day of their journey, when they were resting under a tree to enable the official witness to take off his jacket, a small boy standing some way off said to them, 'There is a *mugome* over there.' He was a decoy watching the road to direct people to a diviner who had lately arrived and set up a temporary village of rough huts. Deciding that it was too hot to go further, the party followed the boy and sat down outside the village fence. A man approached them and, after ascertaining how much money they had to offer, showed them into an enclosure of old sacks. At the entrance stood the diviner himself, holding a stick under which the four of them were made to pass in single file. Diviners are said quite frequently to test their clients in some such manner; sometimes they are made to jump over a furrow and it is said the guilty man usually falls in.

When they had seated themselves on the ground, the diviner asked first of all for his money. The official witness handed him £1 5s., but he insisted on 10s. more, because, he said, it was a difficult case—one that had been much tried in other courts. Stick in hand, but without the use of any divining bones, the diviner began asking the party to respond (*hu vuma*). '*Ya vuma*,' they replied, and he proceeded with his chanting in a mixture of Sotho and Shangana-Tonga in sing-song phrases, at the end of which the clients had to assent. 'You have come from home on a matter', he began. Pointing to the official witness, he said, 'You have accused this boy (pointing to Bodile) of witchcraft. No. I'm making a mistake on purpose. You have not come for this reason.' Looking into a large shell, he continued, 'You have come on a different errand. You have come about money. The sum concerned is £30. No. It is £15. No. It is £10. The owner of the money sells hemp.' Continuing in this manner in short phrases, to which the party responded '*Ya vuma*,' and, suggesting first this, then that, he eventually said, 'I don't like to cause brothers by the same father to fight. Your quarrel is a vain one. The money was stolen by a woman of the Crocodile totem living near your village. She has not yet used the money.' Pointing to Bodile, he said, '*You*, why do you want to kill *him* [Mudana], and you [Mudana] be careful. They may kill you with medicines they have just bought.' Turning to the official witness, he demanded, 'Give me my *phitho* (hidden object). What kind of thing is this which is hidden from me? It is a snuff-box. No. It is a half-crown. No. It is a penny. No. It is European iron. If you think I am telling lies, take out of your left-hand pocket the thing which you have been given.' The official witness took out of

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787 his pocket the battery of a torch. He doubted the competence of a diviner who had been so vague about the nature of the object—'European iron' can be any metal object—but the main thing was that Bodile and Mudana were satisfied and so the party went home, relieved that it was an outsider who was found to be the culprit.

Objectively considered, this seance may appear naïve, but the parties, and even an outsider who was present, did not think so. There was no initial and formal identification of accuser, accused, and 'ears' which one expects from theoretical accounts; but forms and procedures are never set, and it is not unusual for these identifications to emerge later as the divination proceeds. It is by theoretical standards necessary that the *mugɔme*, as a test of his competence, should name the totem or other groups of the consultants, but in this case the parties did not even notice the omission, as they were satisfied on the main issue. The *mugɔme* erred somewhat as regards both the sum involved and the relationship of Mudana and Bodile; but the parties were impressed that he was only £1 out and, although they were not brothers, they were related through brothers. The wide connotation of terms and indefiniteness of conceptions lend themselves, as meanings and rigid categories in a European language cannot do, to manipulation by the *mugɔme* and ready acceptance by the parties of suggestions. In the *khɔrɔ*, the vanquished party often complains of the vague or incorrect indications as to totems and of other unsatisfactory features, but unless the 'ears' agrees, the *khɔrɔ* usually dismisses these objections, since, if he had really been dissatisfied, he would have demanded back the money from the *mugɔme* and proceeded to another. But it is necessary to add that the *mugɔme* often backs up his art with a very high-handed manner or behaviour. Some even beat witches that they have smelt out. It is usual for the diviner to shave one side of the head of the witch and to take from him his jacket or any other object of clothing he would like to have. To the accuser is given a buck's horn to blow on his way home as proof of his success and, when he enters the royal village to report, he is met with joyful trillings of women.

●754 The attitude of people towards convicted witches depends largely upon the nature of the crime, but also upon the number of relatives of the injured party living in the neighbourhood. If he has harmed a number of people in the area, or if the injured party has many relatives to side with him, the witch may be forced by public opinion to leave the area. Malaji, who had caused the difficult birth and the death of the child of his lover, became very unpopular when the witchcraft had finally been attributed to him; from being one of the cheerful young bloods in the district, he became reserved and restrained, and shortly afterwards he left to work in town. But he was not ostracized by any one except the relatives of the injured woman and, when he returns, if we may judge from other cases, the whole matter will have blown over. On the whole, the attitude of the general public to a convicted witch is one of unconcern as long as his efforts have not been directed against them personally. People are accustomed to living in an atmosphere in which any one of their friends or relatives may turn out to be a witch. The atmosphere is

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illustrated in a proverb the sense of which is that you may be the unsuspecting victim of the witchcraft of your closest friend, or, more literally, Bɛlɛgwane, the enemy, does not care; [so intimate with him are you that] you eat with him, [yet] he is the foe that eats you (*Bɛlɛgwane mulala a khi vone; u la nayɔ, gi mulala was hu la wena*). And people chased away as witches from one area or tribe never have any difficulty in being accepted into another. 754

Considerations such as the return of cattle are often strong enough to deter a man from chasing away a wife who has bewitched some one in the village (he would never chase away a wife merely for bewitching outsiders). When once we asked a man why he kept a wife who had been found guilty of bewitching her fellow wife, he replied, 'She is my witch' (*gi mulɔi wa ga*). Being fond of her, he merely built her a separate village. Some people who have never been publicly accused of witchcraft are nevertheless known to be bad witcher. In such cases, people may fear them and try to keep on good terms with them in order to avoid evil consequences.

One of the most fruitful studies in regard to witchcraft is the investigation of the relationship of the people who bewitch one another. Two main categories must be distinguished, viz. cases in which relatives bewitch one another and cases in which the evil is sent by non-relatives. The Lovedu maintain, and the opinion is borne out both by one's general impressions and by the facts, that witches injure mainly those with whom they are in close contact—that is, relatives and neighbours—and that it is difficult to bewitch a stranger. And it is remarkable that of fifty cases of witchcraft observed by us as they came before the *khɔrɔ* and given in the table below, 70 per cent. involve close relatives. Not all relatives are apt to bewitch one, but both men and women are equally liable to harm either men or women. A mother never, it is believed, bewitches her own children, and there is even a saying to the effect that a *mugome* who points out one's mother is not able to divine (*mugome u a tia vummahu a u khomi hu laula*); and, although brother and cattle-linked sister sometimes hate one another, openly as well as secretly, they cannot harm one another, it is said, because they would use 'the medicine bag of the [same] mother'. Similarly neither a son nor a daughter can bewitch the mother. 754 578

The most prolific single source of witchcraft is the conflict of co-wives (24 per cent. of all cases). Their relationship in the polygynous family is a difficult one; the houses are independent, not subservient to one another, yet they are in close contact, and the insistence upon compromises occasions many mental conflicts. Spouses also bewitch one another, but wives kill or injure their husbands more frequently than husbands kill their wives; it is said that a husband who has only one wife will never bewitch her, except perhaps among Christians, who can have only one wife. The conflict of spouses is an aspect of a wider institutional conflict, that between relatives-in-law. If they have irksome obligations towards one another, the society insists that their relationship shall be characterized by mutual respect and helpfulness and that their difficulties, especially *muvumalo* difficulties, are to be resolved as far as possible by the methods and procedure of the *khɔrɔ*. These factors explain why, 595

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754 578 despite the many sources of tension between them, the cases are not, as one might expect, overwhelmingly predominant: only 20 per cent. of the total given in our table are cases of wives or their relatives bewitching husbands or their relatives, and only 16 per cent. husbands or their relatives bewitching wives or their relatives.

What is even more arresting is the fact that easily aggrieved relatives who, as it is phrased, are 'very sensitive' and readily nurse grievances, never or rarely bewitch: such are cattle-linked brothers or sisters, father's sisters, fathers, father's brothers and grandparents. It is even clear from what we have already said that they are believed to have repressed complaints, but they cannot project as witchcraft the displeasures or misfortunes or failures upon those who must, but do not, respect and humour them. They can and do cause illness, but it is not by way of witchcraft, and the resolution of the conflict is by pardon and *ku phasa*, through the gods, not through *vubi*. In other words, witchcraft is a reflection, not of tensions as such, whether open or repressed, but of tensions within the framework of cultural mechanisms for avoiding their being projected as witchcraft. They must be studied in the whole configuration of institutions and social values: the permissible or approved remedies, the interposition of the hierarchy of age and rank between competing individuals, the compromises and reconciliations that are insisted upon, and the extent to which mental drives are conditioned to the cultural pattern or allowed outlets or are blocked by culturally stressed values.

The incidence of witchcraft between strangers is much more intelligible to us, because it arises in situations of conflict that are not very different from our own. But the percentage of these cases (30 per cent.), even when we include the 10 per cent. of cases between distant kin who are neighbours rather than relatives, shows how largely the social structure is built upon the kin.

754 578 595 The following table represents a very broad analysis of fifty cases of *witchcraft that we observed as they came before the Mkoro* and that may be simplified for statistical presentation:

Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (a) House or co-wife against house or co-wife	Co-wife	Co-wife	1	Jealousy about lovers; neglect by husband	
	Co-wife	Co-wife and child of co-wife	2	Jealousy about children and husband's attention	
	Co-wife	Child of co-wife	2	Disagreements about *marumele*	

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
I. *Relatives* (a) House or co-wife against house or co-wife—*cont.*	Co-wife and her mother	Co-wife's child	2	Favouritism of husband and other mixed motives	
	Inherited wife	Co-wife and her children	2	Use of cattle of one house by another and questions of prestige	
	Widow	Fellow widow's child	1	Property arrangements	
	Wife of brother	Wife of another brother	1	Complex jealousies	
	Son of co-wife	Chief son and his wife	1	Status and position	24
(b) Wife against husband	Wife	Husband	2	Friction, favouritism of other wives, position	
	Wife and/or wife's mother	Husband's adulterine child or lover	4	*Sexual jealousy and neglect of wife*	
	Wife	Husband's sister's child	1	Disagreement about marriage of children and marriage	
	Wife	Husband's brother, his wife, or his child	2	Position, jealousy	
	Wife's mother	Husband's child	1	Disagreements	20

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks as to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
(c) Husband against wife	Husband	Wife	1	Pre-marital seduction and *munywalo* trouble	
	Husband	Wife's adulterine child	2	Husband impotent; sexual jealousy	
	Husband	Wife's sister	1	Husband jilted	
	Husband	Brother's son's wife and her mother	1	Revenge for misfortune (illness)	
	Husband	Wife's brother's daughter's husband	1	Wife's brother refused his daughter as wife to witch's son	
	Husband's mother	Wife		Unfaithfulness of wife	
	Husband's mother	Wife's sister	1	Wife's sister jilted witch	16
(d) Parent and own child	Son	Father	1	Son wished to oust father from position as district head	
	Father	Son	1	Son cohabited with young wife of father	6
	Father	Son's wife	1	Son cohabited with inherited wife of father	
(e) Uterine brothers and sisters	Elder sister	Younger sister	1	Younger sister jilted elder sister's husband	
	Sister (and mother)	Brother's child	1	Brother resents power of sister, and *munywalo* trouble	4
Total relatives					70

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Category of conflict	Witch(es)	Victim(s)	No. of cases	Remarks *vs* to nature of conflict	Percentage of cases
II. *Strangers* (*a*) Sexual conflicts	Girl	Lover	1	Lover jilted girl	
	Boy	Lover	1	Lover engaged to her cross-cousin	
	Adulterer	Married woman's child	2	Loss of fine and right to woman or child	
	Commoner (orphan)	Girl of noble birth	1	Refusal of marriage by parents who had adopted orphan	10
(*b*) Various conflicts	Man and his mother	Whole village	1	Status, loss of prestige and amenities	
	Woman	Distant male relative	1	Refusal to implement economic arrangement *re* partner-ploughing	
	Widow	Distant male relative	1	Indirect economic rivalries	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Stranger held cattle that came from witch as *masuwale*	
	Man	Male neighbour	1	Envy of sewing machine acquired in town by neighbour	
	Man	Driver of car	1	Jealousy *re* privileges secured because he could drive car	
	Male friends	Man	1	Man's popularity with girls, owing to dancing ability, resented	
	Woman	Rival	1	Rivals for councillor's attention, sexual and otherwise	
	'Mother' of *Ikobe*	*Ikobe* initiate	1	Initiate who is to marry cross-cousin wanted by witch as daughter-in-law	
	Shangana-Tonga	Lovedu man	1	Competition for job in town	20
Total strangers					30

It will take us too far afield to discuss the nature of the conflicts in detail in the various cases. But a few observations are perhaps necessary.

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Firstly, the cause of the conflict is not necessarily the one assigned by the parties, though the objective situation is often seen by others. Sometimes very trivial causes are given, but they have to be interpreted in their total setting. Secondly, as regards non-relatives, it is said that nobles are sometimes 'seen in the dice', but they are never publicly accused by mere commoners; it will be noticed that, on the other hand, there is one case of a noble accusing a commoner. Rich people who are not nobles enjoy no special immunity; unpleasant people, especially those who are quarrelsome, ambitious, or competitive, are often accused. Conflicts arise owing to close contacts, but may continue after the parties are separated, and witchcraft may be sent any distance, even as far as Johannesburg. Thirdly, the table does not give a number of types of cases; they are merely the cases that came before the court, many of them being dismissed as nonsense. Finally, although the motives are complicated in most of the cases, it is possible to say that jilted love or refusal of sexual advances is an important factor in about 32 per cent. of the cases recorded.

But we must not think of Freudian repressions, for sexual affairs are given recognition in the institution of *vudabu*. We must consider lovers' conflicts in the cultural setting. The sexual urge is not repressed, but the lover whose advances are rejected, though he has opportunities elsewhere, feels aggrieved. The girl, whose choice of a marital partner is limited, seeks extra-marital adventure, but it must be clandestine and occasions difficulties, and the situation between lover, husband, and wife is an uneasy one in which ill-feeling readily arises. The man who has a child by a lover has no institutional claim on that child, and he may be given away by the woman and have to pay a heavy fine, with the result that he is angered. There are also dangers in sexual intercourse and, if a man or woman suffers as a result, he may take revenge. In other words, the conflict situation must be ascribed, not to repressions, but to the incidents of the whole cultural system. Similar considerations apply whenever we analyse any of the other situations of conflict. It is far beyond the purpose of this book to undertake an analysis of the psychological aspects of these conflicts, but we would say that witchcraft is to be explained mainly, not by psycho-pathology, but by a relativistic psychology, arising out of the values and institutional configuration of the culture.

When a man is ill he will immediately, if he has an enemy or has had a quarrel, think of the possibility of witchcraft. This impulse is encouraged by the technique of the dice, which, while indicating the totem or sex of the witch, leaves the client to decide to whom among his friends, enemies, or relatives these must apply. A person with a grievance or an unpopular person is more likely than others to be thought responsible for harm. When some cattle of the queen, usually used by Mudumi for ploughing, were traded to a European, he complained most bitterly. A week later when lightning struck a storage enclosure in the royal village Mudumi was immediately suspect. Some of the cattle belonging to Setemane's inherited wife had been taken by the police, together with those of her husband, in settlement of a debt. She grumbled continuously about her loss. A year and a half later, on the death of a child of her fellow wife, she was suspected at once and, after consultation of the

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bones, her husband chased her away. A person with an unpleasant face very often earns the reputation of being a witch, even though nothing has been definitely attributed to him. A very old person, too, is apt to be thought a witch; his long life is attributed to his bartering the lives of younger relatives for his own. Just as people with grievances are suspected of witchcraft, so successful ones are thought to be specially liable to being bewitched—those who reap better crops than others, successful hunters, those favoured by their European masters. On the other hand, their success is also liable to be attributed to witchcraft on their part.

It has been said that witchcraft is a reflection of the intense hatreds of which the Bantu mind is capable. True, the European is appalled at the seriousness of the crimes attributed to witches for the most trivial reasons. The mother's brother's wife kills the child of her husband's sister who is living with them because he eats too much: 'he finishes our corn'; because a woman no longer loves him, a man not only causes intense suffering to her during a prolonged birth, but also kills the child; jealous of the large crop reaped by his neighbour, a man sends lightning to destroy his whole harvest. These things do not, however, present themselves in this way to the mind of the Lovedu. A Lovedu argues, not from real cause to effect in such matters, but from effect to cause, which makes it all appear in a somewhat different light. A child dies and he looks around him for a possible cause. He thinks of possible motives and enemies, but can find none. He consults the dice, which point to a woman of such-and-such a totem. The only one to answer this description is the mother's brother's wife. She happens to be known as ungenerous, perhaps she was one day heard to comment on having an extra mouth to feed. The misfortune is thus projected upon her: but it is not a psychopathic, it is an approved cultural escape technique or compensation. In cases of illness or death, people tend to seek the cause in the direction of traditional jealousies. A wife of the queen dies in childbirth. The cause cannot be a jilted lover, because she and the father of the child were on the best of terms. But he is a married man, and women are known through jealousy to cause difficult childbirth to the lovers of husbands. The death must have been caused by his wife (even though she lives miles away). Nothing is done in the matter; moreover, there is no general agreement in the verdicts of different doctors. Six months later a young girl in the village dies suddenly of blood poisoning; her mother is known to have had quarrels with the deceased wife of the queen. It is therefore generally rumoured that the grave must have been treated to 'send back' death and the death of the child indicates that her mother was the witch responsible. Nothing more is said of the lover's wife.

Witchcraft provides an explanation of the worst evils, such as sickness and death, that befall man; it is the principle of evil, the Bantu Satan. Illness caused naturally or by ancestors is generally curable; it is only witchcraft that really kills. It was at first a source of great amusement to us that a man could find it possible to live on socially good terms with some man who had killed his father, attending the same beer-parties and able to converse in friendly fashion. But unless the case has been publicly dealt with and the witch aired out, the evidence is considered incomplete,

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754 761 777 in spite of one's own convictions. Moreover, it does not follow that the witch has any evil designs upon one, though he has killed some one else. Personal adjustments with the witch are more easily achieved than we might imagine; they are even imperative, partly because witchcraft is so universal a cause of death that in this respect the witch is almost part of the inevitable order of things, partly because, unless a confirmed witch, he is not regarded with horror by the whole society, and partly because he may be an influential and respected man.

Witchcraft serves also to explain the differential incidence of misfortune or death which we generally leave unexplained; but it is not often invoked in this respect. An old, dried-up tree stands in a field. People often rest beneath it at hoeing time. One day, while two children are sitting in its shade, it falls down and kills one of them. The Lovedu realize that dead trees are liable to fall down. But it has long been standing there. Why has it fallen just on that day and, moreover, at that particular time when the children were there? Further, what made it kill one, leaving the other unhurt? This combination of circumstances must, they feel, be due to some malignant controlling force directed against the child. Or, when people recover from a disease such as smallpox in one district, but succumb to it in another, the differential effect in the latter is ascribed to the work of a witch. The occasion for evoking witchcraft as an explanation in certain circumstances is an aspect of witchcraft, but it is not an explanation of its nature and psychological basis and only part of the explanation of its function.

754 828 Witchcraft is employed to account for unusual or anti-social behaviour. Hysteria might be attributed either to witchcraft or possession. A girl ran away from her own puberty ceremony, an unheard-of and reprehensible action. Her relatives said she must have been bewitched into doing it, so, instead of being punished, she was given treatment to remove the baleful influence. Attributing certain types of anti-social action or the breaking of some customs to witchcraft makes it possible for the society to withstand successfully many blows; an issue is avoided and the transgressor made to feel himself incapable of such actions but for the witchcraft. We must also remember that abnormalities need not necessarily evoke comment. A person may be born an imbecile, but it may be considered quite normal. This is so because there is a place in the society for the weak-minded, sometimes even as jesters of the court. Personal defects or limitations do not, to the same extent as among us, disable a man from performance markedly below the standards required in spheres in which he can be useful; and thus there need not arise an intolerable situation from which escape is sought by psycho-pathological devices or the projection of one's misfortune as witchcraft upon others. Finally, to attribute death to witchcraft, and to set about taking steps to send it back to its owner, probably provides greater emotional satisfaction to the bereaved than the feeling of impotence in the face of an uncontrollable, natural force. The same kind of emotional need is answered when a man with a grievance feels that he can, in the last resort, employ medicine to gain his ends, and people not infrequently indirectly hint to their enemies the possibility of their doing so.

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by 789
the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told 261
that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen 643
can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if 789
they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of 766
rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*fighela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 821
'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, 754
spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering 766
(*khinjo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why [124]
witches, by hanging *lefulujo-mere*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosus*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *fire* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufuge* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *ku pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *ku fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts 821
of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, 527
after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Ci khumela*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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177 (workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian
795 reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians
184 are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement, occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities, Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion, develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.

177 There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the
795 tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft
184 which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence
578 of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of
754 the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers. Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven underground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain, albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witchcraft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witchcraft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment. 177 186 182

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals. 177 125

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doctored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European justice are compensated by magic (*ha mikila*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digwa* and the *zwidajoni* are sham, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimised by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal. 177 758 578

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material 177

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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which he acts in a strange manner, hears voices calling him and often runs amok, the Sotho bone-thrower learns his art in the same quiet manner as any other craft and completes his training not by any public ceremonial but by a private strengthening consisting of drinking water in which the bones have been cooked together with the blood of a cock to make him wakeful and clever. There is no objection to people practising their profession long before they have completed their training, so the doctors range from the novice to the renowned diviner of long standing. The profession, though open to all, is usually inherited from a relative; but there is an increasing number of men to-day who become doctors for the money they make out of it and without undergoing any extensive training.

The doctor associated with the new cult of possession that has within the past thirty years spread over the Lowveld from the east resembles in his methods the Zulu-Xhosa doctor. He is possessed by spirits who talk through him and order him to throw bones and guide him in the use of medicines, and he uses all manner of wonderful tricks. But he undergoes no initiation other than that of all possessed people. The cult is confined largely to women who, during possession, speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thobolo or Kgalaka, but in reality a kind of gibberish. Possession takes the form of dancing to the accompaniment of tambourines, rattles and a special kind of drum beat, initiation into which is believed to cure the ailment which accompanied the first manifestations of the possessing spirit. These spirits are always those of relatives, usually on the mother's side, in contrast to the foreign spirits who are thought to possess Shangana-Tongas who have the same cult. Only a few of those who are possessed ever become doctors and then only when the possessing spirit was a doctor. They are the only class of Sotho doctor who receives inspiration direct from the spirits.

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A class of doctor that does not belong to the Sotho culture yet is indispensable to Lowveld Sotho society, who is seldom or never a Sotho yet has a place in Sotho life, is the *nyanga* or Shangana-Tongas smeller-out. He divines chiefly by the head without much use of bones, is able to find things that have been hidden, and is the final judge or smeller-out of witches.

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The doctor is not, in the minds of most people, clearly distinguished

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

om the witch: it is generally argued that he who knows how to 791
counteract wizards must himself be one, and Lowveld doctors are 754
known to 'try' one another by sending lightning or familiars to their
rals to test their powers. Doctors have been openly accused of
witchcraft. This confusion is, however, in no way detrimental to the
actice of great doctors since not only is a doctor unlikely to work
gainst a client when it is in the interest of his practice to please, but
there must always be a motive in evil-doing, witchcraft without
tention being impossible, doctors harm only their enemies.

Day and Night Wizards. The term *mulai*, wizard, is in the Low- 254
ld equivalent to 'criminal' and implies evil intention, desire to kill 789
hers. In contrast to the Shangana-Tongs, there is thought to be no
ch thing as unintentional witchcraft. The wizard knows he is a
izard and harms others because he bears towards them feelings of
vy or malice. The methods employed in witchcraft do not differ
om those of good magic; the distinction between the two lies in the
il motives, injurious to social life, which lie behind witchcraft.
nce use of magic on one's possessions to hurt the fingers of who-
er tries to steal them or sending animals to frighten a deserting wife
o returning home is not witchcraft, though the technique is
mical with that of the witch, because designed not to kill or injure
iously but to uphold the social order.

All tribes in the Lobedu culture area have a technical distinction 254
tween two classes of wizards—the night wizard (*mulai ga busiu*) and
e day wizard (*mulai ga matsuru*). The night wizard, usually but not
clusively a woman, inherits his evil powers from his mother who
ches him the art in early infancy. His methods are direct: by going
mself or sending familiars, various animals such as the stoat and
ldubwe (human beings whom he has killed and enslaved), he
eks his harm. He works mostly at night, and there exists a sort of
iety of wizards who dance together at night and recognize one
other by day. The day wizard, on the other hand, does not neces-
ily come of a stock of wizards. Any one who uses medicine to
ison or kill is a day wizard. Sending lightning, using people's foot-
ns or pointing at them to harm them, poisoning food and beer,
se are the methods of the day wizard in whose work the 'spell',

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
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i.e., telling the medicine, without any set phraseology, what to do, is important. Day wizards are chiefly men and it is said that, owing to the facility of obtaining bad medicine in towns and from foreign tribes to-day, this type of witchcraft has greatly increased.

In everyday life, however, a person is called a witch, whatever methods he has used, and in an accusation of witchcraft there is never any discussion whether the culprit is a day or night wizard. Moreover, there is in the minds of ordinary people considerable confusion about the type of witchcraft associated with each class, and it is possible to live among Lowveld people a long time without coming upon these distinctions. The night wizard is thus in Evans-Pritchard's terminology the witch, the day wizard the sorcerer; and the great distinction between sorcery and legitimate magic lies not in method but in intention.

Social Importance of Beer and the Dance. It would be a mistake in discussing the main features of Lowveld society to leave out of count the social importance of beer and the use of the dance or *goke* as a social institution, though neither is confined to these tribes. Beer, apart from its religious value, plays a part in social and economic life. It is continually being carried from one group to another, acting as a bond between people and establishing friendly relations. In the Lowveld, in contrast to the Highveld, it is still of greater importance than money; while people may refuse to attend working parties for money, they will flock to one where beer is served. The *goke* is a dance in which women do the drumming while men playing reed pipes dance in a circle round the drums. It is, however, much more than a dance. It is an institution for maintaining friendship and reciprocity between groups, a way of showing sympathy on the death of a relative and the means by which subjects approach their chief for rain in time of drought. A *goke* is often sent by one chief to another in the Northern Transvaal.

Some Comparisons between Lobedu Culture and that of other Areas. The Lobedu culture complex represents a close blending of two cultures, that of the Lobedu who came south from somewhere in Rhodesia when the empire of Monomotapa was breaking up, bringing

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789 from the supernatural. While anyone who knows a cure for an ailment is manipulating the forces of nature and using *vupaga*, there are doctors
755 who, by virtue of long training, know many medicines, have learnt how to divine and have been imbued with additional perspicacity and powers as a result of a special initiation. Medicine functions by virtue of the properties, actual or ascribed, of matter; the principles underlying the operation of medicines assume mechanical cause and effect and even the divining bones are read according to rule.

756 There are, however, two types of doctor who fall into a different category: the *lelopo* doctor, directly possessed and guided by an ancestor spirit, who largely confines his activities to curing possessed people, and the *magome* or 'smeller-out' who is generally a foreigner. People using the forces of nature for evil purposes are *vabi* (witches and sorcerers) and are dealt with in another context. *Vupaga*, it will be seen, is the use of impersonal power inherent in matter, which is extracted by the expert (*paga*) and applied in the interests of the health and well-being of men; it is also the exercise of personal qualities or skills, either inherited or acquired through spirit possession or guidance.

Ancestors

769 Ancestors can influence for good and evil the fortunes only of their own descendants, who in the case of the chief's ancestors are taken to include
777 the whole tribe. Their control over the forces of nature is not explicitly formulated; and what is expressly stated is not always confirmed in Lovedu religious practices. The ancestors are clearly conceived to exercise an overall control. A man will always assert that no harm or illness can befall him if his ancestors are watchful enough, for they have power to ward off all evil
[754] and misfortune. It is said that even witches cannot, without the will of the ancestors, enter a village or deliver the last fatal blow that kills a man. But in practice the will of the ancestors either is not interposed, for no ascertainable reason, or is ineffective to ward off attacks. If some great sorrow overtakes a man, it is said that 'his ancestors have had an accident' implying that he has been temporarily deprived of their protection and is at the mercy of his
[755] enemies. Even medicines are said to be ineffective without the co-operation of one's ancestors, the conception being not merely that their goodwill is essential but also that *vupaga* belongs to the ancestors. In fact, however, the ineffectiveness of medicines is never in any concrete case attributed to the lack of such co-operation.

769 Ancestors are appealed to and thanked for good crops, fertility, plenty, and all manner of good fortune and success. The desire to be remembered
777 and given tendance is attributed to them, and they may themselves cause
753 harm and sickness to descendants who neglect them; but somewhat inconsistently a man may with impunity neglect them for many years and give them tendance only when misfortune overtakes him. Ancestors may be approached and propitiated or thanked by means of offerings and prayer

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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season pro-
821 pitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gwama*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time,
821 people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain
789 in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*ku lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle,
731 or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lenga*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[789] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mafugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale disperses suspicious black clouds, people come to condole with her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next
821 day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers suspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digwa

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
794 of man consists of *digwa* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *gwa* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
881 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *nyali-nakwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *gwa* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *gwa* which is said to 'bite'

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An omen or bane (*lesela*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesela*, and so can a *leshuge*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *pala* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 787 825

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*ramela*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahawa*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahawa* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahawa* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahawa*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 797 602 [753] [749]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (Uslu)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *uslu* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Uslu* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Uslu* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *uslu* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *uslu* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*uslu rya rusiu*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*uslu rya matsiaw*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 751 [577]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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754 standing of ordinary men; sorcery is the manipulation of lawful means for unlawful ends.

The night-witch belongs to an unholy fraternity whose members meet at night to dance to their drums and deliberate upon their deeds of darkness. She uses no medium of destruction and no medicine or spells, but has inborn powers to do what is physically impossible to ordinary men. She goes herself on her nefarious errands or uses familiars. Witches are almost invariably women, partly no doubt because it is difficult to conceive of women having the facilities to purchase medicines for purposes of sorcery, partly also because they are endowed with more mysterious powers than men. The sorcerer, usually a man, whose machinations involve the use of medicines and spells, is a day-witch because his power is derived from ordinary natural techniques 'of the day'. The essence of sorcery is the criminal use of the potency of medicines which can be, and usually are, used in the service of legitimate ends.

754 Many medicines are specifically good or bad and their use cannot traverse
673 their intrinsic nature; but some of the most important are good and hence moral, or bad and hence immoral according as they are used for socially approved or socially disapproved ends. *Madabi*, for example, has the power to transmute the nature of things. It is right for a husband to manipulate *madabi* in a way that will cause wild animals to appear while his runaway spouse works for her lover, for in this way he may frighten her into returning to him. But a jilted lover who takes revenge upon a girl is guilty of sorcery if he uses *madabi* to change her sex when her child is about to be born and thereby endangers her life. Such an act is unlawful vengeance, which is sharply distinguished from lawful restitution; it reflects a desire to injure another for personal motives which are not in harmony with approved social values.

759 Witchcraft and sorcery can always be counteracted. A favourite method
769 of dealing with a witch is the use of reprisal magic whereby the evil is sent back to him, but there are many charms and medicines, all relying on the power of *ruyage*, by means of which witchcraft can be combated or rendered harmless. Villages are protected against witches and sorcerers by charms circling the village or placed at strategic points, while the witch within the village is treated by *ku fera*, i.e. a drug is introduced into his food which has the power of making him forget his frustration and seek compensation in day-dreaming and daddering. After witchcraft or sorcery has been established by divination as the cause of an evil, and the culprit has been identified (the diviner mentions no name but gives certain attributes, such as sex, clan, locality), it is open to the victim to make an accusation and risk the legal proceedings that will inevitably follow. But resort to law is not entirely satisfactory since appeasement, not the hardening of animosities that accusations occasion, is the function of law. Moreover, the initiation of legal sanctions against a witch may spur him to greater activity.

777 Witch beliefs reflect the Lovedu notion that almost all the misfortunes

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that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts. 777

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*rwapa*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare. 754 789

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *mahora*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the bilues, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased. 829 777 753 [821]

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups is the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *goba*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted. 184

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mukhelo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 250 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopœia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 789 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical 824 757 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason [753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are ●[755] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 192 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognize the similarity of plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants [might] receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadzo* of the plateau (*Mu nahe*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadzo* of stony places (*Mu nakhwawe*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *mudzwa*, *mudzwatsi*, *mudzwatshi*, and *mudzwdzingo*, all containing the root *dzw-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugwavi*, *mubvidi*, and *mubulula* [*bulu*] are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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CHAPTER XII

THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

Anatomical conceptions in relation to the science of drugs and of healing—cardinal categories of the causation of disease—training for the medical profession—divinatory dice as a method of diagnosis.

LOVEDU therapy is linked, on the one hand with law, and on the other with medicine, magic, witchcraft, sorcery, and religion, but it is more closely interwoven with these last than with the first. If disease and death are the main objective of witchcraft and sorcery, disease is also the occasion of most religious rites, medicine the means of restoring the health of the human body and law the guarantee of the well-being of the social organism. Law and medicine are both largely concerned with the results of dissension between men. Open strife, which leads to social evils, is examined by the *Mawi* and resolved under the guidance of its wisdom; secret malice, which causes death and disease, is diagnosed by the bones and treated by the doctor; but for the detection of the deeds of darkness the *Mawi* calls in the aid of the doctor. The *Mawi* relies upon public discussion and its genius effects contact and reconciliation between one litigant and another, while the doctor uses private divination and his art inspires the consultant with confidence against his secret enemy. The social psychology of the one is the counterpart of the psycho-therapy of the other. But we must not think of them as essentially different worlds, the one primarily natural and the other primarily supernatural. The medico-magico-religious is to the Lovedu rather a tangible world of mundane arrangements and subject to 'natural' forces than a cosmos, inscrutable in its configuration and governed by 'supernatural' destinies. In truth, Lovedu healing is based to some extent upon observed relations between cause and effect though more largely upon practices and beliefs which, though they will not stand the tests of our science, constitute the psychological therapy of the society. We are far too apt to discount the value of their empirical body of knowledge, instead of using it to construct a sound scientific approach to medicine. We can also do better than scorn as superstitious absurdities those indispensable techniques of medicine which, because our medical profession takes little account of them, enable the charlatan and quack to flourish among us.

To understand Lovedu conceptions of the causation of disease, we must orientate ourselves from their knowledge of human anatomy. It is indeed very meagre. All they know has been gleaned indirectly from the slaughter of cattle and goats, for they practise neither embalming nor dissection of corpses. As a result, though they have names for all the more important organs of the body, they are not always sure of their correct location. Nor have they much idea of physiological function. They know that the stomach and intestines are digestive organs and that the bladder contains urine, but lungs and the diaphragm are vaguely connected with breathing. The womb, ovaries, and testicles are definitely reproductive organs, but in medical practice this function is obscured by the rule of an

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classification. Practice is characterized by vagueness and a very wide and 753
loose, instead of a specific, use of many of these terms. The term *khitshipidi* denotes primarily a swelling or tumour containing white matter. In practice we have found it applied to scrofula or glandular swellings below the ear, which were cut open and squeezed, to slime coughed up and said to be internal *khitshipidi*, and to general aching of all the teeth or tenderness of the gums with no sign of matter. Similarly the term *gobe*, bleeding of the nose, is often applied when there is no bleeding, but general debility, in which case the trouble is thought to be caused by blood in the body that should, but has not, come out. Such false correlations are due not merely to wrong conceptions of cause and effect—any evidence suggesting the presence of blood suffices to incriminate that arch enemy of health—but also to careless observation and loose reasoning. This laxity in medical conceptions is in marked contrast to the logic and coherence of other arrangements of the society. Inaccurate observation 756
and undeveloped symptomatology must be attributed to the extensive 755
reliance, firstly, for diagnosis of all but the most everyday illness upon the divining dice, and, secondly, for curing upon what in the last resort is the psychological rather than the physical.

Lovedu therapeutics includes a number of treatments that have un- 757
doubted curative value, but many more are based on purely magical assumptions. On the whole, those which we should consider to be of some medical value are chiefly home remedies of the humble non-divining herbalist. The higher one goes in the medical scale, the more divorced from scientific principles become the treatments. Simple ailments are dealt with very much as among Europeans: sniffing up water is used for colds, the milk of a certain euphorbia is applied to draw out deep-lying thorns; splints of strips of wood are used for broken limbs or 752
sprains; teeth are extracted by being levered up by means of an instrument like a poker, which is inserted between the roots, a method said to be no more painful than the clumsy use of European forceps. Very detrimental to the speedy recovery of wounds is, however, the practice of scraping or washing off all matter before each application of healing powders. This destroys the new young tissues, delaying for months the healing of sores that normally taken weeks or even days. Use of enemas is 757
unknown and emetics are not nearly as common as among the Zulu. With the Lovedu as with us the commonest treatment is the drinking of medicines. Instead, however, of the bottle of medicine we receive, a Native is given a small bundle of roots or twigs cut into even lengths to take home and boil in water which is drunk or used for making a soft porridge. Sometimes the medicine is brewed and a cold infusion made. There is none of the careful measurement of quantities characteristic of the mediaeval apothecary or of prescriptions found on Egyptian papyri, but the amounts used are not wholly undetermined, for in practice the smallest pot is used and 1 to 2½ pints of water are added; the dose seldom exceeds a few mouthfuls taken once or twice a day for a few days only. If this is not effective, something else will be tried. Wet cupping is a common home remedy, as the numerous scars on head and shoulders of people testify. After scarification, a cupping horn is applied, the narrow

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for a really weak patient. Sprinkling and *ku kuta*, combined very often 757
with other treatments, are also used alone. When there is an epidemic of coughing or dysentery, it is said 'a wind has come' and a doctor is called to sprinkle the people to ward it off. *Ku kuta*, pressing a counter-irritant to the affected part, is used for toothache, when large pieces of heated bark are held to the cheek; for bruises, which are treated by the application of hot boiled leaves of certain trees; after childbirth, when hot porridge placed in a small flat basket is pressed daily to the stomach to ward off pains, and for many other purposes. But the hot poultice or emollient is not known.

Characteristically, the above-mentioned treatments are used both on 757
occasions where they might be of real therapeutic value and for purifica- 755
tions and strengthenings where they could not. The principle of inoculation, which immunizes in diseases such as smallpox, is widely applied to effect cures and to further magical ends with which an empirical relation in our sense is wholly obscure. The relation must be sought, not in the objective link between cause and effect as we see it, but in the Lovedu conceptions of disease, their causes and symptoms, and in the cultural pattern of the methods by which evil may be cast out or symbolically laid upon a scapegoat. This is by no means as foreign to European thought as might at first be supposed, being used to this day among the more backward peasants both in Europe and in South Africa. A cure for headache among the Lovedu is to tie a piece of medicated string or sinew round the head for a day, after which it is cut and allowed to fall with the evil it has absorbed into a hole. To cure gout you scarify the leg to insert medicine, wiping off the blood with the leaves of a growing *magapulo* bush (*Euclea sp.*) to leave the disease on it. The frog is a common scapegoat. We once witnessed how, in the case of pulsating fontanelle of a baby, [807]
considered to be a grave danger, some of the medicine inserted into the scarifications, made around the throbbing spot and on other parts of the body, was placed on a green-and-white frog. The frog was stood on the fontanelle, where it puffed itself up by rhythmic inhalations not unlike the beating of the fontanelle and finally, as a scapefrog, to which the evil had been transmitted, it was taken back to the river. One method of curing convulsions is to shave the hair in two 'paths' which cross in the centre of the child's head and to make a bark cockroach, smeared with medicine, run along each path till it drops off. In curing barrenness and in initiation into the cult of possession, a goat, after being made to lie beside the patient or having its nostrils blown into, is killed and used in the treatment.

Lovedu medicines appear to us to be a jumble of science and magic. 278
Fully 80 per cent. are of vegetable origin. There is hardly a plant in that 757
rich lowveld vegetation which is not used in the pharmacopoeia of some 755
herbalist or doctor and it is significant that new plants are constantly tried out. The pattern of supposed relations that are believed to exist between symptoms and diseases, of the unscientific analogies which we call sympathetic magic, and the use of roots and barks more frequently than leaves or flowers and fruits, limits the value of this testing out of medicines. Nevertheless, many drugs have effects which either obscure or

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278 cure the symptoms, and whether for that reason and its psychological
757 effect or because of a truly curative value, men have great faith in the
755 medicines. There are undoubtedly ingredients in Lovedu medicines which cannot be empirically related to either symptom or cure, since they operate mainly by a technique of analogies which we relegate to the magical world. Such are animal products like hair, skin, excrement, and ovaries used in a variety of ways—for instance, for barrenness and indigestion; minerals like ironstone used for strengthening babies; and sea or river products, sand and shells, indispensable for keeping witches out of the village. But to Lovedu men and women the use of such ingredients in no way differs from the use of a herb: both are thought to have curative value and for them our distinction between magical and scientific treatments, between cause and effect and false analogy, does not exist. Just as a herb may have properties for curing disease, so, for example, the backbone of a python is effective in curing general debility or backache. The bone is pounded and the powder inoculated into scarifications along the back, by which means the immense power of the python is thus imparted to the patient. But note the sequel. So powerful is this medicine that the patient, when his time has come, will have difficulty in dying. His eyes will remain alive though the body is dead until once more the python powder is applied by being burned under his nose that he may inhale the smoke. This strengthening and the reversal of its influence are like injection and desensitization in our medical practice.

758 When we pursue Lovedu conceptions as regards the nursing and treatment of patients, we have once more to regard them from their
[515 point of view. Cleanliness and hygiene are very remotely related to health.
777] Flies are freely tolerated because it is unlucky to kill them, not because, as is held in some other tribes, abundance of flies means riches in cattle. Invalids are not given a special diet, so that instructions by European doctors that a mother should feed her ailing baby on vitamin-containing foods or fruits are ignored unless medicine is given to be mixed with the food. It is equally fatal to appeal to the curative powers of nature: an invalid will impute unwillingness to help, ignorance or even sinister designs, if you tell him that nature will heal him and give no medicine. It is medicine and medicine alone that is thought to heal. But even medicine is never allowed much time in which to do its curative work. If one drug is not effective within a week it will be changed for another. Often a number of medicines are used at the same time, so that if one is ineffectual the other may heal. In every case we attended we found Native treatment was being given at the same time as, and often to the detriment of, our own. Nor would our protests be of any avail. Even in hospitals there are secret chewings of herbs and surreptitious steamings. Though it is admitted that certain medicines may not 'agree' when used together, use of the wrong medicine is not thought to have any harmful effects. At the most, a medicine merely does not heal; it never definitely harms the patient. Inexactness in the quantity of medicine taken is accompanied by a laxity in the carrying out of doctors' instructions which, though of no consequence where Native medicines are used, may do immense harm if the medicines are European. A careful

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755 The distinctive characteristic of the doctor with 'power' is that he is a
791 diviner. That must necessarily be so in a society in which pathology is the science of diseases, the nature and causes of which lie so largely in magico-witchcraft conceptions. Special techniques are called for in place of what we call diagnosis and bedside manner. The diviner's function is, however, more than that: he must be called in about the details of every religious ceremony to discover the wishes of the ancestors; he decides where, in order to avoid the danger of the witch, every village must be built; he makes the witch-proof fence. Besides the bone-thrower, to whom we shall refer as doctor and who is consulted at every turn, there are two other classes of diviner, the *lelepo* doctor and the *magwee*, both foreign introductions from the East. The *lelepo* doctor is often a tribesman, the *magwee* always a Shangana-Tonga, preferably living outside Ulovedu. The spheres of these classes of diviner are different: the doctor heals disease and is the general medical practitioner in its wide Lovedu sense; the *lelepo* doctor, almost always a woman, initiates the 'possessed', and often is also a general practitioner, divining with bones and healing disease, especially barrenness and ailments of children; and the *magwee* is, as we have seen, the forensic physician, and if he is famous he keeps no medicines, though otherwise he combines smelling out of the guilty with a general medical practice. Both *magwee* and *lelepo* doctors claim direct inspiration from the ancestors, but the doctor reads his bones by rule.

As it is difficult to persuade outsiders to divulge their knowledge, the profession of doctor, in theory open to all, is in practice more often than not handed down in the family, from father to son or daughter, maternal uncle to nephew, husband to wife, or even wife to husband. Interest and inclination determine who the pupil will be. To acquire a working knowledge of the bones, with which people are generally familiar to some extent, may take only a few months, but it is useless knowledge unless one has medicines and experience, which may take years to acquire. Ambitious doctors spend their lives gaining these perquisites, buying from one, begging from another, colleague; many travel from tribe to tribe or go periodically to Johannesburg, where good money is to be made. There are many specialists: Rerasvulenu, like his father before him, is a noted rain-maker; Mambye is a master of *mulishi*, by which he changes people into animals or hangs organs of the victim of his vengeance-magic on pegs in the hut; Mashao makes the hedge of the *nyali* lodge witch-proof; Rethavula strengthens the queen for office; Mulelye doctors the boys' circumcision lodge. A doctor who has not inherited cannot easily acquire such specialized knowledge: the price is high and the secrets not readily given away. The greatest doctors are said to use human remains in their most potent medicines, and to satisfy this need there are *maigwegwe*, murderers who waylay and kill people at night. During our stay, people, even at public gatherings, discussed and warned against the activities and haunts of these murderers. The wife of Thagu, the doctor, one night came home very drunk and next morning discovered part of her genitals excised. She accused her husband in the district *Khwe* and, though he denied the crime, he paid the fine. As

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Thage is not a great doctor, people surmised that he wanted the flesh, not for himself, but as the price of a medicine he bought from a renowned doctor. 755 791

A good doctor, unless, as is most common, he grows up in the profession, undergoes a long period of *ad hoc* training of 'walking about' with doctors. Maḓarabani, who hoped by becoming a doctor to save his family the expense of constantly calling in medical aid, began by going about with doctors he knew, from time to time persuading them to show him a few medicines; he put his knowledge to successful use in his family and started collecting a set of bones, buying those he could not pick up himself. Gradually he acquired the elements of divining, finishing up his training at the feet of a Shangana-Tonga *magwau*. Tuition in divining teaches one the various combinations of the dice; really to 'know' the bones one must drink their soup in a ceremony called 'cooking the bones'. It is the only cooking the dice undergo, so that it is taboo to use bones that have been cooked as food; it completes a diviner's training, and it not only creates a bond between dice and diviner, but gives him insight to see what is obscure to others. The ceremony varies from doctor to doctor, but consists in essence of three main features. Firstly, a young cockerel or, according to older custom, a goat is killed, its flesh is cooked with the dice and the broth is drunk by the pupil. The cock quickens perception both of bones and diviner, for it heralds the dawn before man perceives its approach. Secondly, the novice is given medicine (by inoculation or as a drink) containing *inter alia* the heart and nose of the vulture and wild dog, as well as sometimes the heart of the cooked fowl, so that he may sense things from afar. And, thirdly, the bones are buried at the cross-roads overnight 'to gather the news' and next morning are unearthed. When a male passes, a bone representing a male, when a female passes one representing a female, is taken out, and a beer drink is given so as to ensure many passers-by. Thereafter the novice can tell, in a test to which he is submitted, how the bones have fallen without looking at them.

Possession, in the ordinary manner of the cult, but by a spirit who in life was a doctor, constitutes the initiation of a *lelipo* doctor. He may divine during possession when the possessing spirit speaks or chants, or he may throw the dice when not possessed like an ordinary doctor. If during possession the dice are thrown, it is merely for effect, for they are hardly looked at. It is claimed that *lelipo* doctors read dice without training, being guided by their spirit; but in practice we found that either they had for months attached themselves to another doctor or, as members of a divining family, had become familiar with the bones prior to possession. The *magwau*, like the *lelipo* doctor, is guided by a spirit which manifests its desire that he should become a diviner by making him ill, but, unlike the *lelipo* doctor, he is not actually possessed. The *magwau* is the master diviner, but in fact he seldom throws the dice more than once or twice before proceeding to divine 'by the heart'. His initiation comprises the curing of his illness, apprenticeship to another *magwau* and the cooking of the bones. *Lelipo* doctor or *magwau* and guiding spirit are closely associated. A *lelipo* doctor never uses a goat in healing, without setting

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•785 791 aside pieces of meat for his spirit, and a *magwe* always has his special shrine where he reports all money professionally earned. An ordinary doctor sometimes has a shrine where he places horns of goats received or hangs medicine bags when he prays to the spirits, but many do not have these things. To a doctor his divination is like a craft that he has learnt, and he gives offerings only when scarcity of clients is attributed to the displeasure of the gods. When about to divine, he begs the bones to tell him the truth, not the ancestors for guidance.

781 783 The divinatory dice constitute the chief diagnostic method. The Lovedu set is fairly stereotyped, consisting of about forty pieces, most but not all of which are bones; the bones and *hohoti* shells (oval-shaped stones of a fruit) of the Shangana-Tongs *magwe* are somewhat different. Dominating the usual Lovedu set are four flat pieces of ivory or bone, two male and two female, which fall in sixteen different combinations, the cardinal positions. Each position has its own name and its own praise referring, though vaguely, to its meaning; and it is these four pieces from which the general configuration of influences or prognostications is read. There are other sets of four: pieces from the ventral surface of a tortoise, each with two easily distinguishable sides, and shells, two Oliva standing for males and two Cyrsea standing for females. Having thrown the dice, the diviner looks first at the ivory pieces and gives the praise of their disposition, which indicates the general situation, say, dissension, loss, or complaints of the father's sister. But this general situation must be related to the lie of certain other bones, particularly *mulepe*, the knuckle-bone of the steenbuck (*Raphicerus campestris*), from which, as representing the chief, the diviner next orientates the situation. The procedure thereafter involves linking this situation, on the one hand, with events or specific prognostications of good or evil and, on the other, with people playing a part in these events. *Thohadu* or *mudimo*, the talus of the antbear, represents the ancestors, who, like the antbear, live underground, shows whether they are angry or not, and is diagnostic of the health or life of a person which in the last resort lies in ancestral hands. *Dam*, the phalanx of the lion (or in some sets *ngwe*, the phalanx of the tiger) which is also a pointing bone showing direction, *phiri*, the knee-bone of the hyena, of which there may be two, male and female, and *tshwani*, male and female kneebones of the baboon, all stand for the evil power of witches and their familiars. The baboon bones, in addition, indicate, by the side on which they fall, danger or illness on a journey, suitability of the spot for building upon and, in case of barrenness, whether or not a child will be born. Every set contains two morula pipe with functions less specific, depending as they do upon the whole configuration of forces or events, and a river pebble, *lemeja la gwena*, the thing swallowed by a crocodile, which is diagnostic of *khileso*, the illness caused by foreign substances which sorcerers cause their victims to swallow with food or drink.

To bring these evil or good influences into relation with specific people, to determine who is ill or who is bewitching the consultants, the diviner turns to certain astragalus bones, capable of falling on four sides and representing people. Two or three sheep bones stand for important

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or respected persons, such as district or village heads, and goat bones, 787
numbering two to six, for mere commoners—a real separation of sheep 755
and goats. If there are two goat bones, they represent male and female; a third represents a child; four bones extends the range to male and female children, and the further two bones differentiate widow and bachelor. Different totems are shown by bones of the animals revered. Lovedu sets have two (male and female) *maiowu* (rietbuck) bones standing for the Crocodile totemic group; two *phala* (rooibuck) bones for Khalaga and sometimes also Lovedu; two *gulwe* (wild boar) for Lovedu, two *phudi* (duiker) for Khaba and Koni; two *skoko* (bushbuck) for the Tshedzi of Maoulana; and in areas in which there are Phalaborwa and Thamina also two *nge* (porcupine). Elephants and lions are represented by the bones of these animals. These totem-indicating bones vary greatly according to the people with whom the diviner comes into most contact. Many diviners have one or two extra pieces, such as a shell or a stone found in a strange place. Malematsha, for instance, has a piece of chalk from France, where he served in the labour battalion during the Great War.

The detailed rules of divination are far too complicated for treatment in a general ethnographical study, but a few general principles, common knowledge to all in the society, may be mentioned. Firstly, it is the side on which the bones fall rather than their disposition to one another that is important. All the pieces cast fall in two ways, either positive, dorsal, or negative, ventral surface up, while in addition the astralagi have two narrower surfaces, one, the concave side, with a deeper cleft than the other, the convex side. In the normal position, with dorsal side up, the power the bone stands for is said to be active, the person it represents well or walking in the direction it is lying; in the reverse position, with ventral side up, it is sleeping, powerless or dead and hence, when the people represented are witches, a good sign, for they are then on their backs and harmless. An astralagus lying on its convex side with the cleft up shows laughing, happiness, talking, or even quarrelling (much talking), and with convex side up, anger, complaints, sadness. Secondly, the significance of these positions and particularly of the combinations of the sets of four bones varies according to the purpose of the divination: a particular position means one thing when it is illness, another when it is a building site that is in question. Thirdly, despite intricate rules, divination is in the last resort not an exact science, but an interpretation in which the diviner's ingenuity, his knowledge of human nature and his estimate of the interplay of motives in the society play an important part. In this connexion, the praises of each bone and of various positions have an unexpected function. These praises are not trade secrets and are fairly generally known; to be word-perfect is unnecessary and parts may be recited or omitted, while half may be uttered at one moment and the remainder much later. This occupies the mind of the client and gives the diviner time to think and orientate himself. Moreover, interpretation abounds with metaphorical expressions, as does the parlance of European fortune-tellers with club-men and diamond-girls. Many Lovedu diviners, imitating the *magwai*, use a peculiar chant, half Shangana-Tonga, half

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787 Sotho, a jargon difficult to understand and reinterpreted by the doctor or
755 by some one of the party more conversant than the client with the procedure.

The procedure in divination is a subtle process combining suggestion, free association of ideas, and techniques of leading the client and inspiring confidence in the diviner. On opening the bags, the doctor pours out the dice and watches how they fall, but he does not always vouchsafe anything at this stage. Before casting his dice, he chews a piece of root (*khirugula*), which he blows out on to the bones: both he and the bones are thereby given insight and power. Then, taking them in both hands and uttering a praise by way of encouragement, he casts them on to the floor or on the mat provided. At this stage he reads the cardinal positions, perhaps elaborating on the general trend indicated, and suggests what the client has come to consult him about, often in so doing eliciting some information. Thereafter the client himself throws the bones, speaking to them as dictated by the doctor; the practice of bringing a piece of rag breathed upon by the patient is not known, but the consultant may be directed to mention the patient's name. The client will have to cast many times till the trouble has been thrashed out. The next step is for the doctor, after suggesting a remedy, to cast the bones and interpret their reply to the suggestion. Whatever the cause of the illness, the first suggestion is always placation of the ancestors and thereafter medicines and treatments. At each throw only some of the dice are studied, the position of the others being irrelevant to the immediate purpose. Sometimes it takes long (often as we have seen, over two hours or a whole afternoon) for the bones to give a clear indication and, if they fall in unreadable combinations, various causes may be assigned: the bones may not have been properly 'washed'; or a condition precedent to effective divination may have been omitted, such as in one case we witnessed, when the consultant's people had not yet held the removal of 'dirt' (*khitshila*) ceremony after the death of a child; or the bones may unaccountably 'refuse'.

To illustrate the procedure, we give an actual case of divination simplified by the omission of the praises. Ramatiti, the doctor, had just finished divining for Dumedi when Dwagu, Dumedi's friend who lived some ten miles away, came upon the scene and, handing over his 1*s.* to the doctor, asked that the dice be thrown for him. Ramatiti poured out the bones, looked at them, but remained silent. He then chewed a piece of *khirugula*, took the bones in both hands, spat on them and, mumbling a praise, cast them. 'They have fallen *masfengwe*' (a position meaning dissension), he said, uttering the relevant praise. 'You have been greatly troubled,' he continued, enlarging upon the greatness of the trouble. 'The tortoise bones lie *matagola*' (indicating long illness), he added. 'You suffer from "blood" and intestinal trouble. Do you have dreams?' 'Yes,' replied Dwagu, 'chiefly about dead people.' '*Tshwesi*' (the baboon bones), went on the doctor, 'are full [lie on their convex side]; your sickness is on the chest.' Thereupon Dwagu was given the bones to throw and told to repeat after the doctor a praise of the bones: 'Tell us you spy with eyes that see, tell us why we are afflicted; whether it be a god or whether it be

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a witch, tell us.' When the bones had fallen, Ramatini asked, 'Do you know any *gwene* [man of the Crocodile totem]? Are your in-laws Crocodile?' 'No,' replied Dwagu, 'I know only neighbours, not relatives, who are Crocodile.' After Dwagu had denied that he had quarrelled with these people, the doctor warned him not to drink beer with them, and when he objected, 'But we are always drinking together', the doctor said, 'It is they who have given you *khilane*.' Dwagu was doubtful, but replied, 'I remember that once, when I came out of the *gwanne* "school", a son of these neighbours gave me monkey nuts and afterwards my stomach was upset.'

Dwagu threw the bones again and the doctor asked him if he were troubled by matter in the ears. Dwagu admitted that both his ears were affected and added, 'That is how the trouble began, and I have tried many remedies in vain.' The doctor now had a substantial clue. 'The ears are causing blood on the chest', he said. 'Has a *lelepe* doctor tried to cure you?' 'No,' Dwagu replied. 'Only a woman who was one day called for my mother.' The bones were once more thrown to determine whether the woman would succeed if she were called again. The *nalepe* bone lay on its back and with *dzee* and *phiri* upside down, showing the power of the witches to be broken, and *gulane* (wild boar) in its normal position, the doctor declared that Dwagu would recover. But, though it was silently passed over, the diviner was mistaken in thinking that his client was of the *gulane* totem. Again Dwagu threw the dice and the question asked, viz. whether he should offer to (*nawa*) his dead father, was answered in the negative; but though *phiri* (hyena) and *tshwene* (baboon) lay powerless, the positive position of the lion (*dzee*), associated with witches, indicated that the stomach-ache would remain. 'Have you biliousness?' inquired the doctor. 'No.' 'Well, then, do you enjoy your beer?' 'No,' was the reply. 'But one calabash fills my stomach; I can't drink much.' Another throw, this time by the doctor, was favourable to the medicine mentioned as a cure. 'But,' asked the doctor, as he scrutinized the bones, 'what child at home is ill?' When Dwagu said it was his, the doctor congratulated himself on his perspicacity and could not resist following up his success.

Dwagu thus had to cast the dice about his child. The doctor diagnosed *nzoo* (sores), a vague term covering external rashes or sores of all kinds, as well as internal trouble, and a common complaint of children. 'Yes,' replied Dwagu. 'The sores are in its mouth,' adding a full account of the complaint. The *khilane* goat bone (indicating a young male person) was lying positive, so the doctor said, 'It is a boy,' but again he was wrong. Unperturbed, the doctor now threw the dice, having suggested the cure, 'Dung of witches (metaphorical for the insectivorous bat) and mice and moss hanging from trees. Burn one portion holding the child in the smoke and smear its body with the other portion. Tell us, you spy with eyes that see. I say let the fowl (child) be well.' But the bone standing for a small girl fell on its back: the medicine would not succeed. Again the doctor threw, mentioning different ingredients, but similar treatment, and this time the bones were propitious.

The doctor is an important person in the society, not because his

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787 practice brings him wealth, but because disease is a matter of over-
755 present interest. He is paid chiefly in beer, which provides entertainment for friends and neighbours, payer and payee, and enhances his prestige. The family doctor usually receives nothing at all, but is called to beer that is drunk in the family. Diviners receive the 1s. or fowl for divination and perhaps, if they are mercenary or have taken great pains about the medicine, 5s. for opening the medicine bags; but payment for treatment is made only for successful cures. A patient should on recovery not shave his head before bringing beer to the doctor, when the 'hair of his illness' is shaved, perhaps with medicine by the doctor and taken to a hollow tree, where it is left with the words 'Sickness remain there'; but this rule is, as often as not, observed in the breach. The correct charge for curing barrenness or epilepsy is £1 or £1 10s., yet we have seen many cures of barrenness for which only beer was given. The means of the patient and his relationship to the doctor are material factors. *Lelipo* doctors are usually mercenary, requiring a goat for most of their treatments and fining patients who shave their heads without permission. *Mugwau* are the wealthiest doctors, receiving anything from £1 to £7 at one sitting. Many set up temporary villages along the roads to catch clients, and one living in Portuguese East Africa has a levy for transporting clients from the Transvaal lowveld to his home. The *mugwau* exacts full payment before he divines; other doctors have to wait until the cure is effected. A doctor never goes to court about his fees, but he sometimes threatens to cover up the holes where he dug the medicines to call back illness upon the patient.

When medicines are not effective, it is etiquette to acquaint the doctor with the fact before going to a second doctor, but this etiquette is not always observed. Health is the quest of every one at all times, and disease is the most persistent and dangerous enemy of the individual; for the causes of illness are incalculable and even the most harmless disease may let in the witch to strike at his victim. The office of the doctor is both important and honourable, for he is the guardian of the people's welfare. There is no oath that binds him to loyalty and integrity, but these things are expected of him; he even preserves the secrets of his clients and, though the *mugwau* advertises himself, such action by a doctor is regarded as derogatory.

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the complaint is either given or required; and frequently no special spirit is mentioned. It is enough to know the cause of the trouble and what rite is necessary to placate the gods. Even complaints of neglect are usually put positively: 'He complains that you should give him (his shrine) a libation'. The ancestors desire chiefly to be remembered: they want their beads worn, their name revered, a beast or goat dedicated to and eaten after them. They also like to be told about journeys undertaken or marriages, in much the same way as the living, and to be approached with a libation. Yet, unlike the Nguni, they never complain of being hungry; nor are the gods said to drink the libation or even its spiritual counterpart, but are merely pleased to be given their due. There is no such thing as running secure because you have done all that is necessary for the gods; there is always some ancestor who can cause trouble, and it is best to wait and see what is wanted. Moreover, the ancestors are wayward; there is no knowing what they may desire. Mambuch asked to be buried at Khibhuri, but after his death he caused sickness, saying, 'Why did you bury me in the valley in the sun' (instead of in the ancestral grove), and a black sheep had to be sacrificed on his grave. Similarly, Malingwane, brother of the queen, who in 1934 became a Christian on his death-bed, withheld rain in 1935 because they had buried him in a Christian cemetery. Religious rites among the Lovedu tend, therefore, to be addressed to those spirits that cause trouble and in the absence of illness there may be no rites at all.

Certain objects which were once in the possession of the ancestors are used in religious ceremonial and are thought to have special powers of protection and healing. These objects, consisting of ancient beads of glass or native-worked iron or copper, native-wrought assegais, hoes, axes, iron rods with spiked heads, are handed down in the family and carefully cherished. Very often when a daughter leaves to be married, she is given a few beads to take with her for use when she is ill. Such charms are called *thupulo*. Illness caused by an ancestor can generally be cured by a ceremony known as *ho phaza*: a mixture of ground grain and water is poured over beads or other *thupulo* objects in the presence of the patient while a prayer, scolding the spirits and asking for health, is made. The beads are then worn by the patient till he recovers. After *ho phaza* on beads for any one, he may wear them at any time with protective results, and small children generally wear many old beads. Masetha called here 'my hospital' (*spitale ea ga*) to illustrate their powers to us in European idiom. Pumero says, if he does not wear the crocodile bone that was his father's, he gets ill or dreams much of dead people. Association with the ancestors, not anything inherent in these objects, gives them their powers, for we have seen an old Boer gun brought out as a *thupulo* at an offering. Yet for a charm to heal it is not essential that it should have been in the possession either of the complaining ancestor himself or of his family. Sometimes the gods, through the diviner, mention beads or other objects not known in the family at all. It is then concluded that they have been lost and steps are taken to procure them from some one else or from the queen, who has many. Then when they pray, it will be mentioned: 'We are replacing the lost bead.'

771 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-
794 Tonga and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion.
177 Among Shangana-Tonga, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult
753 is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body' and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolotsis was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthunzwa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature.
[128] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwasha in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudemma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), or *munchtchi* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit
755 wishing to manifest itself, a *lobpo* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known in the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the
794 spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.

755 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to
535 enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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possessed, they often say they have come to 'play' with the others and they may even cause slight ill-health on this account. Hence quite often when a possessed person does not feel well, he will ask for the drums, saying he must dance. *Lelopo* dancing consists of fast movements of the foot to the accompaniment of drums or tambourines and rattles. At a seance of *malopo a zwikwe*, those who speak *Thwala*, the large hemispherical *gwa* drum is used in addition to the conical drums. All are, however, beaten with the hands, the elbows being placed on the drumskin in a peculiar manner. *Malopo*, who speak Sotho or Lovedu, use only the conical drums in the ordinary manner.

If the dance has a great fascination—after a seance one finds even small children practising the steps—the dress worn by the possessed adds to the attraction. Cloths of different colours are worn round the waist and tied at the back; round the legs are usually leggings of the outer shell of the *dipuri* (*Oncoba spinosa*) fruit filled with pebbles to rattle as one dances; on the head is a cap of fur or brightly coloured wool or a head-gear of black feathers, while very often a spear, battle-axe, or stick is brandished in the hand. These are the *mujhemo* of the spirit, worn only during possession. The nature of the dress of each possessed person has been indicated by the spirit itself, and people do their best to comply, lest the possessed person dies. Once at a seance the spirit of a woman asked that a beast or, failing that, a goat be 'placed' for him. 'We'll do our best,' the relatives replied, 'but remember we are poor and it is a matter that will take time.' The spirit, angry at this unwillingness, retorted, 'If you don't comply, I'll take away my person [in whom I manifest myself] and go and sleep with her. Tell Makhade (elder brother of the possessed who learnt the profession of doctor from the spirit) I'll take away my profession from him.' 'We'll do our best,' urged the relatives, 'but don't go away in anger.' In spite of this power, possessing spirits have nevertheless to take cognizance of public opinion and the desires of royalty. The spirit of the wife of a royal relative asked for a man's loin-cloth, which women possessed by male spirits occasionally wear, but he refused to allow it on the grounds that for a woman to wear man's attire is unbecoming. An old woman therefore addressed the spirit, saying, 'People here don't like it,' and the spirit was satisfied.

A short description of an institution which contains all the elements of an ordinary seance must suffice to illustrate some of the main features of the cult. When the doctor, called to conduct the initiation, has arrived with his or her attendants, drums are fetched from the district head, and other disciples of the doctor invited to be present. Nothing can, however, be done before the spirit of the doctor descends upon her. To allow this, they retire to a hut and lie down as if to sleep, while an old woman puts down some pinches of snuff on the ground and calls upon the spirits to come. In a few minutes the doctor groans and quivers and the spirit signifies its arrival by a song of greeting. It calls for its *lelopo* clothes and the doctor is dressed. Soon the spirits of her attendants also arrive and treatment, which consists in making the novitiate dance, is begun.

When Betty was being initiated, we arrived early one Saturday evening, attracted by the noise, to find a picturesque scene. It was winter and

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794 five little fires had been lit in the vicinity of the courtyard of Betty's hut.
755 In the centre were three women dancing to the music of drums and
535 rattles. We sat down by the nearest fire and found ourselves with a group
786 of old women. For people had arranged themselves, naturally as is their manner, in age-groups round the various fires; young married women at one, small boys at another, girls above the age of puberty at a third. The dust rose high; what had sounded pleasant enough at a distance became, as one sat in its midst, an almost unbearable din; while in the flickering and uncertain light of the fires the dancing took on a frenzied effect that lent to the scene a wildness and weirdness seldom met with except in travellers' tales of darkest Africa. Never again in our frequent attendances at *malipo* dancing did we recapture that first sense of weirdness so largely due to its novelty and our own ignorance. That night the dancing stopped at 1.30 a.m. but by dawn it had begun again, continuing with intervals of rest during the whole of Sunday and Sunday night. Betty danced most of the time; if she rested too long, the women urged her on, saying, 'How do you expect the spirit to come out if you don't dance?' All this time she was being treated with medicines: black powder mixed with butter fat was smeared on her legs, white froth of medicine churned with a porridge stirrer was applied on various parts of the body, some being administered also internally, and infusions were given her to drink. No food was eaten either by Betty or by the women whose spirits were upon them; the very sight of porridge makes some *malipo* vomit and the only sustenance allowed while dancing is beer, if there happens to be any.

Late on Sunday afternoon they called her mother's brother to try to induce the spirit to manifest itself, for doctors had indicated that the troubling spirit was on the mother's side. Taking a calabash of water in his hand, the mother's brother knelt near the dancing girl and spat mouthfuls of water out on the ground, saying, 'Come out, spirit, that this person also may be well. She remains ailing, and when we go to doctors they tell us it is a spirit. Come outside that this person can be well [cool].' Sometimes, instead of *ku phase* with water, mixed grains of all kinds are thrown over the dancer and the words used are, 'We are giving you everything to come.' It may even be that something, which can be overcome only by magical means, is holding back the spirit, as when, on one occasion, the spirit was said to be bewildered at the cross-roads, not knowing which to take. All the roads except that leading into the village were magically 'barred' and the spirit, thus guided, came straight in and manifested itself. Difficult as it is for a spirit to come on the first occasion, once initiation has taken place, it becomes a simple matter. To make a spirit manifest itself, a person has only to dance in the manner of the cult or to lie down while some one calls on it to come. The spirit may also come of its own accord at any time without being induced.

794 Early on the Monday morning Betty, showing signs of exhaustion,
777 began to stagger in her dancing, and people knew the spirit must be near.
765 Her movements became more frenzied, she put up her hands to her head and dragged her feet uncertainly, and then fell to the ground. Several women who had been expecting this, caught and carried her, still quivering and groaning, into the hut. 'Good day, grandparent. Come nicely,

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grandparent,' they kept saying. After a few minutes Betty began a song, one usually sung on the arrival of a spirit, giving the name of the spirit upon her—namely, Mamaile, her mother's mother. Those present sang the refrain to the accompaniment of rattles. Staggerings and fallings, groanings or growlings are always signs of an approaching spirit; sometimes the possessed person runs away for a short distance. A goat was now brought into the hut. Its body was smeared with medicine, some was poured down its throat and, after the patient had breathed hard into its mouth, it was taken out and killed. Under supervision of the doctor, small pieces were cut from all parts and placed in a bowl, while the stomach contents and portion of the liver were set aside to be used in curing the patient. The experts say that the sickness from which the ancestor suffered before its death and which presumably causes the patient to suffer, goes into the goat. Before proceeding further, the doctor took the bowl of meat to the hut entrance, where, after setting aside half of it, she placed it with a little snuff on the ground, praying to her spirit. Later this meat was roasted and eaten by small boys. The stomach contents were smeared on various parts of the body of the patient; the small pieces of meat were roasted, mixed with a black powder, and administered on the end of a stick to all four of the possessed people present.

The doctor now busied herself charring chips of various kinds of bark in a basin in which some of the goat's liver had also been put. With this the patient was smoked three times under a blanket till she coughed and spluttered. This took a considerable time, during which the other possessed women sang songs in turn. Mabelowa, who is possessed by a man, called for her pipe in which some hemp was put and evinced great astonishment when her fellow wife, her attendant when she is possessed, struck a match to light it. This was a European innovation unknown in the days of her spirit. Similarly, when a potato was brought, all the possessed women examined it with wonder, asking each other whether it was edible. While the meat of the goat was being cooked with medicine in three pots for those present, the possessed women sat outside on a mat, an honour accorded to their spirits. They sat, silent and dignified, saying nothing. A fowl was killed in order that its leg might afford a medicine bag for the patient and the chips of bark used in smoking were ground to a powder to be used by the patient when eating of the first-fruits. It might be mentioned that the doctor carried home with her the hind leg, shoulder, and breast of the goat as her share, while the other meat was regarded as a reward to the crowd for its share in dancing and singing.

For some time people sat and talked to their friends while the doctor worked with her medicines and the possessed women sat quietly in the shade. Suddenly we became aware of a kind of pantomime in which the initiate, directed in song by the doctor, was made to play-act all the work of women. She went to fetch water and wood about 20 yards from home, swept the courtyard, imitated hoeing, the stamping and winnowing of mealies, cooking and dishing up, finally serving food in the correct manner to the small boy whose mother she had married (Betty had married her father's sister). Last of all she was taken to the drums and

794 shown how to dance in possessed fashion, all, it was said, lest when her
●755 spirit left her she should be lazy and not know how to work. Betty
535 walked on in a dream with a wooden, expressionless look and at times appeared so exhausted that we feared she would not be able to lift the stamper when imitating stamping. This mime-show is not performed in all initiations, nor is a goat always killed, for the methods of doctors differ considerably and the patient's relatives may have no goat. Often the patient is set to dance and treated with medicines till she falls down with the spirit upon her.

799 It was now three o'clock in the afternoon, and, the initiation being
755 complete, the doctor thought it time that the spirits departed. She
535 ushered the possessed into the hut, where they all sat down, offered them
533 each a pinch of snuff, took a rattle and began her farewell song, the whole company (for the hut had filled with spectators) joining in the refrain. Next the initiate sang her farewell song, mentioning what she wanted as her accessories—several white cloths, a woollen cap, and a spear to hold when dancing. When all had finished singing, they took off their *swiphawo* (clothes), which their attendants (for each possessed person has some one to help him when his spirit appears) put into bundles to take away, and lay down to sleep. After three minutes the doctor grunted and groaned as departing spirits are apt to do, sat up and began dressing in everyday clothes. The others followed her example and went outside. The patient, but a short while before so exhausted, came smiling out of the hut and scolded the people for letting her oversleep in this shocking manner (appearing to have no knowledge of her initiation). Then all washed their faces and urinated in the hedge, as women do on rising in the mornings.

799 Initiation into the cult is said to make the person well again, and all
755 into whose history one inquires claim to have been cured. Betty herself
799 had no further trouble. If, however, they become ill again, it may be a second spirit, for many people have three or four. There is, however, no further initiation; the second spirit is merely called upon to manifest itself. A second or third spirit may take possession without causing any illness, merely announcing its arrival and making known its wants when the person is possessed. After initiation the spirit manifests itself when it has some complaint or desire, when the person has broken some taboo, or when specially induced by dancing or prayer. A possessed person has to keep certain taboos: he may never eat such firstfruits as pumpkin leaves or green mealies, *marula* fruits or beer made of the newly-harvested corn without medicine given him at his initiation and renewable every year or every two years; any new thing undertaken, as when a possessed woman becomes pregnant, must be reported to the spirit. Some *malipo* may not be beaten with a green stick, lest the spirit descend upon them; others may not touch European medicine. Many of them run away from Europeans even when not actually possessed, and one man had to keep his books securely locked in a suit-case lest his wife should see them and become troubled by her spirit. The very mention of the word *lalipo* in the presence of some may cause the spirit to come. Observances are not the same for all and taboos to be observed depend largely on the doctor who

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does the initiation. There are no special burial rites associated with the cult. There is, however, a vague belief that injury to a snake in the village may in some cases harm a possessed person, an interesting belief in view of the fact that there is so little trace in Lovedu religion of the Zulu idea that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in snakes.

There is a special relationship between a possessed person and the doctor who initiated him: every year when the medicine needs renewal, beer or *mavula* cider is prepared, the doctor, who comes with a number of disciples and attendants, is called and there is a great dance of the possessed often lasting several days. This is 'dancing for medicine' (*ho vinela tshidi*). Some possessed people have to be specially doctored before drinking the first *mavula* cider and the *mavula* season is always a time of *lidipo* gatherings; others are required to contribute corn at harvest time for a large *lidipo* dance at the home of the doctor. These gatherings, at which a goat may be slaughtered in addition to the cider provided, add greatly to the prestige of the doctor. There is sometimes considerable jealousy between *malipo* doctors, who, with those initiated by them, may form rival schools. Some doctors refuse to allow their followers to dance with those initiated by other doctors without special permission. At one season, at which there had been some unpleasantness, the doctor smeared some powder into incisions on the neck, tongue, crown, and sides of the heads of her disciples. Then, taking some medicated water in her mouth, she squirted (*ho phasa*), saying, 'I "place" you. Don't you dance any more. I don't like dancing every day without my special permission. Any *lidipo* who dances where you are dancing will break her leg or be badly hurt.' The remainder of the water was given them to drink.

An interesting feature of the cult of possession is that many people when the spirit is upon them speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thovelo or Kharanga. Investigation into this matter, however, shows that this is not as startling a phenomenon as it might appear. When possessed, a person for the most part sits silent unless he is a doctor. If he speaks at all, this is in monosyllables, for all his wants and messages are conveyed in song. *Lidipo* songs are stereotyped and known to many because the uninitiated have to join in the refrain when rattling the accompaniment. In these songs there is usually a number of foreign words, though many consist purely of meaningless sounds, such as '*Wo le ree ene o ree ree ree mene ree*'. Often peculiarities in the pronunciation of vowels are interpreted as Thovelo. When the refrain begun (*ho ema*) by the possessed person has been taken up by the chorus, he continues with the song or interpolates his own words, usually Sotho with a few foreign words interspersed, till he wishes to stop. In this way he makes known his wishes. It quite frequently happens that no one understands the gibberish of the possessed person, and doctors generally have an attendant who interprets what they wish to convey. There are, however, numerous well-known words in general use by people when their spirit is upon them—for instance, *mafoto* or *moroto* for *lefela* (snuff), *bula* or *mvula* for *mantsi* (water), *na ga nbaya* for *na ga ntiya* (they may beat me), *haya* for *hae* (home). But many possessed people speak pure Sotho, and it is recognized that a newly initiated person may not

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But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasizes in very general terms the importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials. 773

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formulations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going its ordained way is implicitly rejected in their conceptions. The assumption is that cosmic forces are controllable and, in fact, controlled at every turn by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *ungaga* (the evil aspect of which is *vula*), *i.e.* by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digoma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail. 821 772 643 [71] [69]

Ungaga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these attributes or powers (*maagla*) reside are mainly *mulimo* (medicines) or *mere* (plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct 789 755

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from the supernatural. While anyone who knows a cure for an ailment is manipulating the forces of nature and using *vupuga*, there are doctors who, by virtue of long training, know many medicines, have learnt how to divine and have been imbued with additional perspicacity and powers as a result of a special initiation. Medicine functions by virtue of the properties, actual or ascribed, of matter; the principles underlying the operation of medicines assume mechanical cause and effect and even the divining bones are read according to rule.

There are, however, two types of doctor who fall into a different category: the *lelapo* doctor, directly possessed and guided by an ancestor spirit, who largely confines his activities to curing possessed people, and the *magwane* or 'smeller-out' who is generally a foreigner. People using the forces of nature for evil purposes are *vulsi* (witches and sorcerers) and are dealt with in another context. *Uwupuga*, it will be seen, is the use of impersonal power inherent in matter, which is extracted by the expert (*pupa*) and applied in the interests of the health and well-being of men; it is also the exercise of personal qualities or skills, either inherited or acquired through spirit possession or guidance.

Ancestors

Ancestors can influence for good and evil the fortunes only of their own descendants, who in the case of the chief's ancestors are taken to include the whole tribe. Their control over the forces of nature is not explicitly formulated; and what is expressly stated is not always confirmed in Lovedu religious practices. The ancestors are clearly conceived to exercise an overall control. A man will always assert that no harm or illness can befall him if his ancestors are watchful enough, for they have power to ward off all evil and misfortune. It is said that even witches cannot, without the will of the ancestors, enter a village or deliver the last fatal blow that kills a man. But in practice the will of the ancestors either is not interposed, for no ascertainable reason, or is ineffective to ward off attacks. If some great sorrow overtakes a man, it is said that 'his ancestors have had an accident' implying that he has been temporarily deprived of their protection and is at the mercy of his enemies. Even medicines are said to be ineffective without the co-operation of one's ancestors, the conception being not merely that their goodwill is essential but also that *vupuga* belongs to the ancestors. In fact, however, the ineffectiveness of medicines is never in any concrete case attributed to the lack of such co-operation.

Ancestors are appealed to and thanked for good crops, fertility, plenty, and all manner of good fortune and success. The desire to be remembered and given tendance is attributed to them, and they may themselves cause harm and sickness to descendants who neglect them; but somewhat inconsistently a man may with impunity neglect them for many years and give them tendance only when misfortune overtakes him. Ancestors may be approached and propitiated or thanked by means of offerings and prayer

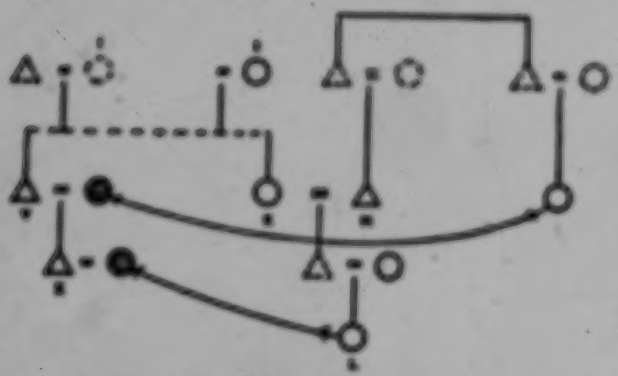

FIG. 3. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*raka lelaka*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and mother's sides so that they become *malaka e matse*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage (which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 230 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopoeia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 789 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical 824 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his 757 faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason [753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are [755] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 192 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognise the similarity of plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants might receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadze* of the plateau (*kha naka*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadze* of stony places (*kha makhwarani*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *mudzwo*, *mudzwatsi*, *mudzwatishi*, and *mudzwolinga*, all containing the root *dzw-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugwari*, *mukwidi*, and *mukakala thudu* are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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classification. Practice is characterized by vagueness and a very wide and 753
loose, instead of a specific, use of many of these terms. The term *khitshipidi* denotes primarily a swelling or tumour containing white matter. In practice we have found it applied to scrofula or glandular swellings below the ear, which were cut open and squeezed, to slime coughed up and said to be internal *khitshipidi*, and to general aching of all the teeth or tenderness of the gums with no sign of matter. Similarly the term *ɣɔbɛ*, bleeding of the nose, is often applied when there is no bleeding, but general debility, in which case the trouble is thought to be caused by blood in the body that should, but has not, come out. Such false correlations are due not merely to wrong conceptions of cause and effect—any evidence suggesting the presence of blood suffices to incriminate that arch enemy of health—but also to careless observation and loose reasoning. This laxity in medical conceptions is in marked contrast to the logic and coherence of other arrangements of the society. Inaccurate observation 787
and undeveloped symptomatology must be attributed to the extensive 785
reliance, firstly, for diagnosis of all but the most everyday illness upon the divining dice, and, secondly, for curing upon what in the last resort is the psychological rather than the physical.

Lovedu therapeutics includes a number of treatments that have un- 757
doubted curative value, but many more are based on purely magical assumptions. On the whole, those which we should consider to be of some medical value are chiefly home remedies of the humble non-divining herbalist. The higher one goes in the medical scale, the more divorced from scientific principles become the treatments. Simple ailments are dealt with very much as among Europeans: sniffing up water is used for colds, the milk of a certain euphorbia is supplied to draw out deep-lying thorns; splints of strips of wood are used for broken limbs or 752
sprains; teeth are extracted by being levered up by means of an instrument like a poker, which is inserted between the roots, a method said to be no more painful than the clumsy use of European forceps. Very detrimental to the speedy recovery of wounds is, however, the practice of scraping or washing off all matter before each application of healing powders. This destroys the new young tissues, delaying for months the healing of sores that normally takes weeks or even days. Use of enemas is 757
unknown and emetics are not nearly as common as among the Zulu. With the Lovedu as with us the commonest treatment is the drinking of medicines. Instead, however, of the bottle of medicine we receive, a Native is given a small bundle of roots or twigs cut into even lengths to take home and boil in water which is drunk or used for making a soft porridge. Sometimes the medicine is bruised and a cold infusion made. There is none of the careful measurement of quantities characteristic of the mediaeval apothecary or of prescriptions found on Egyptian papyri, but the amounts used are not wholly undetermined, for in practice the smallest pot is used and 1 to 2½ pints of water are added; the dose seldom exceeds a few mouthfuls taken once or twice a day for a few days only. If this is not effective, something else will be tried. Wet cupping is a common home remedy, as the numerous scars on head and shoulders of people testify. After scarification, a cupping horn is applied, the narrow

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

304 757 Scarification, except in the mutual inoculation and blood mixing of husband and wife prior to their first sexual intercourse after marriage and after the death or miscarriage of a child, is a treatment that is directed less at the evils of blood than towards a strengthening of the body or part of the body by the insertion of medicine. It is used in curing headache, for [752] sprains and broken limbs, and for all 'strengthenings', such as that prior to taking a child out of the hut for the first time or the 'fixing' of one's body against witches. For general strengthenings, incisions are made on all the joints and on other parts of the body, such as head and neck depression, which are considered important. Scarification is, with the drinking of medicine or eating of powders, quite the most common form of medical treatment; it is used in the home as much as by diviners and forms part of many other treatments, such as the vapour bath. By far the most 751 interesting form of scarification is, however, '*hu thumela*' (vaccination) against smallpox in which matter from the pustules of affected persons, mixed with other medicines, is inoculated to introduce the disease in a mild form. It is done on the dorsal side of the wrist or on the forehead, a pattern which supports the claim that it was known prior to the advent of the European; moreover, the ingredients of the serum used by Euro- [771] peans are not known. Possibly the treatment was borrowed from Arabs, who were the first to study smallpox and measles. The old method was [164] still widely practised in the 1938 smallpox epidemic, for, though it was realized that it 'called' the disease instead of curing it, people noted that, despite European vaccination, there was still much illness.

757 Steaming and the vapour bath also form part of the practical elements in Lovedu medicine. There are various forms of steaming and smoking, all of which go by the same term. To 'loosen' a cough, chips of a certain [783] root may be placed in a pipe with a live coal and smoked; to purify a person after a death, chips are charred on a potsherd and the smoke [844] inhaled through a reed; before being taken out of the hut, a new-born child is held naked in the smoke of burning chips or root and bark; boils and other swellings are brought to a head by the application of the steam of boiling roots. To cure fever or general weakness of the body after an illness and for purification of husband and wife after the death of a child the procedure is more complicated. Red-hot stones are put into a large pot of medicated water and when it bubbles and boils the patient, naked except for a cloth passed between the legs, is covered with a blanket and steamed. After much spluttering and shouting, he is taken out, sprinkled or washed down with cold water and then either scarified on the joints or subjected to *hu hata*—that is, a river stone is pressed on the joints and is later taken back to the river. This treatment is considered too drastic

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for a really weak patient. Sprinkling and *hu hata*, combined very often 757
with other treatments, are also used alone. When there is an epidemic of coughing or dysentery, it is said 'a wind has come' and a doctor is called to sprinkle the people to ward it off. *Hu hata*, pressing a counter-irritant to the affected part, is used for toothache, when large pieces of heated bark are held to the cheek; for bruises, which are treated by the application of hot boiled leaves of certain trees; after childbirth, when hot porridge placed in a small flat basket is pressed daily to the stomach to ward off pains, and for many other purposes. But the hot poultice or emollient is not known.

Characteristically, the above-mentioned treatments are used both on 757
occasions where they might be of real therapeutic value and for purifica- 755
tions and strengthenings where they could not. The principle of inoculation, which immunizes in diseases such as smallpox, is widely applied to effect cures and to further magical ends with which an empirical relation in our sense is wholly obscure. The relation must be sought, not in the objective link between cause and effect as we see it, but in the Lovedu conceptions of disease, their causes and symptoms, and in the cultural pattern of the methods by which evil may be cast out or symbolically laid upon a scapegoat. This is by no means as foreign to European thought as might at first be supposed, being used to this day among the more backward peasants both in Europe and in South Africa. A cure for headache among the Lovedu is to tie a piece of medicated string or sinew round the head for a day, after which it is cut and allowed to fall with the evil it has absorbed into a hole. To cure gout you scarify the leg to insert medicine, wiping off the blood with the leaves of a growing *mutagola* bush (*Euclea sp.*) to leave the disease on it. The frog is a common scapegoat. We once witnessed how, in the case of pulsating fontanelle of a baby, [827]
considered to be a grave danger, some of the medicine inserted into the scarifications, made around the throbbing spot and on other parts of the body, was placed on a green-and-white frog. The frog was stood on the fontanelle, where it puffed itself up by rhythmic inhalations not unlike the beating of the fontanelle and finally, as a scapefrog, to which the evil had been transmitted, it was taken back to the river. One method of curing convulsions is to shave the hair in two 'paths' which cross in the centre of the child's head and to make a bark cockroach, smeared with medicine, run along each path till it drops off. In curing barrenness and in initiation into the cult of possession, a goat, after being made to lie beside the patient or having its nostrils blown into, is killed and used in the treatment.

Lovedu medicines appear to us to be a jumble of science and magic. 278
Fully 80 per cent. are of vegetable origin. There is hardly a plant in that 757
rich lowveld vegetation which is not used in the pharmacopoeia of some 755
herbalist or doctor and it is significant that new plants are constantly tried out. The pattern of supposed relations that are believed to exist between symptoms and diseases, of the unscientific analogies which we call sympathetic magic, and the use of roots and barks more frequently than leaves or flowers and fruits, limits the value of this testing out of medicines. Nevertheless, many drugs have effects which either obscure or

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278 cure the symptoms, and whether for that reason and its psychological
757 effect or because of a truly curative value, men have great faith in the
755 medicines. There are undoubtedly ingredients in Lovedu medicines which cannot be empirically related to either symptom or cure, since they operate mainly by a technique of analogies which we relegate to the magical world. Such are animal products like hair, skin, excrement, and ovaries used in a variety of ways—for instance, for barrenness and indigestion; minerals like ironstone used for strengthening babies; and sea or river products, sand and shells, indispensable for keeping witches out of the village. But to Lovedu men and women the use of such ingredients in no way differs from the use of a herb: both are thought to have curative value and for them our distinction between magical and scientific treatments, between cause and effect and false analogy, does not exist. Just as a herb may have properties for curing disease, so, for example, the backbone of a python is effective in curing general debility or backache. The bone is pounded and the powder inoculated into scarifications along the back, by which means the immense power of the python is thus imparted to the patient. But note the sequel. So powerful is this medicine that the patient, when his time has come, will have difficulty in dying. His eyes will remain alive though the body is dead until once more the python powder is applied by being burned under his nose that he may inhale the smoke. This strengthening and the reversal of its influence are like injection and desensitization in our medical practice.

758 When we pursue Lovedu conceptions as regards the nursing and treatment of patients, we have once more to regard them from their
[515 point of view. Cleanliness and hygiene are very remotely related to health.
777] Flies are freely tolerated because it is unlucky to kill them, not because, as is held in some other tribes, abundance of flies means riches in cattle. Invalids are not given a special diet, so that instructions by European doctors that a mother should feed her ailing baby on vitamin-containing foods or fruits are ignored unless medicine is given to be mixed with the food. It is equally fatal to appeal to the curative powers of nature: an invalid will impute unwillingness to help, ignorance or even sinister designs, if you tell him that nature will heal him and give no medicine. It is medicine and medicine alone that is thought to heal. But even medicine is never allowed much time in which to do its curative work. If one drug is not effective within a week it will be changed for another. Often a number of medicines are used at the same time, so that if one is ineffectual the other may heal. In every case we attended we found Native treatment was being given at the same time as, and often to the detriment of, our own. Nor would our protests be of any avail. Even in hospitals there are secret chewings of herbs and surreptitious steamings. Though it is admitted that certain medicines may not 'agree' when used together, use of the wrong medicine is not thought to have any harmful effects. At the most, a medicine merely does not heal; it never definitely harms the patient. Inexactness in the quantity of medicine taken is accompanied by a laxity in the carrying out of doctors' instructions which, though of no consequence where Native medicines are used, may do immense harm if the medicines are European. A careful

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comparison between the instructions of Native doctors at consultations and 758
the actual manner in which these were carried out showed great discrepancies between the two. There are certain general principles known to all and on the whole people trust to their knowledge of these and the powers of the medicines themselves rather than slavishly following instructions.

The sick like to be in the open or in the sun, but it is for comfort and warmth, not because the curative power of nature or the need for nursing is recognized. An invalid generally spends the day lying wrapped up in his blanket in or near the courtyard or in the sheltered storage enclosure. This open-air sick-room, sunny or shady as the needs of the body dictate and protected from wind, is, in the absence of light, well-ventilated rooms, the best possible place for the health of the patient. At night, however, or when the patient is too ill to move, the sick-room is the kitchen hut, where the evening meal is cooked, and it is generally foul with smoke and full of people. A patient suffering from a bad cough is given a potsherd of sand to spit into. If at all possible, a patient goes outside to relieve himself, but if he is too weak to walk a broken pot is provided as a commode. Very sick people are given soft porridge without meat or relish, and great pains are taken to persuade patients to eat lest they lose strength and waste away. The treatment in diseases such as smallpox, measles, 757
and chickenpox, which one generally gets once only, is peculiar and shows how values and procedures used in other spheres of culture may become interwoven with medical practices. The illness is dealt with as if it were a stage in life like puberty or circumcision. When the first symptoms appear, the patient is isolated and a stick, placed across the hut door, warns people off, for *muridi* (shadow) will aggravate the illness if the patient comes into contact with certain people. After some days, when the rash has disappeared or the pustules no longer contain white matter, he is smeared with fat and ochre, whether he feels better or not, and allowed out. The treatment is called *hu tcba*, the term used for going through the circumcision initiation. But there is another aspect of the treatment. The pox pustules are scraped daily with soaked bark of *mutscre* (*Bridelia sp.*), the purpose as phrased being to cause the white matter to come out and to prevent the pustules from going deeply into the endodermis, thus leaving pock marks

'Transition' diseases, as we may call those dealt with upon the pattern 753
of *hu tcba*, lead us to consider some general conceptions underlying Lovedu medical practice and causation of disease. These conceptions remind us of the Greek theory of humours which long dominated European medicine and were at the basis of mediaeval physiology. Physical and mental qualities and dispositions were attributed to the four chief fluids or cardinal humours of the body, viz. blood, phlegm, choler, and melancholy or black choler. Choler, probably derived from the Greek word for bile and from which we get our word 'cholera', was, for instance, the humour causing irascibility of temper. The Lovedu attach less importance to temperament and have based their cardinal categories, not upon physiological fluids, but upon conceptions associated with shadow (*muridi*), mingling (*makhuma*), heat (*hu fcza*), and sex. These do not

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754 human being who has been killed by a witch to be his slave. The *khiḓuḓwane* is not an ordinary corpse, though witches do call corpses out of their graves in order to cut off portions of their body for medicine, a procedure that can be prevented by magical protection of the grave. Only a person specially killed for the purpose can be a *khiḓuḓwane*; when they bury him, it is only his shadow that goes into the grave; the real person has been enslaved and put in a large earthen pot or in a cave. At night he hoes for his master, cuts poles for building, or goes on nefarious errands. If you meet a *khiḓuḓwane*, you faint at the sight, and even after medical treatment your body may feel dried up, as though it has no blood.

That the fear of *zwiḓuḓwane* is very real to the Native, and backed by what is to him convincing evidence, is shown in the case of Madume. In November, 1937, Madume, a man residing near us, died. Ever since his wife's death he had lived with (*hu gaula*) a woman whom he had never properly married and, after his death, it was rumoured that he had been killed by the mother of his son's wife for the sake of her daughter, who was jealous that her husband's father should be fonder of, and show more favours to, a concubine than to his legitimate daughter-in-law. The mother of the girl had first, so it was said, wanted to kill Madume's wife, but her daughter had argued that it would be better to kill Madume himself, since he might pick up some other woman and they would have the same trouble over again. How much of this story had actually been given by the diviner and how much was sheer surmise we were never able to discover, but a month after the death people began to be afraid to go near his village at night, as he had been seen standing at his gate. The concubine, afraid to remain at home at night, went to sleep with neighbours, whence she would return at dawn to do her household duties. One morning when it was just getting light, she rose to go home. On her way she suddenly ran shouting into the nearest village and fell in a faint at the entrance. People rushed to help her and called in Madume's sister
[757] to revive her in the manner usual in such circumstances: by holding smoking chips under the nose to cause sneezing (*hu ɛtsemudisa*). She told them she had seen three *zwiḓuḓwane*, a man called Khishweni who had died long ago in the neighbourhood, and two children, dancing and singing on the road. From this evidence the conclusion was immediately come to that Khishweni must have been killed by the same witch as Madume, since both were walking about, and so great was the fear of going out at night that the women of the neighbourhood could not be persuaded to attend a girl's initiation ceremony which had begun before this episode.

775 Contact with Europeans has led to the conception of *khipogo* (spook) which must not be confused with *khiḓuḓwane*. A *khipogo* is the ghost of a dead person, but the sight of a *khipogo* does not, like that of a *khiḓuḓwane*, make one faint or dry up; it only makes one's heart jump in fright. Such a ghost can be laid by means of medicine (*diphaba*) on the grave. Children often run to their mothers with scared faces and bated breath to say they have seen a *khipogo*, sometimes even in broad daylight.

754 Night-witches can be male or female, but the great majority are female.

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Leswa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *ḋere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches. 753 772 811 821

'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mashɔthɔjɔ* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death. 772 789 811 821 [766] [757] [831]

Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is 783 753

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278 cure the symptoms, and whether for that reason and its psychological
757 effect or because of a truly curative value, men have great faith in the
755 medicines. There are undoubtedly ingredients in Lovedu medicines which cannot be empirically related to either symptom or cure, since they operate mainly by a technique of analogies which we relegate to the magical world. Such are animal products like hair, skin, excrement, and ovaries used in a variety of ways—for instance, for barrenness and indigestion; minerals like ironstone used for strengthening babies; and sea or river products, sand and shells, indispensable for keeping witches out of the village. But to Lovedu men and women the use of such ingredients in no way differs from the use of a herb: both are thought to have curative value and for them our distinction between magical and scientific treatments, between cause and effect and false analogy, does not exist. Just as a herb may have properties for curing disease, so, for example, the backbone of a python is effective in curing general debility or backache. The bone is pounded and the powder inoculated into scarifications along the back, by which means the immense power of the python is thus imparted to the patient. But note the sequel. So powerful is this medicine that the patient, when his time has come, will have difficulty in dying. His eyes will remain alive though the body is dead until once more the python powder is applied by being burned under his nose that he may inhale the smoke. This strengthening and the reversal of its influence are like injection and desensitization in our medical practice.

758 When we pursue Lovedu conceptions as regards the nursing and treatment of patients, we have once more to regard them from their
[515 point of view. Cleanliness and hygiene are very remotely related to health.
777] Flies are freely tolerated because it is unlucky to kill them, not because, as is held in some other tribes, abundance of flies means riches in cattle. Invalids are not given a special diet, so that instructions by European doctors that a mother should feed her ailing baby on vitamin-containing foods or fruits are ignored unless medicine is given to be mixed with the food. It is equally fatal to appeal to the curative powers of nature: an invalid will impute unwillingness to help, ignorance or even sinister designs, if you tell him that nature will heal him and give no medicine. It is medicine and medicine alone that is thought to heal. But even medicine is never allowed much time in which to do its curative work. If one drug is not effective within a week it will be changed for another. Often a number of medicines are used at the same time, so that if one is ineffectual the other may heal. In every case we attended we found Native treatment was being given at the same time as, and often to the detriment of, our own. Nor would our protests be of any avail. Even in hospitals there are secret chewings of herbs and surreptitious steamings. Though it is admitted that certain medicines may not 'agree' when used together, use of the wrong medicine is not thought to have any harmful effects. At the most, a medicine merely does not heal; it never definitely harms the patient. Inexactness in the quantity of medicine taken is accompanied by a laxity in the carrying out of doctors' instructions which, though of no consequence where Native medicines are used, may do immense harm if the medicines are European. A careful

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comparison between the instructions of Native doctors at consultations and 758
the actual manner in which these were carried out showed great discrepancies between the two. There are certain general principles known to all and on the whole people trust to their knowledge of these and the powers of the medicines themselves rather than slavishly following instructions.

The sick like to be in the open or in the sun, but it is for comfort and warmth, not because the curative power of nature or the need for nursing is recognized. An invalid generally spends the day lying wrapped up in his blanket in or near the courtyard or in the sheltered storage enclosure. This open-air sick-room, sunny or shady as the needs of the body dictate and protected from wind, is, in the absence of light, well-ventilated rooms, the best possible place for the health of the patient. At night, however, or when the patient is too ill to move, the sick-room is the kitchen hut, where the evening meal is cooked, and it is generally foul with smoke and full of people. A patient suffering from a bad cough is given a potsherd of sand to spit into. If at all possible, a patient goes outside to relieve himself, but if he is too weak to walk a broken pot is provided as a commode. Very sick people are given soft porridge without meat or relish, and great pains are taken to persuade patients to eat lest they lose strength and waste away. The treatment in diseases such as smallpox, measles, 757
and chickenpox, which one generally gets once only, is peculiar and shows how values and procedures used in other spheres of culture may become interwoven with medical practices. The illness is dealt with as if it were a stage in life like puberty or circumcision. When the first symptoms appear, the patient is isolated and a stick, placed across the hut door, warns people off, for *muridi* (shadow) will aggravate the illness if the patient comes into contact with certain people. After some days, when the rash has disappeared or the pustules no longer contain white matter, he is smeared with fat and ochre, whether he feels better or not, and allowed out. The treatment is called *hu tba*, the term used for going through the circumcision initiation. But there is another aspect of the treatment. The pox pustules are scraped daily with soaked bark of *mutscre* (*Bridelia sp.*), the purpose as phrased being to cause the white matter to come out and to prevent the pustules from going deeply into the endodermis, thus leaving pock marks

'Transition' diseases, as we may call those dealt with upon the pattern 753
of *hu tba*, lead us to consider some general conceptions underlying Lovedu medical practice and causation of disease. These conceptions remind us of the Greek theory of humours which long dominated European medicine and were at the basis of mediaeval physiology. Physical and mental qualities and dispositions were attributed to the four chief fluids or cardinal humours of the body, viz. blood, phlegm, choler, and melancholy or black choler. Choler, probably derived from the Greek word for bile and from which we get our word 'cholera', was, for instance, the humour causing irascibility of temper. The Lovedu attach less importance to temperament and have based their cardinal categories, not upon physiological fluids, but upon conceptions associated with shadow (*muridi*), mingling (*makhuma*), heat (*hu fesa*), and sex. These do not

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783 not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and con-
753 tagious force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an invisible counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction, including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage (regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor. 'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

783 Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*. A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born
758 child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to
834 warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi* affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhuma*) to those eating it.
[826] Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leshega*) are full of *muridi* and were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings from the teeth of the *leshega*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hosts infects
[843] these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long journeys from home.

783 *Muridi* is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other
753 injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will

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known to affect the stomach, many kinds of spinach to cause diarrhoea. 753
Epidemics of smallpox, measles, coughs are thought to be brought by 'wind' (*phɛfo e ḍile*) and steps may be taken to combat them by sprinkling with medicines the inmates of the village. Usually an epidemic 'just comes', but on occasion one hears that a witch has 'sent' the wind. Ancestors, too, are thought to exercise some controlling influence over [769] wind; in most libations they are asked, 'Prevent for us these winds'—that is, as we might phrase it in our prayers, 'Guard us from disease.' Diseases are never classified as natural or non-natural solely according to their nature or symptoms. Any natural illness may also be 'sent' and, 753 though natural death is recognized as possible, in practice those closely 754 affected always attribute death to witchcraft or sorcery, though outsiders may give other reasons and some even say of an old man dying, 'The gods have called him to rest.' Of the thirty deaths, including a number of old people, that came to our notice, none were, however, thought to be natural. Contagiousness (*hu fɛdɛla*) of certain diseases, such as venereal diseases, leprosy, whooping cough, measles, is recognized, and it is known that consumption may be transmitted by parents to their children, as one of its names, *lehɔpla la tata-mulɔgɔ* (cough of the family father) signifies.

There must, of course, be a body of professional men and women 759 trained in and practising the art and science of medicine, but there are also many who have an extensive knowledge of home remedies. This is not unexpected in a society in which ordinary mortals live close to, and know a great deal about, nature. Every one is familiar with plants and their properties, which is one of the bases of pharmacology, with the meagre conceptions of anatomy and physiological relations, and with much of the intricate system of causation of disease. There are many men and women who know some special medicines or types of treatment, inherited usually from father, mother, or spouse, and kept secret, not because the knowledge is a source of material benefit, for the remedies are generally given free, but because it lends some recognition and prestige. Mamutho, despite all our efforts, divulged her medicine for inflamed eyes to us only as a parting gift. Madinji treats sprains and fractures; Khiebe specializes in mutual inoculation of the newly wed; and Khapani knows roots for dysentery. These are herbalists, not doctors, but some herbalists are so well-known for the efficacy of a medicine they have that even diviners send patients to them. Knowledge of these remedies, however important, does not make one a doctor (*Ḍaga*): that appellation is accorded only to those who are initiated bone-throwers or as herbalists have achieved general recognition as dispensers of many medicines and treatments. Muhale's wife, though no bone-thrower, is a good midwife and wields expertly a blood-letting awl. But a herbalist, even if called *Ḍaga*, remains *Ḍaga-tshubya*, a doctor without horns (power), because he does not divine; he can prescribe for recognized diseases, but he cannot diagnose in other cases for which the divining dice are necessary. From our point of view, the herbalist diagnoses and prescribes along scientific lines; to the Native he is a novice unable to deal with witches or the more serious diseases.

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of their illness. Night-witches are not often seen by people, but there is 754
certain medicine which can be put in the village fence to keep a night-witch rooted to the spot, unable to move till you come and find him. As soon as he is addressed, he will scurry away. Those who have seen witches, always describe them as naked, perhaps because people always sleep naked wrapped in their blankets. The most effective way of keeping witches at bay is the placing of medicine (*diphaba*) round the village fence, which either makes them forget their errand or makes the village appear like water or a forest.

Night-witches cause all manner of illness in ways unknown to ordinary people. They may pour blood over you, then next day you are ill; your blood is not right and soon you die. They may cut off portions of your body to insert millet or sand, which causes intense pain. If your bones ache and you feel tired without knowing why, it may be that a night-witch has made you hoe in his garden all night or beaten you all over your body with sticks. Sometimes he even makes you ride a bicycle all night. Besides killing, night-witches are fond of causing barrenness in their enemies. They are great destroyers of crops. After you have ploughed, they go into your field and pick up all the seeds so that nothing grows, or they rob your field of its fertility to increase that of their own fields. They also send their familiars at night to milk your cows or let them out of their kraal to cause damage that may bring you to court. Night-witches form a sort of fraternity: they all know one another and meet at night to drum and dance for amusement. They also fight one another: those of an area in which the crops have failed will send wind to break mealies and trees in another area or worms to destroy the crop. The destructiveness of such contests is a reality to some, for in one district in which many worms appeared in the mealies, so we heard, a public meeting was held and one man accused Shangana-Tonga witches, whom he said he had seen the previous night. Often a real battle against foreign witches takes place in which wounds are received that the witch does his best to hide during the day. Witches have even been known to die from wounds received in battle at night, as sometimes admitted by themselves.

Night-witches employ familiars (*dithomya*) such as the hyena, the snake, 759 ●
the *muishond* (*Pœcilogale albinucha*), and, to a lesser extent, owls and 825
the striped *muishond* (*Ictonyx capensis*): both kinds of *muishond* are polecats or skunks. How the witch tames these animals is not known, but they become so intimate that they come at night to ask for food and call the witch their mother, but there is no sex relationship between witch and familiar as is reported for the Pondo. Two actual cases were reported to the queen while we were in the field in which 'sent' snakes had been killed; one of these had been found to contain porridge and relish, certain proof of its association with a witch. The difference between an ordinary snake which also bites and a 'sent' snake appears from the circumstances: if, for example, others walk along a path before you and escape, but you get bitten, then the snake must be 'sent'. For 'sent' snakes are real snakes; the Zulu practice of smearing medicine on sticks to turn them into snakes when your enemy passes is not known to the Lovedu. The most fearful of all familiars is, however, the *khidughwane*, a 754

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of the lines of the father's mother and mother's father, such as is [782] mentioned by Stayt for the Venda. The complete absence of any awe 781 or reverence when the Bantu approach their ancestors is seen in the loud talk, jokes and laughter of all except the officiators themselves, and the discussions that frequently take place between the officiator and his neighbours in the middle of proceedings as to what he should do next and how he should do it. As is the case with Europeans, some families are more religious than others, and the very human tendency to forget the gods when things go well is well marked. Some people are always giving to the gods, telling them of all important happenings in the family, giving them a share of any beer that arrives at the kraal, asking their blessings; others forget to perform even the harvest thanksgiving and, unless illness or other trouble comes to show the anger of the ancestors, years may elapse without any religious ceremony taking place.

THE DOCTOR. No religious ceremony of any importance takes 791 place without the co-operation and advice of the doctor; indeed the majority of offerings that are made are done on the advice of the 759 doctor, who determines in every case all such details as which charms are to be used, whether any special relatives have to be present, what if any beads are to play a part. The great doctor is a figure of inter-tribal importance; he works not in one tribe but in many, a fact which largely accounts for the uniformity in the religious practices of different tribes, in contrast to the diversity found in any one tribe. All doctors are not, however, of the same importance. The herbalist, of whom there are hundreds, both male and female, has a limited sphere. He has inherited from his parents or some other relative, often, in the case of a woman, from her husband, one or more medicines or type of medical treatment such as the cutting of veins for blood-letting and a cure for epilepsy, and this he dispenses to all who come.

The doctor, *par excellence*, is the bone-thrower who combines with 791 his divining an extensive knowledge of medicine. There is nothing spectacular about the Sotho doctor; he wears no special or distinguishing dress; his methods are not directed to securing any dramatic effects. Unlike the doctor in Zulu-Xhosa society who is called to his profession by the spirits, undergoes a long period of *ukutwasa* during

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754 There are many other specialized techniques, but for our purposes it
832 will suffice to refer briefly to love-magic. Love-medicine was not known
789 to the Lovedu, and its use is generally said by the older people to be witchcraft. Nevertheless, this magic, introduced from the towns, where, especially among Zulu and Xhosa, it is common, is used by many young men in Ɓulovedu to-day. One method, scarification of the forehead or use of medicine in your snuff, makes all the girls love you; blowing a medicated pipe of the *mukhure* shrub (*Ricinus sp.*) morning and evening, while calling the name of a certain girl, will make her come to you soon; and there are various other medicines. Love-magic to cause hysteria in girls is known as a Zulu practice, but is not used in Ɓulovedu. It would be looked upon as witchcraft.

754 These borderline methods, sometimes called witchcraft, sometimes
761 not, and often referred to as 'good' *vulɔi*, bring us to a consideration of what constitutes *vulɔi*. All witchcraft is socially disapproved, anti-social, but this criterion is not always sufficient to distinguish between witchcraft proper and practices bordering on witchcraft. Swearing at people, or scolding them violently, when the cause hardly justifies it, is liable to call down upon them forces which lead to death or misfortune to them or their family. It is called *lesola* and is reprehensible; but it is not *vulɔi*; nor is *mahava*, illness caused by the ill-feeling of a father's sister or other relative. The conduct of a woman who, having had an abortion, causes her husband's death through neglecting to give him the medicine necessary to ward off such disaster is strongly disapproved of, but it is not witchcraft, even though it causes death.

Since many borderline practices are judged by their result and become witchcraft when they cause death, it might be argued that this criterion must be distinctive. It is, however, not enough; causing death to a husband by abortion is, as we have seen, not considered to be witchcraft, nor is the murderous *khigevɛgwa* a witch, even though he secretly kills people at night and sells parts of their body to doctors. Furthermore, many accusations of witchcraft have arisen where there has been no death, but only sickness or loss by lightning. The only difference between the killing by a *khigevɛgwa* and that by a witch lies in the method employed. The killer uses ordinary weapons; the witch kills by means of medicine or some peculiar powers not known to ordinary people. The distinguishing feature of all cases of witchcraft is the use or supposed use of medicine or witch-power. Intent is another feature by which one judges an action. Where a woman causes the death of a husband through abortion, her conduct is anti-social and the act is done in secret, but it differs from witchcraft proper in the absence of intent to kill. Fear of the consequences of adultery is the main force deterring her from correct behaviour; and it is argued that if she really wishes to kill she need not employ so round-about a method.

754 The conclusion we may draw is that, for an action to be witchcraft, it must satisfy, not one, but all the following three requirements: it must be disapproved of, anti-social; there must be an intent to kill or to harm; and it must be thought that either medicine or the mysterious forces of night-witchcraft have been used. Secrecy is not peculiar to witchcraft; it is

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bones, her husband chased her away. A person with an unpleasant face very often earns the reputation of being a witch, even though nothing has been definitely attributed to him. A very old person, too, is apt to be thought a witch; his long life is attributed to his bartering the lives of younger relatives for his own. Just as people with grievances are suspected of witchcraft, so successful ones are thought to be specially liable to being bewitched—those who reap better crops than others, successful hunters, those favoured by their European masters. On the other hand, their success is also liable to be attributed to witchcraft on their part.

It has been said that witchcraft is a reflection of the intense hatreds of which the Bantu mind is capable. True, the European is appalled at the seriousness of the crimes attributed to witches for the most trivial reasons. The mother's brother's wife kills the child of her husband's sister who is living with them because he eats too much: 'he finishes our corn'; because a woman no longer loves him, a man not only causes intense suffering to her during a prolonged birth, but also kills the child; jealous of the large crop reaped by his neighbour, a man sends lightning to destroy his whole harvest. These things do not, however, present themselves in this way to the mind of the Lovedu. A Lovedu argues, not from real cause to effect in such matters, but from effect to cause, which makes it all appear in a somewhat different light. A child dies and he looks around him for a possible cause. He thinks of possible motives and enemies, but can find none. He consults the dice, which point to a woman of such-and-such a totem. The only one to answer this description is the mother's brother's wife. She happens to be known as ungenerous, perhaps she was one day heard to comment on having an extra mouth to feed. The misfortune is thus projected upon her: but it is not a psychopathic, it is an approved cultural escape technique or compensation. In cases of illness or death, people tend to seek the cause in the direction of traditional jealousies. A wife of the queen dies in childbirth. The cause cannot be a jilted lover, because she and the father of the child were on the best of terms. But he is a married man, and women are known through jealousy to cause difficult childbirth to the lovers of husbands. The death must have been caused by his wife (even though she lives miles away). Nothing is done in the matter; moreover, there is no general agreement in the verdicts of different doctors. Six months later a young girl in the village dies suddenly of blood poisoning; her mother is known to have had quarrels with the deceased wife of the queen. It is therefore generally rumoured that the grave must have been treated to 'send back' death and the death of the child indicates that her mother was the witch responsible. Nothing more is said of the lover's wife.

Witchcraft provides an explanation of the worst evils, such as sickness and death, that befall man; it is the principle of evil, the Bantu Satan. Illness caused naturally or by ancestors is generally curable; it is only witchcraft that really kills. It was at first a source of great amazement to us that a man could find it possible to live on socially good terms with some one who had killed his father, attending the same beer-parties and able to converse in friendly fashion. But unless the case has been publicly dealt with and the witch smelt out, the evidence is considered incomplete,

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754 in spite of one's own convictions. Moreover, it does not follow that
761 the witch has any evil designs upon one, though he has killed some
777 one else. Personal adjustments with the witch are more easily achieved than we might imagine; they are even imperative, partly because witchcraft is so universal a cause of death that in this respect the witch is almost part of the inevitable order of things, partly because, unless a confirmed witch, he is not regarded with horror by the whole society, and partly because he may be an influential and respected man.

Witchcraft serves also to explain the differential incidence of misfortune or death which we generally leave unexplained; but it is not often invoked in this respect. An old, dried-up tree stands in a field. People often rest beneath it at hoeing time. One day, while two children are sitting in its shade, it falls down and kills one of them. The Lovedu realize that dead trees are liable to fall down. But it has long been standing there. Why has it fallen just on that day and, moreover, at that particular time when the children were there? Further, what made it kill one, leaving the other unhurt? This combination of circumstances must, they feel, be due to some malignant controlling force directed against the child. Or, when people recover from a disease such as smallpox in one district, but succumb to it in another, the differential effect in the latter is ascribed to the work of a witch. The occasion for evoking witchcraft as an explanation in certain circumstances is an aspect of witchcraft, but it is not an explanation of its nature and psychological basis and only part of the explanation of its function.

754 Witchcraft is employed to account for unusual or anti-social behaviour.
828 Hysteria might be attributed either to witchcraft or possession. A girl ran away from her own puberty ceremony, an unheard-of and reprehensible action. Her relatives said she must have been bewitched into doing it, so, instead of being punished, she was given treatment to remove the baleful influence. Attributing certain types of anti-social action or the breaking of some customs to witchcraft makes it possible for the society to withstand successfully many blows; an issue is avoided and the transgressor made to feel himself incapable of such actions but for the witchcraft. We must also remember that abnormalities need not necessarily evoke comment. A person may be born an imbecile, but it may be considered quite normal. This is so because there is a place in the society for the weak-minded, sometimes even as jesters of the court. Personal defects or limitations do not, to the same extent as among us, disable a man from performance markedly below the standards required in spheres in which he can be useful; and thus there need not arise an intolerable situation from which escape is sought by psycho-pathological devices or the projection of one's misfortune as witchcraft upon others. Finally, to attribute death to witchcraft, and to set about taking steps to send it back to its owner, probably provides greater emotional satisfaction to the bereaved than the feeling of impotence in the face of an uncontrollable, natural force. The same kind of emotional need is answered when a man with a grievance feels that he can, in the last resort, employ medicine to gain his ends, and people not infrequently indirectly hint to their enemies the possibility of their doing so.

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171 The *gomana* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the
778 ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend
881 *gomana* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an outsider. The *gomana* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *zwidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as
772 something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and
821 magic (*vuŋaga*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digoma*. The seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digoma*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal
811 evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a
821 much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu. To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: man and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may
772 sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of
811 the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from conditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desic-
821 cation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

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[81] attached to possession and no socio-economic stratification of classes; for a great man, whether he be poor or rich, is first and foremost a royal relative, and the purpose of economic activities is self-sufficiency and independence. Trade is disliked and competition is absent even in craftsmanship. So marked is the disinclination to make comparisons that it is difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things that Europeans quite naturally compare, such as the achievements of individuals or objects of craftsmanship.

Children are taught 'to be like others', not to strive to outdo them and precociousness is disliked. A child asking for sweets often says 'Give me also', even if no one else has been given any on that occasion. He begs for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors the prayer is quite often phrased, 'Give us also', or 'Let him have health like others'. To stress, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with or greater than that of others would be improper. Contrast with this the opportunities for and love of competition in Zulu society where every boy is constantly measuring himself against others, vieing with them in fights, in dress, in love-making, in dancing, for leadership and praise.

The give and take, absence of competitiveness, and lack of force in the social and political structure, make moderation the keynote of Lovedu social life. Outstanding individuals are not tolerated: a show of forcefulness on the part of a councillor one day, which appealed to us as an indication of efficiency unusual in the society, was apologized for with the excuse that he must have been drunk. Display of all kinds is disliked. The elaborate beadwork and interest in dress, so characteristic of the Zulu, are absent, and there is nothing to correspond to the institutionalized public boasting (*ukugiya*) —jumping and stabbing at an imaginary foe to the accompaniment of a string of praises—that plays so important a role in Zulu life.

Excess of every kind is deprecated. Speed is undignified. Things must be done *ga usya*, slowly, at a regular pace, in a moderate and dignified manner. Excess in human relations, like heat in the cosmic order, is liable to bring disaster. The reaction to death is calm, quiet grief, not the funeral wail of [76] the Nguni or the terror reaction of the Tsonga. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to call down evil upon the next child born to her. Mputa was born a cripple, because, so we were told, his mother, Makwadu, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. Even in scolding moderation has to be observed, for scolding out of proportion to the offence, can, as we have shown, bring evil, even death.

Quarrelsomeness is one of the worst offences. Congruent with this out- [78] look, the murderer or the warrior who has killed an enemy must purify [81] himself to avoid becoming quarrelsome, the threat of which is so unpalat- [67] able as to be a powerful sanction. But quarrels and conflicts do occur on account of temperamental qualities, conflicting interests, and other causes; they are also precipitated sometimes through imperfections in the social

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The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly, 643
ritual suicide is not conceived to have any relation to the welfare of the 762
country. People do not say that the country will suffer if the physical 731
powers of the queen fail. But ritual suicide does elevate the queen to a divinity; only by her act, not because of susceptibility to the weaknesses of man, can she die. Age neither increases nor decreases her powers. She is the 'soil'; her death 'heals' or 'dries up' the soil in the double sense of defiling it (as twins do) and scorching it (as the sun does); and as they phrase it, the 'country dies with its owner'. Consequently, after the queen's death, famines come, cattle and people succumb, and many flee the country. When Mujaji II committed suicide in 1894, there followed the *matshona*, the three years of unprecedented drought and pests, during which, according to contemporary European observers, practically all the cattle and a third of the population died. After the death of Mugɔdɔ, likewise, there was a great famine. The only other famine vividly recorded by tradition was during the reign of a chief who, being a usurper, was unable to make rain. Though the death of a chief presages death of the country, there is no great hurry to appoint a new queen. To the unfolding of a plan that guarantees abundance, immediate needs, even the need for the life-giving rain, must be subordinated.

For an account of succession to the throne we have to rely upon the 643
memories of men who were adults forty-five years ago. The practical 762
and the ideal are confused in their minds. The generalized account we give is thus not specifically related to the death of Mujaji II unless otherwise indicated. Shortly before her death, the queen calls together her great men, sits silently looking at them for a while, and then retires to her hut. She will not see again the young boys who have gone to the *vudiga*. Long before this, Mujaji II and her inner 'council' had named the daughter of Leakhali, who was her 'sister' and great wife, as successor; she had driven both mother and daughter with their brothers from the country, but was secretly receiving and instructing the daughter. None but a small circle of close relatives knew of these arrangements; and a little later she took poison (*khitaba*) [278] in which the fatal ingredients are said to be the brain and spinal cord of the crocodile. There is a rule that the killer of a crocodile is for ever debarred from entering the capital, a prohibition patterned [784] upon the taboos against bringing into a village the wood of trees with which shrines and protective charms (*dithugula*) are made, for these trees 'reveal', and so render useless, what they create. The poison is not conceived to kill instantaneously; the queen dies in the presence of those who know the secrets, but the death is not made public. Those who pass the royal hut still greet her; even cases are still submitted as if for her final decision. Deception of the people is the aim emphasized in descriptions and in phraseology. In the old days many cattle were killed 'to deceive the people', but neither this killing, which provided at least for the funeral feast and the skin for the dead body, nor the other arrangements, had this function only. The spirit of the deceased continues, as it were, to preside over the country and no one could take over the reins 643
of government. 766

The body decomposes, it is ritually rubbed (*ku fɔrɔla*) to remove skin 789

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643 physical imperfections, not susceptible to the ills that befall ordinary men; that she cannot die a natural death but departs only by her own volition; that succession to the throne is uncertain since the choice of a ruler must in the last resort be made by the spirits of the tribe; that though she may not have a husband, lest political control become concentrated in him, yet she must bear the heir by a secret consort (a royal classificatory brother) specially chosen to maintain untarnished the purity of the royal blood; that she ensures the regularity of nature and the changing of the seasons; and, more
643 particularly, that her death dislocates the rhythm of nature, bringing
731 drought and famine, the abrogation of law and order. People today still speak with horror and fear of the years (1894–6) following the death of the previous queen, Majuji II. They were years, as we know from documentary sources, when drought, locusts, rinderpest and, in their wake, unprecedented famine and desolation, wiped out practically all the cattle and perhaps a third of the human population.

643 The preservation of the queen's sanctity requires that her life be subject to observances which shield her from the public eye and restrain her movements. She is 'the huckster in the hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) who sells her rain-medicines from the seclusion of her abode, and may not move about freely or leave the district of the capital. She was the only chief in the Union who, a few years ago, could not go to the Native Commissioners' Office to exercise the vote of her people in the election of a representative to the Native Representative Council. She cannot attend large assemblies of men, and is generally inaccessible except to her close relatives and great councillors. But otherwise her activities are not restricted, nor is her life a continuous ritual and, unlike other Divine Kings, there are no elaborate safeguards surrounding her every movement.

Tradition decrees that chiefs may have no physical defect, but not that
• [762] they must die while still young and strong. Ritual suicide of the queen is by Lovedu conceptions not a means of guaranteeing a timely death lest failure of physical powers should upset the regularity of nature, but rather a symbol of her divinity, for it proves that she is not heir to the weaknesses of ordinary man. It is mystically connected with the fourth circumcision school in her reign: she must see the boys going in but not coming back. The Lovedu queen is believed to be immune from disease, but age does not diminish—it even increases—her mystical powers over nature. The only disqualification to rule is inability to make rain in the early period of her reign. Once she
[789 has demonstrated, by her ability to make rain, that the rain-charms have
82] been entrusted to her and that she has been divinely chosen, irregularities in the seasons are attributed not to weakness of her powers but to some extraneous factor, such as contraventions of rules associated with keeping the country cool, disobedience to the chief, and the anger of the ancestor spirits.

643 Arrangements connected with succession of a new queen also emphasize
762 her mystical relations with the cosmic order. The death of her predecessor
789

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institutions or their inadequacy for meeting all situations. In the resolution of difficulties of this nature arbitration and compromise play an important role, both judicially and extra-judicially. The genius of the legal system even in its most formal aspects is the skilful use of the restitutive sanction, in its spiritual rather than its material sense. The fundamental objective is the re-establishment of relations that have become broken or strained, and that objective is achieved, not so much by vindicating rules as by reconciling the parties. There is indeed a tacit assumption that the social equilibrium will be maintained if personal relations are suitably adjusted. The primary task of the courts is therefore to smooth out personal difficulties rather than to settle legal issues. For in law as in life it is not the rule that is important but the personal and social relations. The cattle-linking of brother and sister from different 'houses', ordinarily disapproved, is an arrangement that agreement between the 'houses' makes possible, and if the parties agree, even murder can be compounded. Even when a diviner has found a man guilty of witchcraft, it is felt to be necessary that the culprit should 'agree' with the findings, i.e. accept the verdict of the bones. In judicial proceedings a defendant will be asked if he agrees to pay the award; if he disagrees, full latitude is allowed him to expostulate. Should the court sense a genuine grievance it will reopen the case and bring its decision more into line with an amicable adjustment. As laws and institutions exist for human beings, they are not ends in themselves, and even the most fundamental duties and obligations between individuals and groups are conditional upon the ever-invoked 'if they agree'. If people do not agree there can be no relationship. If they have to be coerced there cannot be genuine agreement. This is why the execution of a judgement is left to the parties. The whole social and political structure relies upon the maintenance of good relations without resort to compulsion. Hence the use of the mechanisms of marriage and bride-price to hold in willing allegiance a great diversity of alien groups, who outnumber the Lovedu proper by nine to one; hence also the aversion from regimentation and military discipline.

Great importance is attached to the dignity of the individual. Every person has rights and obligations; even a child's rights to property are respected. If a man feels that he is not being given his due, it is right to complain (*velacla*) just as the ancestors do when they have not received proper attention. Any indignity to the personality, such as corporal punishment, is socially disapproved. Perhaps it is for this reason that a Lovedu soon becomes tractable if ordered by the court to carry stones or perform some other useless task when he has been guilty of 'despising' the court.

Suicide is not common, but when it is resorted to it is as a protest against wrongful accusations or as a result of the complete frustration of an individual forced against his will into an impossible situation, e.g. a girl forced to marry someone she dislikes.

A high value is placed on human life. An aspect of Western civilization that puzzles the Lovedu is that we tolerate the loss of human life involved

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769 which royal ancestors only can withhold; differences in the harvest
241 between one area and another are often attributed to fights between the
782 witches of the two areas, and even variations in yield between one man's field and his neighbour's may be due to witchcraft. Yet one finds in prayers many a request for a good harvest, even though there are no special ceremonies devoted to this end. A man pouring a libation for a sick child said among other things, 'Give us corn; when we plough let us also reap. Why are you stinting us?' And it is significant that the only regular religious observance is the harvest offering of beer made of each year's new corn in villages where there are shrines or dedicated animals. When any one dies, there is thought to be danger that the fertility of the [764] crops will depart with him or her. Hence, when a gourd of seeds of every kind is placed in the grave together with a firebrand and calabash of water for the journey, some of the seeds are scattered over the body with the words, 'Do not depart with all the corn and seeds,' and very often the grain belonging to the deceased is treated with medicine in order that it may remain fertile.

769 Above all, the ancestors complain, a fact which lies at the basis of
782 Lovedu religion, for by far the greater proportion of religious rites are those performed in response to ancestral complaints. One might at first think it strange that the gods, in life just ordinary, well-disposed people, should in death be so liable to bring trouble upon their kin. Sometimes it is thought to be a sign of love: when Masilu's grandmother had made him ill because she wanted a goat dedicated to her, his mother said, 'No wonder his *gogo* seized him. She was always so fond of him.' But chiefly it is the nature of ancestors to complain; as the Lovedu phrase it, 'When people sleep (i.e. are dead), they ought to complain' (*Hɛ vathu va khi lala fase va swanɔdɛ hu velɛala*). When there is illness, they are, as it is phrased, 'seen in the divining bones'; it is they who sometimes 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult childbirth, and sometimes, but far less than among the Nguni, their complaints cause dreams. Our close friend [787] Walter, coming to seek work in Johannesburg, dreamt disturbing dreams of his dead father, who appeared to say that he was needed at home. He thereupon returned home and, when he arrived, his mother took him to a doctor, whose bones declared that the dead father was annoyed at not having been told of the journey to town and had to be appeased (*hu phasa*). Walter was well educated, but he had failed in his last examination and felt doubly frustrated. He had great ambitions of reforming the political system of the tribe, from which his education had divorced him, and in town he was dissatisfied that nothing was open to him but the unskilled work of his uneducated compatriots.

769 An ancestor may complain about the way he has been buried, and if he
782 has died far from home, may demand to be 'brought back home' in a
778 ceremony in which, besides the dedication of a beast or goat, a goat is killed and eaten, its bones being buried as though it were a person. But this 'bringing home', involving the making of a shrine, applies only to those dying at a distance and does not resemble the 'bringing home' of the Zulu, among whom it is part of death ceremonial. At times the gods complain of neglect. But in the majority of cases no definite reason for

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In the actual working religion of the Lovedu the commonest and most 788
conspicuous rite is *hu phasa*, consisting of a prayer and the pouring on to earth or *thugula* of a mixture of ground, sprouted grain and water, a mixture colloquially referred to as *muṭaziwa lesclo* (the rinser of the winnowing basket). More rarely *hu phasa* is merely spitting out water in the courtyard to the accompaniment of such prayer. There is no formulated distinction in principle between the two forms; the Lovedu say that the dice decide which is to be used. We found water squirted in illness caused by complaints of the living; in some cases of difficult birth; where in the initiation of a possessed woman the spirit was begged to manifest itself; and in one exceptional instance water was squirted on the face of a corpse addressed in prayer before it was buried (usually the [764] corpse is merely addressed when the grains are put into the grave). The efficacy of *hu phasa*, which is also used magically to render witchcraft ineffectual, appears to lie in its 'cooling' effect. *Hu phasa* is performed in connexion with a large number of cases of illness and bad luck and is the recognized approach in asking for blessings on a journey or an undertaking. Hardly a week passes without some one in the neighbourhood having to *phasa*, and generally the prayer in these cases takes the form of a 'scolding' (*hu rohana*), in which the spirits are asked why they are causing illness and told to be satisfied. One does not *phasa* without also using charms in the mixture to make the spirits forget, and the officiator may be male or female, whomsoever the dice have indicated. Rites of thanksgiving, except for the customary harvest beer, are almost unknown. We came upon such a rite only once when the bachelor brother of Madinji returned home after an absence in town of thirty years and she performed *hu phasa* in the presence of the family, saying, 'Spirits of Mambeuli, this is one of your fowls. We thought he was lost; now he is back. Keep him as you have kept the rest of us. If he goes away, let him soon remember and long for his home.'

The only regular offering is the annual harvest beer given to dedicated 782
animals and shrines, though even this may be neglected: the village may 778
be moved without the shrine, or the dedicated animal die without being replaced. We ourselves witnessed the setting up of a shrine and dedicated sheep after twenty years' neglect in the chief house of Sedena. Much 241
more formal than ordinary rites of *hu phasa* is the harvest offering, which 782
may take place any time between July and November, for there is here no rule that the queen should take precedence. The officiator is a woman where possible, the *khadi*, who is specially called to come, and real beer, called *muphaba* and made of eleusine, is prepared for the ceremony. If eleusine is not available, red kaffir corn (*makhaha*) may be used, but no other grain is acceptable to the spirits. In its preparation, which is in the hands of old women or girls below the age of puberty, care must be taken that the eleusine is stamped, not ground on the grindstone, and that none of it is tasted before the gods have been given some. Ordinary beer is tasted to see if it is ready, but *muphaba* is smelt or tested by stirring with a twirler. Though the married women of the village play no part in the religious rites on such occasions, it is the duty of the chief wife in whose courtyard the ceremony will take place to smear with dung the place

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village. It was the *zwiḍajani*, ancestral spirits come to join in the joy and revelry of the living. They opened the next song and joined in the singing of the women, all in the whistling language which people make out by its tone. Later more beer was brought out and when the *zwiḍajani* began a new song no one took any notice. 'If you are drinking beer, what are we to drink', came the wails of the *zwiḍajani* and a pot of beer was brought to the bush by councillors. Dancing and singing continued till the small hours of the morning, when the sounds of the *zwiḍajani* disappeared in the direction of Maulwi, the burial grove of the dead queens, and the revellers, happy and drunk from beer of the *thugula*, retired to bed. The spirits visit only important members of the royal group and a few other families, but beyond this there are no differences between the harvest giving of the queen and that of other people.

Ritual killings of all kinds are insignificant by contrast with the beer offering. There are, first, killings specially for the ancestors, but they are so rare that many people have never seen them. Secondly, there are occasions when the killings, clearly ritual, are not thought of as an offering or sacrifice, because nothing is given to the ancestors. And, thirdly, there are killings, not associated with ancestors or religion, in which small pieces of meat may nevertheless be set aside to 'tell' (*hu suma*) the gods of some event or to propitiate them. *Hu suma* is a conception somewhat different from our 'offer' or 'give'; it has two connotations as used in ordinary life: it is either merely to inform a superior or, by extension of this idea, to send him a share of something good one has, such as a leg of an animal slaughtered or a calabash of the beer one has brewed. In approaching the gods, sometimes one and sometimes the other conception is uppermost.

The killing which most clearly contains the conception of an offering and the primary purpose of which is propitiation of the gods is the slaughter of a black sheep for rain at the grave of a royal ancestor: the victim is immolated, small pieces of meat cut from all parts of it are set aside for the gods, and all the bones are collected and buried in the grave, together with the stomach contents. Equally stressed, however, is the eating of the meat without salt by the assembled crowd. At the installation of a district head, a beast, referred to as a *thugula*, is killed and, in so far as it is killed in a special manner and morsels of meat set aside for the gods to be cooked and later eaten without salt by children below the age of puberty, it is the vicarious submission of a gift to the ancestors. But the major portion of meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones collected, for a hind leg is sent to the queen. So little is the 'goat of killing' in marriage ceremonial regarded as an offering or sacrifice that we sought for it in vain in the context of a killing for the ancestors. Yet pieces of meat are laid on the shrine and a prayer offered, though the rest of the meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones kept. Still further removed from an offering is the goat killed on a death to provide a skin for covering the body: its meat is eaten without salt, and all who partake of it must sleep in the hut of the deceased, but nothing is given to the ancestors and no prayer is offered. On the other hand, though the *lelɔpɔ* doctor, when killing a goat to treat a patient, sets aside pieces of meat

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643 766 [787] and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mufugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

643 •765 372 651 789 A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mufugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khɔrɔ* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mufugo* (*hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

372 783 177 Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

428 given to the son of deceased's youngest wife who had deserted one goat was
[588] him; two goats were killed for the widow of the deceased's eldest son by his first wife when she came from Johannesburg to pay a visit of condolence. Deceased's field was a *leshupe*, a site of their previous village, and as is the custom with such a field, was divided between his wives. His mealies were equally divided between all his wives, his own daughters who were present at the ceremony also receiving some. In the case of Mathekha, all his cattle were given by the *khadi* (his sister) to his eldest son by his chief wife, a man who was a prominent councillor of the queen. It was understood they would be used for helping his brothers and half-brothers to marry. The old man's blankets and money were divided among all his children, the elder ones receiving £1 10s. 0d., the smaller ones only 10s.
[587] The wives of a deceased man if they are still of childbearing age are allocated to his brothers or, in the case of a very young wife, sometimes to the chief son and heir. It is his responsibility to hold the family together after the death of his father. The
[765] division of the property is made on the day of purification from mourning (*khitshila*) about a year after the death when all the
428 relatives have gathered together. The person responsible for
429 the division of the inheritance in property and wives is the eldest uterine sister of the deceased who acts in consultation with her sisters, especially the cattle-linked sister of the deceased. If there is no uterine sister the deceased's eldest daughter takes her place. She will act in consultation with her father's
[587] brother if one is still alive. In allocating wives some consideration is generally given to the wishes of the parties concerned.

429 When the heir is a minor, a brother of the deceased, usually the one who inherits the mother of the heir, may be chosen to act as regent. But he must be careful to act only in consultation
634 with the *khadi*. In many instances in the case of the death of a
429 district head when the *khadi* (sister of deceased) is old or a
562 widow and free to leave her husband's homestead she may
[593] herself come to rule in her brother's village. When M. died,
[692] the son of his chief wife was still a child so his uterine sister, a widow, came to rule, while the younger half-brother of the deceased returned from another area where he had been living to set up his village near by in order to raise seed to his half-brother by the chief wife and help his half-sister by conducting the court cases.

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The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly, 643
ritual suicide is not conceived to have any relation to the welfare of the 762
country. People do not say that the country will suffer if the physical 731
powers of the queen fail. But ritual suicide does elevate the queen to a divinity; only by her act, not because of susceptibility to the weaknesses of man, can she die. Age neither increases nor decreases her powers. She is the 'soil'; her death 'heals' or 'dries up' the soil in the double sense of defiling it (as twins do) and scorching it (as the sun does); and as they phrase it, the 'country dies with its owner'. Consequently, after the queen's death, famines come, cattle and people succumb, and many flee the country. When Mujaji II committed suicide in 1894, there followed the *matshɔna*, the three years of unprecedented drought and pests, during which, according to contemporary European observers, practically all the cattle and a third of the population died. After the death of Mugɔdɔ, likewise, there was a great famine. The only other famine vividly recorded by tradition was during the reign of a chief who, being a usurper, was unable to make rain. Though the death of a chief presages death of the country, there is no great hurry to appoint a new queen. To the unfolding of a plan that guarantees abundance, immediate needs, even the need for the life-giving rain, must be subordinated.

For an account of succession to the throne we have to rely upon the 643
memories of men who were adults forty-five years ago. The practical 762
and the ideal are confused in their minds. The generalized account we give is thus not specifically related to the death of Mujaji II unless otherwise indicated. Shortly before her death, the queen calls together her great men, sits silently looking at them for a while, and then retires to her hut. She will not see again the young boys who have gone to the *vudiga*. Long before this, Mujaji II and her inner 'council' had named the daughter of Leakhali, who was her 'sister' and great wife, as successor; she had driven both mother and daughter with their brothers from the country, but was secretly receiving and instructing the daughter. None but a small circle of close relatives knew of these arrangements; and a little later she took poison (*khitaba*) [378] in which the fatal ingredients are said to be the brain and spinal cord of the crocodile. There is a rule that the killer of a crocodile is for ever debarred from entering the capital, a prohibition patterned [784] upon the taboos against bringing into a village the wood of trees with which shrines and protective charms (*dithugula*) are made, for these trees 'reveal', and so render useless, what they create. The poison is not conceived to kill instantaneously; the queen dies in the presence of those who know the secrets, but the death is not made public. Those who pass the royal hut still greet her; even cases are still submitted as if for her final decision. Deception of the people is the aim emphasized in descriptions and in phraseology. In the old days many cattle were killed 'to deceive the people', but neither this killing, which provided at least for the funeral feast and the skin for the dead body, nor the other arrangements, had this function only. The spirit of the deceased continues, as it were, to preside over the country and no one could take over the reins 643
of government. 766

The body decomposes, it is ritually rubbed (*hu fɔrɔla*) to remove skin 789

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643 766 [789] and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mufugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

643 765 372 651 789 A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mufugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khɔrɔ* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mufugo* (*hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

372 783 177 Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining [787] bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figthtla*) [789] unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than 826 *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ɖɛre* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to • 766 rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ɖɛre*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are 754 sometimes called *mashəthəjə*, because they *rəthəja* (cause to be cool,

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others. 789 261

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figchela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place. 643 789 766

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering (*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *ɖere* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *hu pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain. 821 754 766 [824]

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khumela*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal 821 527

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821 has been reached), and we were told that in the old days men of import-
527 ance used to come and condole with (*hu emela*) the chief on such a day, as though to sympathize with her in the frustration of her efforts. There are other holidays associated with rain. On the day after the first rain of the season has fallen no hoeing or fieldwork is to be done. Such a holiday is called *le-nkhi-nteme* (do not cut me), as if the earth, believed still to be hot, dislikes being broken up by the hoeing. Such a holiday is also observed after the rain charms have 'bitten' the new termites and first-fruits of the year and when, any time during the summer, rain falls after two of three weeks drought, it is called *muene* (guest or stranger) and the next day observed as a holiday, for one honours a guest.

766 Wrong burials which stop the rain are righted by the use of *mufugo*
821 medicine and the water obtained by squeezing the undigested stomach
789 contents (*muswane*) of a sheep down a hole made in the grave with a stick
842 and reaching the body. This is thought to disperse the 'wind' and cool the grave. The flesh of the sheep is eaten without salt. The conception is thus of a grave agitated by ghostly heat and wind, which may be 'laid' by 'cooling', or, as we might say, calming, in the treble sense often of pacifying [the ghost], modifying [the heat], and causing [the wind] to subside. *Mufugo*, the medicine so important in the removal of impediments to rain, has to be obtained from the queen and a specially appointed person is responsible for doling it out in bottles when needed. The office is not conceived to be hereditary, but it has been held by a Mudiga family for some time, being handed down by father to son. When the last official in charge of *mufugo* died, his son was an unmarried man too young for the responsibility of office. Some five years later (1938), when the queen decided that he should assume charge, he protested his youth, though he then had two children, fearing that after contact with the medicine he might forget to wash his hands before eating and thus be rendered impotent. In this he had the full support of his mother, who prevailed upon the queen to allow an older relative to undertake the work provisionally; but the present position is that, should this old man be away, the heir to the office will have to act. Whether *mufugo* is identical with the rain medicine of the rain-pots is not quite clear; but, whatever its ingredients may be, it is considered extremely dangerous, liable to rob men and women of their fertility, and great care is thus necessary when working with it.

789 Sometimes it is said that 'the country is not right' (*naha a e loge*) and
372 then there is a special ceremony in which all the fires in the country are put out with *mufugo*. No generally recognized set of circumstances lead up to such a line of action, nor is there any idea that the fires are defiled in any way. It is simply looked upon as a method of getting rain when there is drought, resorted to when the divining bones of the doctor declare it to be necessary. People sometimes say, 'Fires are put out to usher in a new year,' but this does not mean that putting out the fires is an annual ceremony, as it is, for instance, among the Pedi. The word 'year' must not be taken literally, just as it does not refer to an abstract period of time in the phrase, 'The year has been infected by *hu khuma*', when what is meant is that the rain charms have 'weakened' (*hu khoma*). In this ceremony

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and the regularity of the seasons are bound up with the life of the chief, but the identification of the earth with the chief in the phrase 642 643 'mabu a fesa' (the earth is hot, burning) which is used by all Lowveld tribes as a euphemism to denote the illness or death of the chief, seems to imply some connexion between the life of the chief and the fertility of the earth. Some such association seems implicit also in the feeling among the Lobedu that the chief should have no physical defect (it is thought to be impossible for the queen to be ill, and the present queen has never had a day's illness) and should lead a secluded life, being seen by and giving audience to royal relatives and the nobility only. So close is the association between the ruler and the land he rules among the Lobedu that the chief may not leave the country or cross its boundaries, a taboo which made it impossible for Modjadji to register her vote at the nearest Native Commissioner's office in the recent elections for the Native Council.

The great power of the chief in the three most important tribes of 643 the Lowveld lies in rain-making. Here we find as in so many other 789 aspects of their culture an intensification of a feature present in modified form in many other tribes, leading to a difference as great or greater than the complete absence of the trait. Many chiefs in South Africa are great rain-makers, and tribes of the Highveld and Sekukuniland share with those of the Lowveld the custom in time of drought of sending young men to 'beat mofoko' pegs around the country or to put out all the fires in the country and rekindle new ones in each village. But the Lowveld chiefs, especially Modjadji, are the greatest rain-makers of all, recognized in the old days as such by tribes as far south as the Swazi and Zulu, and rain ritual here has characteristic features not found elsewhere. Important among these is the custom of dancing for rain. When the rains do not come at the right time, it is usual for each headman in turn to come to the royal kraal with his followers to *loba* rain by dancing for the chief, and when this does not help the women come as a last resort to do a special dance which is so exacting and causes so much crying on the part of small babies, who have to go hungry while their mothers dance, that it is believed the chief must be moved by it. This custom, still practised by the 643 Lobedu, has died out elsewhere in the Lowveld, having been last 789 performed among the Khaha in 1911. The belief that twins, mis- 766

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643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men,
588 and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
644 or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[557] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[557] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth
[565] ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in rain transactions.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's
[171] mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage,

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643 physical imperfections, not susceptible to the ills that befall ordinary men; that she cannot die a natural death but departs only by her own volition; that succession to the throne is uncertain since the choice of a ruler must in the last resort be made by the spirits of the tribe; that though she may not have a husband, lest political control become concentrated in him, yet she must bear the heir by a secret consort (a royal classificatory brother) specially chosen to maintain untarnished the purity of the royal blood; that she ensures the regularity of nature and the changing of the seasons; and, more 643 particularly, that her death dislocates the rhythm of nature, bringing 731 drought and famine, the abrogation of law and order. People today still speak with horror and fear of the years (1894–6) following the death of the previous queen, Majuji II. They were years, as we know from documentary sources, when drought, locusts, rinderpest and, in their wake, unprecedented famine and desolation, wiped out practically all the cattle and perhaps a third of the human population.

643 The preservation of the queen's sanctity requires that her life be subject to observances which shield her from the public eye and restrain her movements. She is 'the huckster in the hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) who sells her rain-medicines from the seclusion of her abode, and may not move about freely or leave the district of the capital. She was the only chief in the Union who, a few years ago, could not go to the Native Commissioners' Office to exercise the vote of her people in the election of a representative to the Native Representative Council. She cannot attend large assemblies of men, and is generally inaccessible except to her close relatives and great councillors. But otherwise her activities are not restricted, nor is her life a continuous ritual and, unlike other Divine Kings, there are no elaborate safeguards surrounding her every movement.

Tradition decrees that chiefs may have no physical defect, but not that [762] they must die while still young and strong. Ritual suicide of the queen is by Lovedu conceptions not a means of guaranteeing a timely death lest failure of physical powers should upset the regularity of nature, but rather a symbol of her divinity, for it proves that she is not heir to the weaknesses of ordinary man. It is mystically connected with the fourth circumcision school in her reign: she must see the boys going in but not coming back. The Lovedu queen is believed to be immune from disease, but age does not diminish—it even increases—her mystical powers over nature. The only disqualification to rule is inability to make rain in the early period of her reign. Once she [789 has demonstrated, by her ability to make rain, that the rain-charms have 821] been entrusted to her and that she has been divinely chosen, irregularities in the seasons are attributed not to weakness of her powers but to some extraneous factor, such as contraventions of rules associated with keeping the country cool, disobedience to the chief, and the anger of the ancestor spirits.

643 Arrangements connected with succession of a new queen also emphasize • 766 her mystical relations with the cosmic order. The death of her predecessor 789

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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugɔ*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 572 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*figchela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *dere*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Lesoa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *dere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches.

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'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mashɔthɔjɔ* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death.

772 789 811 821 [766] [757] [831]

Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is

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home a second wife until his first has had a child or, more usually to-day, until she is pregnant; and he has to avoid his wife to some extent until the baby is weaned, a period of three years or even more. 897

If a wife is barren, a substitute may, as we have seen, be sent. The whole subject of substitution is too large for adequate treatment here, but some aspects of it may be mentioned. Among the Lovedu a man may marry two sisters in the ordinary course of events, quite irrespective of whether the first married has prematurely died or is barren, but the wife's sister is not specially reserved for the husband as if he had a prior right to her. The marriage is desirable, not enjoined by the society, when it is known that the sisters will co-operate and care for each other's children. In the case of barrenness, there is substitution, but the substitute wife is not a subservient wife. It is not a case of true substitution, but a strengthening of a weak link in the chain of bride and cattle exchanges. A barren wife cannot be discarded; on the contrary, the insistence upon treating her well, though it recognizes, also represses the tendency to regard her position with misgivings. Men make a great effort, by treating a barren wife well, to elicit the praise of others, especially the queen, whose continuous interest is a guarantee that the virtue will be idealized. There are other considerations that reinforce the great concern of a female ruler for peacefulness and good relations. A man who ill-treats his barren wife need expect no reciprocity from her parents, and he has no weapons against them. He cannot demand back his cattle, for failure to have children does not vitiate the cattle exchanges. He cannot even initiate the procedure whereby his parents-in-law will send him a substitute. On the contrary, he must await their pleasure and if they do decide to send a substitute, he must *nywala* (give cattle), and he may be asked more *munywalo* than for her sister. But if he has been a good husband and is poor, less may be asked. A man realizes that the virtue of treating a barren wife well is richly rewarded. 842 595

Similarly, a husband whose wife has died prematurely without issue is in the same position: he has no right to demand a substitute or, in default, the return of the *munywalo*. When he is offered his wife's sister or other suitable substitute, he must hand over cattle for her. It is true that the substitute sets up the house that 'has fallen', but the really important point is that the relationship created by the cattle exchanges should be maintained. A husband must report the death of his wife with an ox; he must call her people to the ceremony ending the mourning period; he must continue his visits as son-in-law; he must always be prepared to help his parents-in-law. All this will not necessarily induce them to give him a substitute; and if he neglects these things, the potential right to such substitute is not effaced. On the other hand, his parents-in-law must continue to honour him when he visits, they must still send him beer, they must acknowledge relationship with him. If they do not do these things, if they spread tales that he has been the cause of the death of their daughter, the relationship may be broken; and consequently the claim to a substitute, non-existent before, now is given recognition. If they value the link broken by their conduct they must reforge it by sending a substitute; if they do not, their action has already caused it to snap 587 768

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587 and the *munywalo* must be returned. But it is only at the stage where
•768 interrelations have become intolerably strained that the widower can demand back his cattle. The law thus is that a man who has lost his wife has no right to demand a substitute; but if it appears that his parents-in-law maliciously refuse to give him one. in circumstances that break the bonds established by the *munywalo*, he may do so.

Substitutions have to be distinguished from inheritances of spouses, for the latter is not spoken of as marriage at all; it is '*hu khova*', to hand over or allocate, and implies looking after. Among some of the neighbouring tribes, a man may, on the death of the brother, inherit the wife of his brother, both of his elder or his younger brother. Among the Lovedu the theoretical rule is that only a younger brother may inherit an elder brother's wife; but sometimes, if the parties agree, it is the elder brother who inherits. Among some tribes a man cannot inherit his father's wives, unless they are wives that have not yet actually been married. Among them the supreme vice, the sin that disqualifies even the heir to the throne, is to 'spoil' the wives of their father. Among the Lovedu the two things are not interconnected, and a man may inherit any of his deceased father's wives, if he calls them *mmani* (little mother), which
[588] inplies that they are wives junior to his mother. A woman may inherit wives just as she may marry them, especially the widow of her cattle-linked brother, but also the widow of her elder or of her younger brother. There are no rigid rules as regards inheritance of wives; if a man's younger brothers are preferred to his sons and the latter are preferred to the sons of the younger brothers, the actual arrangements are in essence determined by the deceased's cattle-linked sister, who officiates but acts upon the advice of her father's brother or her own brothers and sisters. It is all a matter of agreement. There is no institutionalized method whereby the inherited wives may signify their approval or disapproval, but in practice they are exceedingly independent, almost invariably remain in their own village wherever the man who inherits them may be, and not infrequently become everybody's prey. They sometimes marry wives of their own, which releases them from undue dependence upon their inheritors, who are, however, obliged to assist them in the things that men do. Sometimes their gardens and houses, just as their beer drinks and entertainments, are markedly superior to those of married women; for they are able to accept favours from numerous admirers. And on the whole the lot of a widow is not an unenviable one.

A man cannot inherit his mother's sister, nor can he inherit the wife of a son of his mother's sister. Such arrangements would be incongruous with the *munywalo* complex, for 'two sisters cannot eat one another's property'. Nor may a father inherit his son's wife; it would upset the hierarchical arrangement of the society. Again, a man cannot inherit his mother's brother's wife, even if she is not the mother of his own wife. It is also curious that the Lovedu do not attach great importance to seed-raising. They speak of 'raising seed to the family' (*hu dzosa mulɔgo*) when a girl marries at her cattle-linked aunt's, and that is the primary meaning of the phrase. A younger brother who takes his elder brother's widow

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is not primarily conceived of as raising seed; his main duty is to care for her and to maintain intact the *munywalo* scheme.

The economic aspect of marriage is more important than the sexual. The duty of a niece to marry at her cattle-linked aunt's is phrased as an economic obligation. A wife has power because she is the provider of food. There are many other sources of the influence of an old woman, both over her son and her son's wife, and they have economic implications. Nagambi, a man of thirty-five, scorned to bow to his wife's wishes except when she was possessed; yet the wishes of his mother dictated when he should go to town or return home, what land he should plough and when, what medicines or doctors he should get for his baby. The apparent helplessness of women when a stranger calls and asks for information or wishes to do business is not wholly assumed, for theoretically business and politics are the affairs of the men; but often enough it is convenient to defer to the men and to exercise a woman's influence behind the scenes. Thrift and industry are the virtues valued in a wife; it is the hard-working girl who is coveted as a bride. For that reason also, a faithful concubine (*mugaula*) has in practice a high status.

Madume's brother had both a wife and a *mugaula*, and when he died the *mugaula* took all his property for her son. Madume, who denied her right to do this, brought an action and the case eventually came to the capital. The court wholly ignored the issue as to whether a *mugaula* had legal rights. It contented itself with urging the *mugaula* to give Madume control of the assets which had accrued from the work of his brother's son, warning Madume not to press his case. 'Did not the *mugaula* cook and work long for your brother?' it asked. 'And was it not due to her thrift that there are goods? You are wrong to worry her.' Unions with concubines are often stable and economically satisfactory. Quarrels, even jealousies, between a man and his *mugaula* sometimes come before the courts, just as if they were disturbances within a family. Muhale complained, not that his son was living with a *mugaula*, but that the *mugaula's* laziness had prevented him from giving a beer-drink for a whole year. When the jealousy of the *mugaula* threatened domestic trouble, the queen considered the matter important enough to send a messenger, who, with the district head, came to settle the dispute; the court dealt with the matter exactly as if the parties were married, urging mutual forbearance and co-operation. A man who illicitly lives upon a woman, eating from her porridge bowls (*madilo*), acquires no rights over her or her children, and is derisively called 'father of the porridge bowls' (*ramadilo*).

Instead of attempting to deal with the conflicts and tangles in *munywalo* and marriage, we shall refer to a few of their aspects merely. The conditioning of cross-cousins for their obligations as marital partners does not eliminate temperamental differences, and in modern conditions, which emphasize individual acquisitiveness as against reciprocity, the burden of obligations in the *munywalo* ring becomes too heavy. A father, more intent upon the polygynous circle of huts than upon maintaining the chain of *munywalo* exchanges, may use the cattle coming in from his daughter's marriage to acquire a wife for himself; and an almost

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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife.

Makhuma (from *hu khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figehela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*hu thuswa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold.

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'.

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on

592 that the man has now a son-in-law, whom he can approach for
571 economic help whenever he is in need. His wife, too, if she
606 needs anything can brew beer to take as *khirola* for her son-in-law, or crack open *morula* nuts and take them as a gift, in return for which he will give her money or whatever he can. *Khirola* may be taken even to the uterine brother of a son-in-law for
[602] he also is a *muduhulu*. A man looks more and more to his affines for economic help as his father ages and his brothers become involved in their own commitments. To the wife the marriage of her daughter is also very important for a different reason. This makes it possible for her to have a daughter-in-law. For on the marriage of her son a woman stops cooking and in addition has the help of her daughter-in-law in her garden work. If she has no son she can in the last resort always use the bride-price to 'marry' a girl herself who will relieve her of the most heavy and onerous household and agricultural work.

592 With the marriage of his sons there is a gradual handing
571 over of the reins to the younger generation which is completed by the man's death, when the eldest son of his chief wife takes over his position and responsibilities. This is the point at which the house achieves its final independence economically (though not ritually).

613 It is interesting to note that Lobedu do not, like the Zulu,
562 identify a lineage segment by its female foundress.

Death and Inheritance

●768 On the death of a wife her husband must administer the affairs
593 of her 'house' to its best advantage. If the children have any
[604] complaints they may, if their grandparents are dead, make them to the father's cattle-linked sister or to his eldest uterine sister who has considerable influence as 'priestess' of the family.
[583] If the father marries a woman with the cattle of the daughter of such a 'house' such wife will be attached to this house and the sons of the house could use the marriage cattle of the daughters of this woman to obtain wives.

768 When a married woman dies leaving very young children they are generally sent either to the mother's mother or to her sister to be reared. M's son and son's wife died in close succession leaving very young children. Shortly after, when his own

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wife also died, he sent the children to her sister to be reared and 768
gave her his deceased's wife's fields to cultivate to provide food
for the children. When they are big they will be brought back [591]
with a gift of beer and their father will give a thanking gift of [431]
an ox or money for the rearing of the children.

The utensils of a deceased wife remain in her hut to be used 428
by her children or son's wives; and her eldest son has the right [768]
to inherit her fields. Until twenty years ago when it was still [583]
the custom for a mother to receive a cow and calf on the marriage of her daughter (if a virgin) in recognition of having reared her, this portion of the bride-price was the special inheritance of the youngest son with whom she generally lived until her death.

When the father of a polygynous family or the head of a homestead dies there is, owing to the property arrangements characteristic of the Lobedu and their attitude to its possession, never a great deal of heritable property. The property of each house is inherited by the eldest son of that house. The heir to [592]
the position of head of the homestead is the eldest son of the chief wife. Only he or the uterine brothers of his father are responsible for his father's debts—not the sons of other houses. It is generally stated in discussions that any cattle or goods acquired by the father as his personal possessions should be inherited by the chief son and heir. In practice it is more common to divide out such property among all the sons and daughters.

When Ramalepe, a rain doctor, died about three years ago all his cattle and goods were divided equally among his sons. His rain medicines and his field went to his chief wife's son; his mealies (from his own field) were equally divided between his wives and his uterine sisters. When Philip's father died there was no sister of his father still living so Philip went to the queen and asked her what to do. She told him to call his sisters and to divide out the property in consultation with them. He then called his sisters (eldest and other daughters of his father) and showed them the property—thirty-six goats. They agreed on dividing the goats as follows: the deceased's two elder daughters by his first wife were given ten goats each; Philip, a son by the second wife, received eight; Mutzere, sister's son to deceased, was given one goat to kill and eat at his home; one goat was

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name, and are kept at present in a village beside the bush in which the last three rulers lie buried. Their keeper is a descendant of Malegudu, eldest son of Mugɔdɔ, who fought with Mujaji for the throne. These drums are not to be seen by the public, nor are people, except inmates of the royal district, supposed to pass anywhere near there. In appearance and decoration they are no different from ordinary drums, but they are made in a special way and it is said that the maker 'will see them with his eyes but never hear them with his ears' (i.e. he will be put to death when his work is done). The largest is *phaṭaṭɛ*, which stands about 4 ft. high; next in size is *ʃaŋga*; then comes *pekahare*; while the smallest and most important of all is *raŋwedi*, to which is attributed powers even of locomotion, because in 1892, when Albasini set fire to the royal village, it was the only one of the *gomana* drums that was not burnt. While all four *gomana* drums are said to contain a human skull instead of the stone that one usually finds inside it, *raŋwedi*, the smallest, has the facial skin of a human being placed (in strips, it is said) under the resonator of ox hide and has, smeared on the outside, the body dirt of the person (said to be always a chief councillor or other important person of royal blood) killed for its manufacture. This drum is thought to be closely associated with the welfare of the tribe. Should the chief have occasion to escape from enemies, she should take with her this drum, and it is said that, when the heir to the throne receives instruction in the use of rain medicines just prior to the death of the ruling chief, she must be sitting upon it. In some of the neighbouring tribes the sacred drums are pierced on the death of the chief.

The care of these sacred drums, involving periodic smearing with fat and ochre to keep out weevils and moths, renewal of the skin resonators, building and repair of the hut in which they are kept, is the work of a special section of people, those of Ravothata, whose totem is *ɖou* of Vulebye. Vulebye is in Phalavorwa, where this drum cult is much stronger than among the Lovedu. These Ravothata are also responsible for closing the *vyali* initiation at the capital when they come at its end with their weird-costumed dancing performers, the *magɔgɔbya*. Thus once again the *gomana* and the *vyali-vuhwera* are linked into a common complex. The sacred drums, played only on special ceremonial occasions and by men, not women, who are usually responsible for drumming, are looked upon as gods (*vadimo*). The praise of *phaṭaṭɛ*, the largest, is 'Leg of *phaṭaṭɛ* of Muhale [the old chief]; if it is not a god we can throw it away rattling to the pool' (*Goto la phaṭaṭɛ a Muhale hɛ vga ve a se mudimo re ga laṭa re khogolosa ra isa madivem*). The Thavina and Nareni, tribes to the south of the Lovedu, offer to the sacred drums the first-fruits, and everywhere their beating is associated with rain and the agricultural year. Not only are the drums gods, but their sound is thought to be very pleasing to the *xwiɖajani*, those ancestral spirits who, when the drums are sounded, come and sing and dance. The knowledge that their part is played by initiated men does not appear to detract from their importance in the eyes of those who are in the secret. The instrument used consisted in the old days of the tibia of a human being with a feather inserted (and there is reason to believe that some of these are still extant) but to-day

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534 they use mostly two pieces of wood slightly concave on the inside in which
778 a piece of sinew or reed is temporarily inserted. The language being
794 tone-bound, messages and songs can be understood when whistled.
●769 Not all ancestral spirits, but only those of the Lovedu proper and of some of the important groups, such as the Khaha and Nareni, are thought to be able to visit the earth as *zwiḑajani*.

794 The most important feature of the drum cult was the beating of the
769 sacred drums in an enclosure near the village, usually in the afternoon
782 and evening on six successive days twice every year: in the spring just before the sowing and in winter after the harvest thanksgiving. The spring drumming was preceded by propitiation of the royal ancestors by means of a libation on their graves in Ḑaja Forest, where the earlier chiefs lie buried. There was a special procession which no one was to see on pain of death, the Mulodozi River had to be crossed at a special spot called *Khiṭaba-vakɔlɔlɔ* (washing place of great people) and it is maintained by some that a black ox was also slaughtered. The district head at Ḑaja, who was responsible for clearing a way to the graves, had to plant near the royal graves a little of every seed cultivated. The people would then see, it is said, which grew best and would plant much of that. The *gomana*, the beating of the sacred drums, 'was the chief thing that had the power of asking rain from the ancestors'. The sounding of the drums at harvest-time was a thanksgiving. The first harvest *gomana* after the circumcision took the form of an initiation, in which the neophytes were introduced into the drum ritual and the secret of *zwiḑajani*, and received cuts on their faces as a sign that they had passed through it.

794 Though the sacred drums are still kept and the Ravothaṭa people are
782 still called to repair the hut in which they are placed, the regular beating of *gomana* drums has fallen into disuse. The last *gomana* initiation held officially by the queen in the tribe was in 1892, just before the accession of the present queen. It is difficult to account for this lapse when among neighbouring tribes the cult is still fully carried out. Some say the reason lies in the ritual murders that are associated with the drums, but since it is an accepted principle that a sheep may satisfactorily take the place of a human being and, moreover, this difficulty must somehow have been overcome in other tribes, this reason does not appear good enough. Possibly the cult was introduced from the south and had not become sufficiently assimilated or taken deep enough root to survive the lethargy induced by European contact. Perhaps the rain-making powers of the queen herself made it largely unnecessary. It is not impossible that it will suddenly spring back to life, as did the *vyali* in 1938–9 after a lapse of over thirty years.

794 Though the queen herself now holds no *gomana*, the institution is not dead. Elements such as *zwiḑajani* have taken permanent root and the queen has allowed a stranger, Rasekwalo, a rain doctor of the *kwena* totem who came to live on European-owned land under her jurisdiction, to hold a *gomana* with, of course, his own drums, and in 1929, when he came to ask that boys from the royal village should be allowed to attend the initiation, she gave her consent. He holds one *gomana* a year, receiving

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Though made by men or women, there is something almost supernatural about a *gɔma*: its manufacture is called 'giving birth to' (*hu dzwala digɔma*) and though, for example, in the case of a dancing *gɔma*, every one knows that some person is playing the part, this in no way detracts from its importance. Many of the *digɔma* are masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, or leaves. Some are mummeries with a meaning attached; others are simply interesting or wonderful objects. One *gɔma*, *dau* (lion), consists of a sound made by passing the hand down a stick on a piece of hide held over a pot. These *digmɔa* are traditional in initiations, but very often new ones are invented and, since different regiments or areas come on many ceremonial occasions with their own *digɔma*, there may be a mild competitive element in the showing of *digɔma*, especially in *khɔba* and *vyali*. Laws taught in initiation ceremonial are also referred to as *digɔma*. But the greatest of all *digɔma* are the *gomana* drums, which are looked upon as gods and are associated with the ancestors and religious ritual. *Digɔma* vary from laws or mummeries to semi-gods. The element of awe, so conspicuously absent in Lovedu religious practices, is found in their attitude towards *digɔma*—not that there is any display of awe towards them or in their presence, but that in referring to some of them people talk as though of something awesome or god-like. Even the *zwiḍajani*, ancestral spirits, who come to earth when *gomana* drums are played or at religious ceremonies, are thought of as *digɔma*, which in this manner become part of religion itself.

The greatest *gɔma* of the *vyali* is *khiuḍogani* or *khiuḍogala*, referred to also as the great Bird of Muhale or of Rhodesia who, like most *digɔma*, is believed to come from a pool in the river. It is a *gɔma* of the men and manifests itself only when there is moonlight, returning, it is said, to its pool when the moon is dark. But it is always there, secreted in its enclosure. The girls have to sing whether it is there or not, and often, though the moon is dark, it whistles its directions and commands. It consists of a light, semicircular framework about 4 ft. high, over which are put strings of the *muga* thorn tree (*Acacia rehmanniana*), which have been placed in water to become black. Surmounting it all is a small head crowned with an ostrich or other feather. It is seen only occasionally, when it comes dancing into the *vyali* courtyard at night, and, in spite of bright moonlight, its black colour makes it difficult to discern it clearly. It speaks and sings by whistling through an instrument similar to, but larger than, that used by *zwiḍajani*, made of the leg-bone of cattle.

This Bird is the ruling spirit of the *vyali*. It has many praises used by the girls in its honour. Coming as it does when the green foods of summer are being eaten and the grass is long, it is the embodiment of plenty and has daily to receive from each initiate summer foods and beer. All the time it is there every one in the area who makes beer has to bring one calabash to its enclosure. If this is not observed the person may be fined. The Bird regulates the whole procedure of the *vyali*, ordering which songs have to be sung, telling the girls when to dance, when to stop singing, what to do. At times it even gets angry and then, if it is dancing, it may stamp out the courtyard fires. Any infringement of the rules of the school are referred to as 'breaking the ribs' (*hu rɔva leṭagori*)

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833 753 *ḍere* if the circumstances of the personal relations of the patient justify such a diagnosis. People thought that Maḍaradani's cough was *ḍere*, but when he insisted that he had no lovers it was diagnosed as *khileso*; Mulada's debility was probably due to chronic malaria, but his friends suspected that he had taken no precautionary measures before resuming co-habitation with his wife, who had miscarried after seven months. *Ḍere* is distinguished from *lefiha* (consumption) by its rapid course and the fact that *lefiha* (*hu fiha*, to breathe) is not caused by women. *Ḍere* [847] can be cured only in its earliest stages, an ingredient of the medicine being a portion of the abortion or, in the case of intercourse with a woman who has lost a child, can be prevented by steaming and mutual inoculation. The prevalence of *ḍere* suggests that abortions are common and that effective abortifacients are in general use. In reality, however, innocent women are accused as soon as a lover falls ill, and rather than be thought murderers, they often give him medicine purporting to be a portion of the abortion mixed with sand to be used as a cure.

753 769 Disease and healing are in the last resort connected with the guardianship of the ancestors. If they are annoyed and relax their vigilance, their descendants may be rendered susceptible to disease, or medicines used cannot have their full effect. Ancestors, however, do not merely ward off disease or assist cure; they also actively cause illness. The crying all day of a baby may be due to the spirit of a grandfather pinching it in order that it should be given his name; sore eyes in children are often, and in adults sometimes, attributed to ancestors; barrenness or difficult birth is laid at their door, and sometimes they seize the whole body of a person because they wish to 'possess' him. But ancestors never cause death: even if at first an illness is said to be due to them, should death supervene, it is attributed to witches. Complaints of living relatives, especially of the father's sister, may also cause illness.

754 By far the most important of all causes of ill-health, however, is the evil work of witches and sorcerers. Certain illnesses, such as *khileso*, are characteristic of sorcery and can be contracted in no other manner. But any disease may be caused by witchcraft and witches may avail themselves of the opportunity offered by any minor illness to enter and aggravate it. Diagnosis depends on the course of the illness. Dysentery is regarded as due to natural causes; but should it not respond to treatment or should the patient suspect an enemy, a witch will be implicated. During the 1938 smallpox epidemic, the head of a district which was more hardly hit than its neighbours called a meeting of residents. Men declared, 'Smallpox kills people here; they merely get ill and recover elsewhere. There is a witch in our midst.' Money was collected, three men sent to a diviner, and, in the end, two women were accused. A specialized cause of illness is legitimate vengeance-magic used against theft and called *khidɔba*, which makes the finger of the thief swell up or the stolen goat bleat in his belly.

753 It must not be imagined that the Lovedu do not recognize a large number of diseases as natural. Many illnesses 'just come'. Such are all minor ailments like coughs, colds, stomach disorders, and also other more serious diseases like dysentery and malaria. Too much beer is

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known to affect the stomach, many kinds of spinach to cause diarrhoea. 753
Epidemics of smallpox, measles, coughs are thought to be brought by 'wind' (*phɛfo e ḍile*) and steps may be taken to combat them by sprinkling with medicines the inmates of the village. Usually an epidemic 'just comes', but on occasion one hears that a witch has 'sent' the wind. Ancestors, too, are thought to exercise some controlling influence over [769] wind; in most libations they are asked, 'Prevent for us these winds'—that is, as we might phrase it in our prayers, 'Guard us from disease.' Diseases are never classified as natural or non-natural solely according to their nature or symptoms. Any natural illness may also be 'sent' and, 753 though natural death is recognized as possible, in practice those closely 754 affected always attribute death to witchcraft or sorcery, though outsiders may give other reasons and some even say of an old man dying, 'The gods have called him to rest.' Of the thirty deaths, including a number of old people, that came to our notice, none were, however, thought to be natural. Contagiousness (*hu fɛdɛla*) of certain diseases, such as venereal diseases, leprosy, whooping cough, measles, is recognized, and it is known that consumption may be transmitted by parents to their children, as one of its names, *lehɔpla la tata-mulɔgɔ* (cough of the family father) signifies.

There must, of course, be a body of professional men and women 759 trained in and practising the art and science of medicine, but there are also many who have an extensive knowledge of home remedies. This is not unexpected in a society in which ordinary mortals live close to, and know a great deal about, nature. Every one is familiar with plants and their properties, which is one of the bases of pharmacology, with the meagre conceptions of anatomy and physiological relations, and with much of the intricate system of causation of disease. There are many men and women who know some special medicines or types of treatment, inherited usually from father, mother, or spouse, and kept secret, not because the knowledge is a source of material benefit, for the remedies are generally given free, but because it lends some recognition and prestige. Mamutho, despite all our efforts, divulged her medicine for inflamed eyes to us only as a parting gift. Madinji treats sprains and fractures; Khiebe specializes in mutual inoculation of the newly wed; and Khapani knows roots for dysentery. These are herbalists, not doctors, but some herbalists are so well-known for the efficacy of a medicine they have that even diviners send patients to them. Knowledge of these remedies, however important, does not make one a doctor (*Ḍaga*): that appellation is accorded only to those who are initiated bone-throwers or as herbalists have achieved general recognition as dispensers of many medicines and treatments. Muhale's wife, though no bone-thrower, is a good midwife and wields expertly a blood-letting awl. But a herbalist, even if called *Ḍaga*, remains *Ḍaga-tshubya*, a doctor without horns (power), because he does not divine; he can prescribe for recognized diseases, but he cannot diagnose in other cases for which the divining dice are necessary. From our point of view, the herbalist diagnoses and prescribes along scientific lines; to the Native he is a novice unable to deal with witches or the more serious diseases.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Ancestral caprices and complaints and rites to appease them—the universe of the ancestors a replica of the everyday world—relations of magic, morality, and religion—possession by spirits as a religion and socio-psychological phenomenon.

NATURE spirits and hero-gods have no place in the Lovedu scheme of things. There is, however, Khuzwane, the creator, who made all things, including men, and left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when these rocks were new and soft. But no one knows what has happened to him and no one ever thinks of him. The gods of the Lovedu are their ancestors, deceased fathers and mothers who guard one in death as they did in life. Each family has its own ancestors, and religious observances are thus peculiarly a family concern. 776 769

Ancestors have various attributes. They are one's protectors and no harm can befall one unless they, the ancestors, are neglectful. Witches, powerful as they are, can neither enter the village nor cause sickness without their connivance; hence the procedure in divination, even in the clearest case of witchcraft, of inquiring whether the spirits should be appeased. Disease cannot enter nor epidemics break out if only the ancestors are watchful enough and well-disposed. Again and again one finds this idea expressed in prayers; 'Protect us from epidemics [winds]', they say; while the queen in a prayer at her harvest ceremony put it even more positively: 'As regards life, we have been very well, but now we are being killed by that epidemic which you have allowed to come', referring to smallpox. There can be no success without the co-operation of the ancestors. Medicine cannot help nor doctors heal if the ancestors are not with one. This idea, reminiscent of our 'By the will of God', is expressed in the phrase, 'We do not say our doctor, [will heal]; we say our doctor and the ancestors'. It appears also in a prayer we heard on behalf of an absent son working in town, when a goat, dedicated to his grandmother (father's mother), who had made him ill two years before, was being given the new corn: 'Here is the child; here he is, mother. We ask that you let him be happy and cool (give him health). Tell all the other spirits [certain names mentioned], and we who remain, *we say our thing with the gods.*' 769 754 753 782

The phrase '*vadimo lalane*' (spirits, sleep) which rounds off so many prayers, and the constant fear of waking up (*hu dzosa*) the ancestors, causing them to stand (*hu ema*) and cause trouble, appear at first as a peculiar contradiction, as though people do not wish their gods to be watchful. The term *lala* is, however, idiomatic, expressing peace, things being as they should be, as in the phrase, '*Ha va mulao; shago la lala*' (There was order; the country slept), implying that the rains were good and all was well; while *hu dzosa* in this sense means stirring to anger rather than waking up from sleep. 769 782

The ancestors are responsible for the fertility of the crops. True, nothing could grow without rain, for which the queen is responsible and 769 241 782

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769 which royal ancestors only can withhold; differences in the harvest
241 between one area and another are often attributed to fights between the
782 witches of the two areas, and even variations in yield between one man's field and his neighbour's may be due to witchcraft. Yet one finds in prayers many a request for a good harvest, even though there are no special ceremonies devoted to this end. A man pouring a libation for a sick child said among other things, 'Give us corn; when we plough let us also reap. Why are you stinting us?' And it is significant that the only regular religious observance is the harvest offering of beer made of each year's new corn in villages where there are shrines or dedicated animals. When any one dies, there is thought to be danger that the fertility of the
[764] crops will depart with him or her. Hence, when a gourd of seeds of every kind is placed in the grave together with a firebrand and calabash of water for the journey, some of the seeds are scattered over the body with the words, 'Do not depart with all the corn and seeds,' and very often the grain belonging to the deceased is treated with medicine in order that it may remain fertile.

769 Above all, the ancestors complain, a fact which lies at the basis of
782 Lovedu religion, for by far the greater proportion of religious rites are those performed in response to ancestral complaints. One might at first think it strange that the gods, in life just ordinary, well-disposed people, should in death be so liable to bring trouble upon their kin. Sometimes it is thought to be a sign of love: when Masilu's grandmother had made him ill because she wanted a goat dedicated to her, his mother said, 'No wonder his *gogo* seized him. She was always so fond of him.' But chiefly it is the nature of ancestors to complain; as the Lovedu phrase it, 'When people sleep (i.e. are dead), they ought to complain' (*Hɛ vathu va khi lala fase va swanɛdɛ hu velɛala*). When there is illness, they are, as it is phrased, 'seen in the divining bones'; it is they who sometimes 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult childbirth, and sometimes, but far less than among the Nguni, their complaints cause dreams. Our close friend
[787] Walter, coming to seek work in Johannesburg, dreamt disturbing dreams of his dead father, who appeared to say that he was needed at home. He thereupon returned home and, when he arrived, his mother took him to a doctor, whose bones declared that the dead father was annoyed at not having been told of the journey to town and had to be appeased (*hu phasa*). Walter was well educated, but he had failed in his last examination and felt doubly frustrated. He had great ambitions of reforming the political system of the tribe, from which his education had divorced him, and in town he was dissatisfied that nothing was open to him but the unskilled work of his uneducated compatriots.

769 An ancestor may complain about the way he has been buried, and if he
782 has died far from home, may demand to be 'brought back home' in a
778 ceremony in which, besides the dedication of a beast or goat, a goat is killed and eaten, its bones being buried as though it were a person. But this 'bringing home', involving the making of a shrine, applies only to those dying at a distance and does not resemble the 'bringing home' of the Zulu, among whom it is part of death ceremonial. At times the gods complain of neglect. But in the majority of cases no definite reason for

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the complaint is either given or required; and frequently no special spirit 769
is mentioned. It is enough to know the cause of the trouble and what rite 782
is necessary to placate the gods. Even complaints of neglect are usually 778
put positively: 'He complains that you should give him (his shrine) a libation'. The ancestors desire mainly to be remembered: they want their beads worn, their name revived, a beast or goat dedicated to and named after them. They also like to be told about journeys undertaken or marriages, in much the same way as the living, and to be approached with a libation. Yet, unlike the Nguni, they never complain of being hungry; nor are the gods said to drink the libation or even its spiritual counterpart, but are merely pleased to be given their due. There is no such thing as resting secure because you have done all that is necessary for the gods; there is always some ancestor who can cause trouble, and it is best to wait and see what is wanted. Moreover, the ancestors are wayward; there is no knowing what they may desire. Mambeuli asked to be buried at Khikhuti, but after his death he caused sickness, saying, 'Why did you bury me in the valley in the sun' (instead of in the ancestral grove), and a black sheep had to be sacrificed on his grave. Similarly, Mulogwane, brother of the queen, who in 1934 became a Christian on his death-bed, withheld rain in 1935 because they had buried him in a Christian cemetery. Religious rites among the Lovedu tend, therefore, to be addressed to those spirits that cause trouble and in the absence of illness there may be no rites at all.

Certain objects which were once in the possession of the ancestors are 769
used in religious ceremonial and are thought to have special powers of 751
protection and healing. These objects, consisting of ancient beads of 755
glass or native-worked iron or copper, native-wrought assegais, hoes, 778
axes, iron rods with spiked heads, are handed down in the family and carefully cherished. Very often when a daughter leaves to be married, she is given a few beads to take with her for use when she is ill. Such charms are called *thugula*. Illness caused by an ancestor can generally be cured by a ceremony known as *hu phasa*: a mixture of ground grain and water is poured over beads or other *thugula* objects in the presence of the patient while a prayer, scolding the spirits and asking for health, is made. The beads are then worn by the patient till he recovers. After *hu phasa* on beads for any one, he may wear them at any time with protective results, and small children generally wear many old beads. Maseriba called hers 'my hospital' (*spitele aa ga*) to illustrate their powers to us in European idiom. Patnere says, if he does not wear the crocodile bone that was his father's, he gets ill or dreams much of dead people. Association with the ancestors, not anything inherent in these objects, gives them their powers, for we have seen an old Boer gun brought out as a *thugula* at an offering. Yet for a charm to heal it is not essential that it should have been in the possession either of the complaining ancestor himself or of his family. Sometimes the gods, through the dice, mention beads or other objects not known in the family at all. It is then concluded that they have been lost and steps are taken to procure them from some one else or from the queen, who has many. Then when they pray, it will be mentioned: 'We are replacing the lost bead.'

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●769 782 825 Offerings may be poured on the ground or on *thugula* objects. Sometimes, however, the ancestors desire a shrine or a dedicated animal. The queen herself and some others have dedicated cattle, male or female, according to the spirit represented; a few families have sheep, while the majority have goats. Fowls are neither dedicated nor killed for the gods. But we have one instance of a dedicated snake, that in the Reltla family, to which in 1939, at their burial grounds in the depths of the forest, libations were offered when the *vyali* initiation began in that district; the conception is wholly alien to the Lovedu, though the Reltla have been so long linked with, as to be indistinguishable from, them; and the snake, said to whistle, is described as like that dreaded monster, the 'mountain snake' which is often thought of as a mamba but strikes terror like the omen it is. The use of these different animals is traditional in, and bears no relation to the wealth of, the families concerned; some have a dedicated animal, others merely a shrine, while many have both. The dedicated animal receives the name of an ancestor, father or grandfather in the case of the head of the lineage, or of any complaining spirit that has demanded such *thugula*, and it is believed that his spirit (*muya*) has entered into it. Some dedicated animals are credited with abnormal powers: Mamujaji's agitation one day, while being driven to the dip, correctly presaged unpleasantness with the dip inspector; Malegudu is the fiercest bull in the land, like the warrior whom he represents. Though some people unceremoniously pour beer-offerings down the throat of dedicated animals, it is generally claimed that, unlike ordinary animals, they readily drink beer, but the claim is contradicted by the mealie leaves put over the beer to coax the animal to drink. In 1938, when Malegudu, called from the herd to drink the harvest beer, remained immovable, every one was afraid to approach him, but it was considered sufficient to throw the beer over him from a distance, so that by licking himself he might partake of the offering.

778 Shrines, which are to be found generally on the left-hand side of the entrance to the sleeping hut of the chief wife, vary in appearance and contents. A shrine may consist of a small mound of earth, containing the [824] bones of a sacrificial goat; it may be a sacred plant or tree, usually *ṭiṭigwani* (*Hypoxis villosa*) or *leɔmɛ* (*Hæmanthus sp.*) and *muṭabu* (*Ficus capensis*), a black river stone, a long stick, or even a piece of a certain kind of ant heap (*khiṭhoni*). The queen's own shrine is a mound under which are buried the bones of a goat slaughtered some twenty years ago when it was set up. Mashishimali's shrine contains no bones, but consists of a *ṭiṭigwani* lily and a river stone, both visible above ground. Ramatiti has three shrines and one dedicated goat, all of which have arisen out of illness caused by ancestral complaints. Of the first, the shrine of his father, nothing is visible above ground; it consists of a buried piece of ant-heap, used instead of a goat because Ramatiti is not the chief son, who should have the dedicated animal, and a black river stone which keeps the spirit cool and appeased (lying down), as well as the three plant substances [824] *muṭɛra*, *leɔgo* (*Alipedia sp.?*), *vuleɔaja*, which are placed in most shrines to make the ancestors 'forget'. The other two are mounds containing the bones and heads of goats, one representing his mother, the other, like the live goat, his mother's brother, his wife's father.

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The immortality of Lovedu spirits is of practical importance in their working religion only for two or three generations back; beyond this they are hardly remembered. The spirits that cause most trouble are one's grandparents, and in religious practices these tend to be the most important. Both sides of the family, that of one's father and that of one's mother, are equally important; both cause trouble and both must be placated; and this is an accurate reflection of the social structure, of relationship reckoned bilaterally, and of the cattle links. The configuration of the ancestral world is no different from that of the ordinary world. It is therefore not surprising that all four lines of grandparents are recognized. Even when a spirit in the line of the father's father is being placated, the line of the father's mother may also be mentioned: thus we have heard an officiator in a *phasa* ceremony calling, not only upon his father's younger brother, the spirit troubling its granddaughter, but also upon his father, father's father, elder brother, mother, and elder sister. Dedicated goats to male ancestors tend to, but do not always, run in the male line. As in social or political arrangements, the male line may recede before the female; it may even, as far as ancestors are concerned, become almost completely obliterated. In the Matsui family, for instance, the father's father's line is neglected, except for *hu phasa*, when they cause illness, but the father's mother's line is all important. It is to the latter that the beast Mamujaji is dedicated and it is to this beast that the new corn is given every year. This emphasis reflects the links with the queen which the family wishes to emphasize, for Mamujaji, the ancestor of the father's mother, was mother of Mujaji I.

The coherence of the social and the ancestral worlds is seen even in regard to the implications of the *munywalo* system. Biological relationship not socially recognized is of no importance in religion, and not only can the biological father of an illegitimate child or his relatives never cause illness, for the 'gods follow the cattle' (*medimo e tsotla dikhomu*), but the queen's ancestors cause illness in children of any of her wives, whoever their father may be, and it is the queen who is often required to *phasa* for them. In the gathering together in worship of all relatives the social system is similarly reflected. When after many deaths or much illness in a family the dice order a *mukhoro*, a religious gathering of all relatives, not only the lineage but relatives on both sides (*mulɔgɔ*), including those by marriage, meet. Each brings a basket of corn as a contribution towards the beer for the occasion, but a relative who is on bad terms with the others will, of course, simply stay away.

Not only the scheme of institutionalized social relations, but the nature of these relations in ordinary life is reflected in religion. The fact that the gods were known in life is largely responsible for many of the outstanding characteristics of Lovedu worship. We must not expect a behaviour pattern of humble worshipper to omnipotent god. Awe and trepidation characterise the attitude to the mysterical secrets of great *digoma*, but they constitute a category poles apart from the ancestors and *dithugula*. People pray to ancestors as man to man, scolding them or reminding them of their duties to their children. The following prayer, uttered when Pheduli was brought home, is typical: 'We say, here is your corn, Pheduli.

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for
[888] an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*mudimo wenu*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me ox liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's
753 daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite un-
766 expectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of the girl, *phasa* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognized as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phasa*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Hu phasa* in these circumstances recognizes psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mahudu* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of *mufugo* and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gummifera*) to every village in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or groundnuts, which they eat in the *khoro*. Each married man in turn must give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s*. or a fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khcthe*), anything may be given. Each boy must give 1*s*. or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine, took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water, which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the queen's mother *Leakhali*, buried at Khada; sometimes it is Mugodo's sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery, instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *loea* the queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *loea*, but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case, no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but they have "weakened" (*hu figchela*) it. They want me to be troubled.' She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people themselves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft, had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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A sister's cattle-providing capacity gives her a pivotal position in the social structure. It is the cattle accruing from her marriage that 'build' a house for her brother and 'beget' children to her lineage. Over this house she has rights that can be legally and mystically enforced. She settles disputes in it, and distributes its possessions when its owner dies. She invokes the gods on its behalf; no one, not even her brother himself (the husband and head of the house), can ill treat the wife of this house without having to reckon with her, and any breach of the marriage relationship is void without her consent. It will be evident that no judgement of the Lovedu courts in regard to a marriage has much chance of being carried out without the assistance and co-operation of this sister. For this and other reasons women are prominent as intermediaries and conciliators in the society. It should also be no surprise that any woman may marry wives, whose children call her 'father'; that many women are kraal heads and some of them the most important districts heads in the country. As chief officiators in offerings and sacrifice women play an important role also in religion. 593 562 [588]

Structurally the agnatic group, of which the cattle-linked brother is a member, is a minor lineage three to four generations deep, which supplies wives to the lineage into which his sister has married. The obligations of providing wives on the one hand and returning cattle on the other cannot, indeed, be enforced beyond the actual houses concerned and their lineal descendants, but the relationships of reciprocity and the behaviour patterns of helpfulness on the part of the wife-receivers, and of honouring and periodically bringing beer on the part of the wife-providers, are usually extended beyond these houses to the whole minor lineage and, where the relationships have been long established and are kept alive as part of the political structure, they may embrace major lineages five to eight generations deep. The wife-providers are called either maternal uncles (*vamalume*), since a man's mother's brother (*malume*) is ideally his wife's father, or grandparents (*vamukhulu*), since his maternal grandfather is the male representative of his wife's agnatic group (being her paternal grandfather). Conversely, the wife-receivers are called either sons-in-law (*vatsezi*), because the lineage into which a man's sister marries is also the lineage into which his daughter marries, or *vaghukulu* (grandchildren or sister's sons), a man's sister's son being the same person as his daughter's husband or his father's granddaughter. It should be noted that, even though these wife-providing and wife-receiving lineages are related through marriage, the relationships between them are not merely affinal. The wife-providers and wife-receivers are not merely brothers-in-law but also cognates—wife-providers being maternal uncles and grandparents, and wife-receivers being children of paternal aunts, sisters, or daughters. A man's maternal kin are also his affines, while the maternal kin and sororal affines are merged with the paternal kin. 613 601 612 613

This merging of various types of kin is perhaps the reason why all four lines of kin—father's father, father's mother, mother's father, mother's 753 769

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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her
769 honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of
several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor
who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love
for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor
lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the
spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cog-
nates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member
of the kindred (*mubgo*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
634 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function
of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and
population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife
exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original
agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to
vofanoni (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send
wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*mudukulu*) and,
by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes
parent-in-law (*vamakhulu*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear
group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and re-
latives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system
to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiat-
ing from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way
that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and
became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the
queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in
return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies,
but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and
uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked
with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in
641 wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, con-
vert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned
ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need
for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the
queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also
there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of sub-
jects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a
sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
182

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But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasizes in very general terms the importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials. 773

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formulations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going its ordained way is implicitly rejected in their conceptions. The assumption is that cosmic forces are controllable and, in fact, controlled at every turn by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *vuŋaga* (the evil aspect of which is *vulsi*), i.e. by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digoma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail.

821 772 643 [71] [769]

Vuŋaga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these attributes or powers (*maŋla*) reside are mainly *melimo* (medicines) or *mere* (plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct

789 755

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789 from the supernatural. While anyone who knows a cure for an ailment is manipulating the forces of nature and using *vuyaga*, there are doctors
755 who, by virtue of long training, know many medicines, have learnt how to divine and have been imbued with additional perspicacity and powers as a result of a special initiation. Medicine functions by virtue of the properties, actual or ascribed, of matter; the principles underlying the operation of medicines assume mechanical cause and effect and even the divining bones are read according to rule.

756 There are, however, two types of doctor who fall into a different category: the *lelɔpo* doctor, directly possessed and guided by an ancestor spirit, who largely confines his activities to curing possessed people, and the *mugome* or 'smeller-out' who is generally a foreigner. People using the forces of nature for evil purposes are *valɔi* (witches and sorcerers) and are dealt with in another context. *Vuyaga*, it will be seen, is the use of impersonal power inherent in matter, which is extracted by the expert (*yaga*) and applied in the interests of the health and well-being of men; it is also the exercise of personal qualities or skills, either inherited or acquired through spirit possession or guidance.

Ancestors

769 Ancestors can influence for good and evil the fortunes only of their own descendants, who in the case of the chief's ancestors are taken to include
777 the whole tribe. Their control over the forces of nature is not explicitly formulated; and what is expressly stated is not always confirmed in Lovedu religious practices. The ancestors are clearly conceived to exercise an overall control. A man will always assert that no harm or illness can befall him if his ancestors are watchful enough, for they have power to ward off all evil
[754] and misfortune. It is said that even witches cannot, without the will of the ancestors, enter a village or deliver the last fatal blow that kills a man. But in practice the will of the ancestors either is not interposed, for no ascertainable reason, or is ineffective to ward off attacks. If some great sorrow overtakes a man, it is said that 'his ancestors have had an accident' implying that he has been temporarily deprived of their protection and is at the mercy of his
[755] enemies. Even medicines are said to be ineffective without the co-operation of one's ancestors, the conception being not merely that their goodwill is essential but also that *vuyaga* belongs to the ancestors. In fact, however, the ineffectiveness of medicines is never in any concrete case attributed to the lack of such co-operation.

769 Ancestors are appealed to and thanked for good crops, fertility, plenty, and all manner of good fortune and success. The desire to be remembered
777 and given tendance is attributed to them, and they may themselves cause harm and sickness to descendants who neglect them; but somewhat incon-
753 sistently a man may with impunity neglect them for many years and give them tendance only when misfortune overtakes him. Ancestors may be approached and propitiated or thanked by means of offerings and prayer

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and the use of *dithugula*, objects such as beads which have once been in their possession; but they can also be constrained by medicine or the properties of matter. 769 777

Ancestors are capricious: their complaints as seen in the divining bones are usually about being neglected; but they may cause illness to those they love most in order to receive recognition, have their name perpetuated, or their beads worn. They are said to 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult labour, to afflict children with sore eyes, and even to prevent the queen from making rain. Their complaints need imply no omission or neglect on the part of the afflicted descendant, but merely some special desire that could not have been anticipated. The degree of either neglect or tendance bears no relation to their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, since the ascription of misfortune to the ancestors is always *ex post facto*: hence the paradox that a family that is assiduous in its tendance of the ancestors may suffer more ill health and misfortune than one that has neglected the ancestors for a long time. 753

Dithugula are instrumental in controlling nature not only indirectly through the ancestors but also directly by virtue of the substances used in them. A *thugula* may be a shrine to an ancestor (male or female), an animal dedicated to him, old beads or objects of iron to which, owing to their having once been in his possession, power to influence him is attributed. But a *thugula* may also be any charm of herbs concocted by a doctor and worn for protective purposes. The queen's rain-medicines are *dithugula*. The most important religious ceremony of the year, the annual offering of beer to ancestors as thanksgiving for the harvest, is also called *thugula*. *Dithugula* thus constitute a category of objects, usually closely associated with the ancestors (though they may be made by a doctor), through which they may be approached, and which have special virtue particularly to give health and protection against ills and epidemics. 778

Dithugula are found in every lineage which, through its shrines, dedicated animals, and charms, secures the general welfare of its members. The queen's *dithugula*, her rain-medicines, sacred objects, and shrines through which she intercedes with the royal ancestors, are the ultimate symbols of her power and the safeguards of the welfare of the country; and just as certain medicines (*diphaba*), which are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget their complaints, are pegged round the village by the paternal aunt or sister of its head to protect it against witches, so also the queen may *thugula* the whole country by sending boys to peg medicated sticks on its boundaries as a protection against evil, particularly epidemics that might threaten it from outside. [769]

The queen's control

The basis of the queen's control over nature is her divinity. So bound up is she with nature that her very emotions affect the rain. The complex of royal institutions includes the conceptions that she must be without 643

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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *gɔma*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794

With the *vyali-vuhwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*vyali*) and for boys (*vuhwera*), are associated many *digɔma*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khiudogane*, Bird of Muhale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *vyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *gɔma* and a symbol of the royal ancestors. 881

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *vyali-vuhwera* with its great *digɔma* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digɔma*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalavorwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir sits on the smallest drum while being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vadimo* (gods) as well as *digɔma*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gɔmana* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [794 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digɔma* are the *zwidajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thugula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gɔmana*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *letugu* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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An omen or bane (*lesola*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesola*, and so can a *leshega*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *ʈola* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 787 825

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*vusola*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahava*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahava* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahava* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahava*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 777 602 [753] [769]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (Vulɔi)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *vulɔi* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Vulɔi* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Vulɔi* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *vulɔi* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *vulɔi* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*vulɔi vya vusiu*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*vulɔi vya matsiare*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 754 [577]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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There is nothing morally wrong in sex or the sex act; not only is sex play among small children connived at, but premarital sex relations are institutionalized. It is only having a child before marriage that is immoral. For adultery restitution must be made, yet a husband who is jealous and watches his wife too closely is despised, and most men and women have extramarital lovers (*vatavo*). The Lovedu attitude is less strict than that of the Tsonga living among them, for Tsonga married women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, and the compensation and fine for adultery are far higher than among the Lovedu. The Lovedu attitude to sex is matter-of-fact, and obscenity in ritual does not have a prominent role. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of promiscuity; they learn from their proverb that 'a woman's pubes may break up a family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are undeveloped.

To anyone brought up in the West European culture, where every breach of the moral code is also a sin in the eyes of a God who may punish the wrongdoer either in this life or the hereafter, an arresting aspect of Lovedu culture is that there is only a vague connexion between the ancestor-gods and morality. It has been said for the South Bantu in general, and by more than one authority, that the ancestors 'are the guardians of the moral code, it is they in the first instance who are thought of as visiting on their descendants punishments for some omission or commission'[1] There is among Lovedu a vague idea that failure to carry out one's kinship obligations may bring ancestral displeasure in the form of bad luck, and there may also be some connexion between such displeasure and *mahava*, the force generated by complaints of living kin, which causes illness. But a careful study of Lovedu religious practices over a period of years has brought to light no single instance in which ancestors have complained about anything not immediately concerning their own personal relations with their descendants—their right to tendance, remembrance, and propitiation; the manner of their burial; their desire to be told of major events in the lives of living kin. No ancestor has ever been known to concern himself with the theft, witchcraft, murder, or adultery of any descendant, nor do they trouble about the breaking of taboos which prevent rain and vitally affect the welfare of all. Lovedu ancestors are not upholders of custom in general; they are concerned only with those customs and taboos which affect their own welfare and that of their kin. Even royal ancestors do not concern themselves with the breaking of taboos that lead to drought. This is not a reflection of their carelessness or supineness, for they are quick to complain if, for example their graves are desecrated. On one occasion in 1938, when two men had cut firewood in the bush near the royal burial grounds at Maulwi, the *zwidajani* wailed all night to indicate their displeasure. Again when Mologwane, deceased chief councillor and brother of the queen, 'held her

[1] A. W., Hoernlé, 'Religion in Native Life', in *Thinking with Africa*, edited by Milton Stauffer, 1928, p. 100. See also, W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, 1928, pp. 381–90.

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577 arms' to cause drought in 1938, it was because he had for personal
●769 reasons been buried, at his own express request made before death, in the Christian cemetery instead of in the damp shade of the forest, like his forebears.

577 It would appear that this lack of interest on the part of the ancestral gods
593 in the morality of their descendants is in conformity with the pattern of the relationship between living parents and their children. Parental protection and care are given not by virtue of the morality or conduct of their children; it is one of the imperatives of the kinship bond. A parent loves his wayward, bad son as much as, if not more than, his well-behaved, virtuous children. It is only a bad personal relationship between parent and child or neglect of filial duty that could cause a parent to withhold his protection.

626 Sanctions for right behaviour are, first and most important, the pressure of public opinion and of the reciprocal arrangements of the political and social structure. A man conforms to the code because of his self-esteem and the high regard he has for his reputation for fairness and moderation, wisdom and ability to get on with others, generosity and helpfulness, not merely among his kin but in the wider circle of his friends and neighbours. The next important group of sanctions are the pain and misfortune that may follow if those he has injured use vengeance magic or resort to witchcraft and sorcery against him. Certain types of conduct carry their own automatic ritual sanctions which form a third group of deterrents, even though there is little pressure of public opinion against the conduct and no necessary or immediate consequence to the person himself, unless indeed he is re-
626 peatedly guilty. Finally, duties towards the ancestors, such as tendance and
769 recognition, have the religious sanctions of ancestral anger in the form of illness, or misfortune. Ancestral displeasure can also be inferred as a sanction acting indefinitely and over a vague area of conduct to reinforce men's obligations to kin, generally those kin who stand to them in a relation of some authority. This inference may be made, not because ancestors ever directly cause misfortune to a descendant for breaches of correct behaviour to kin as they do in the case of neglect of themselves, but because bad luck may be attributed to failure in one's duties to kin.

[769] Ancestor worship of the Lovedu plays hardly any part, then, in upholding tribal morality. Nor are people so delicately conditioned to the values of
577 the society that they spontaneously react to conscience. Their moral code is not markedly internalized and Lovedu have no sense of 'sin'. Since there are few repressed fears the pressure of which on the mind can be removed by confession and atonement, a sense of guilt seldom moves men, and offenders very rarely repent merely at the dictates of conscience. Their sense of shame is more delicately internalized, but it drives men to make restitution only when the misdeed has been exposed or brought into relation with the system of reciprocities. Lovedu are sensitive mainly to the intangible forces of the social system, and the moral code is upheld mainly

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *mokoko* or
613 *leloko* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[789] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *mokhobo* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours
[476] and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

[562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[582] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*mokhobo*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

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side, not to the Sekhobo side. The lineage head's father's mother had been a 'wife' and close relative of the queen, a connection which the Sekhobo family tended to stress socially and which was reflected also in their religion (they had a cow dedicated to and representing her).

The Lobedu lineage, in fact, does not operate as a group to the exclusion of other kin except in informal consultations on matters of marriage or litigation; and the lineage does not emerge in everyday activities as a clearly marked unit. A *mokhobo* such as the above is one of two or three rare occasions when the lineage comes together and in every one of these cases both sons and daughters and their children are invited to be present.

Lobedu homesteads vary in size and composition from a typical minimum of a married man with his mother, wife and children to a group of half-brothers, their mothers, wives, children and grandchildren, still living together after the death of the father. Very often other relatives, such as a widowed sister and her children, a maternal relative or an affine of the head are to be found living in the homestead. But these are the least stable elements and tend to move away in a short time. Though small units continuously hive off, and there is a good deal of change in the small homesteads of more recent immigrants or where a migrant labourer husband has never returned, the Lobedu homestead is on the whole, especially in the case of the chief son and his descendants, a remarkably stable unit. Over a period of thirty years most of the larger homesteads known to me have remained in the same place or been rebuilt a few hundred yards from the old site after the death of their head.

Economy of the Lobedu and their attitude to property

The economy of the Lobedu is a subsistence one based mainly on agriculture and stock-raising supplemented by migrant labour in European areas. Land for cultivation is allotted to individuals by the district head. Once allocated, fields are inherited in the male line and cannot be taken away so long as they are in effective use. Only if a man moves away from the district or is chased out as a witch can he and his family lose

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house should not be used by the son of another house. If this is done (as it sometimes is if one wife has only daughters and another only sons) this immediately establishes a new relationship between half-brother and sister who now become cattle-linked; and the girl whose cattle were used has the right to 'follow the tracks of her cattle' to ask for a daughter-in-law from that 'house'.

A 'house' is never wholly dependent in economic matters on the husband and his lineage. It has other possible sources to exploit. Thus a married woman may, and often does, get fields from her own people to cultivate. The difference between these fields and those given by her husband's people is that the latter are hers as a right and are inherited by her sons; the former she obtains through the goodwill of her blood-kin and on her death they revert back to them unless the children are still young and the fields are needed to feed them. Similarly, though it is the father's duty and responsibility to help his sons to marry and though uterine brothers always help one another, a man who has a married sister very often turns to her husband or to the sister's son for help with cattle to marry a wife. There is a difference, however, between help given by a uterine brother and that given by a relative on the mother's side or an affine—a brother does not expect to be repaid but help from other categories of relative becomes converted into a marriage bond or has to be repaid. The close bond between uterine brothers is indicated in the saying 'uterine brothers share even the head of a locust'.

Each 'house' is distinguished, then, from that of other wives of the husband by its cattle-links and obligations to the wife's side of the family (and later the daughters' husbands' families) and by dependence on ancestors on the mother's (i.e., wife's) side in addition to those on the father's side.

In the case of preferential marriage, too, the 'house' is all-important. Here, in contrast to marriage with strangers where the boy's family initiates negotiations, the first approach is usually made by the girl's people who bring the matter in the first instance to their sister, the woman of the 'house' concerned. Thus, for example, when Dumedi obtained cattle from the marriage of his eldest daughter by his first wife (a mother's brother's daughter) her people approached his mother

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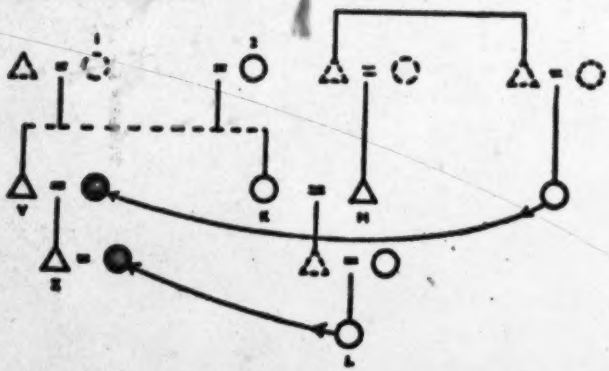

FIG. 7. An arranged marriage (Z to L) to 'knit together' the families of two affines.

growing apart (separating). Here is my son's daughter. Let us knit together the family (*ruka leloko*) else soon we shall be lost to one another'. So Z, the son of V, married L, M's granddaughter. It is interesting to note that while M had married V's half-sister, V had also married a 'sister' of M (M's father's brother's daughter), a case of 'brother-sister' exchange which is very rare among the Lobedu. Z was thus marrying his mother's 'brother's' son's daughter, who was at the same time also his father's half-sister's son's daughter.

Marriage from generation to generation with the uterine 582
brother's daughter has important consequences for ancestor 613
worship. It leads to a merging of ancestors on the father's and 769
mother's sides so that they become *moloko o motes*—one lineage, as the Lobedu phrase it, with identical ancestors in at least two of the four grandparents' families. If a diviner diagnoses an 755
illness as due to someone in a man's father's mother's lineage 583
(which in the case of two generations of mother's brother's daughter marriages will be the same as the mother's father's lineage), then a man's mother, or even his wife, could officiate in a beer-offering in his homestead to the ancestors concerned. The Lobedu call upon and give offerings on different occasions 603
to all four grandparents and other deceased members of their 769
lineages. It is interesting to note that the mother's mother who never becomes by virtue of preferential marriage an ancestor common to both sides of the family and might thus be in danger of being left out, makes herself very much felt in practice. She

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is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbourhood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,

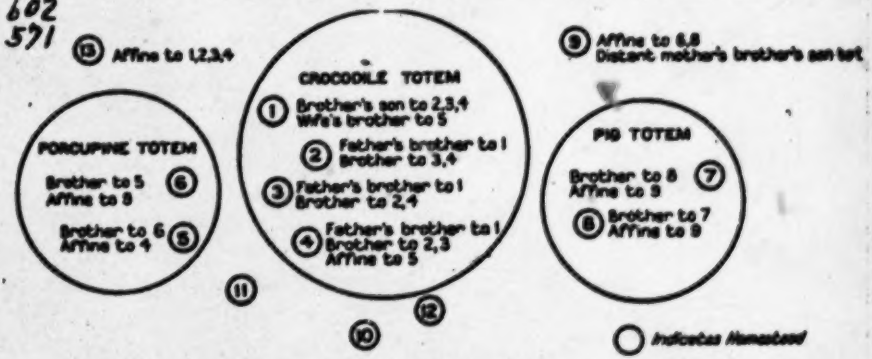

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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794 some to render them fertile; the *digɔma* are almost all made of grasses,
789 reeds, or leaves; the remarkable *vahwera* costumes are made of various
778 special kinds of grass; and on one of the most important excursions made by the *vyali* girls, called *maiḡini* (at the locusts), they are made to collect the bark of various kinds of trees. The *vyali* as a fertility rite is most clearly seen in the sexual intercourse at the order of the Bird which used to be indulged in towards the end of the initiation on the approach of spring. The true meaning of the Bird is difficult to discover, though it is significant that it is associated with moonlight, comes from a pool, and declares on its departure that it will leave mists behind it. In one praise song of the Bird it appears to be referred to as *vaḡaja*, the ancestral spirits: 'I have heard you, Bird of ours and Rahufa of Muhale. The father of giving has gone, O *vaḡaja*. There remain only things for which one must pay' (*Gi hu phulaphudɛ noni yesu le vuRahufa a Muhale rahufa khi ile, vaḡaja, hu sadɛ kha muthɛgo fela*). This Bird, *gɔma* of the old men, is related to the *gomana* cult, using the same method of whistling through an instrument.

881 The Lovedu appear to have borrowed *vyali* and *vuhwera* and the
794 *gomana* drum cult from neighbours. Some elements, like *zwiḡajani*,
● 771 have become firmly embedded in a number of institutions; others, like *vuhwera*, are looked upon more as entertaining appurtenances without any very serious meaning beyond that of giving pleasure. But the sacred drum cult clashes to some extent with the rain cult of the queen and there is little doubt that to this fact one must partly attribute the failure to beat *gomana* drums in recent years.

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for
[788] an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*mudimo wenu*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me ox liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious
752 *(repressed) displeasure in their hearts* cause illness. When Ramatiti's daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite un-
786 expectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of the girl, *phasa* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognized as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phasa*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Hu phasa* in these circumstances recognizes psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mabudu* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not

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immediate and usually not consciously phrased, yet in the total complex of the culture all things are interconnected, albeit in ways that are not easy to see clearly. The gods help good and bad men alike, they send illness whether one is careful or neglectful of the observances due to them, and the after-life is the same for all. But we should be careful not to deduce too much from this. The position of a sister and her privileges are sanctioned by the gods, as is also the respect due to old people. In general the gods are not upholders of custom, yet on one occasion in 1937 two *swifajani* cried all day in the bush at Maulwi because some women had broken the taboo against cutting wood there. The chief concern of the gods appears to be to look after their own interests. They complain when they dislike the manner of their burial, but they are undisturbed when twins are not buried in wet soil, even though this has a disastrous effect on the *whole country*. *If* they were disturbed about custom in general, instead of things directly affecting them, they would complain of many disturbing changes in these days of culture contact; instead, one only finds that possessing spirits dislike European things and that at offerings European utensils are generally not used.

Another outstanding characteristic is the almost entire absence of any speculative element. The Lovedu are not concerned with such things as the life hereafter and the mode of life of the gods; theirs is essentially a practical religion in which rites are of far greater importance than attitude of mind, action than belief. Its rites are directed to practical ends, such as recovery from illness and the procuring of rain. In vain does one inquire into the meaning or reason of a rite, for the reply always is, 'The bones tell us to do these things,' and the practical end is phrased as determined by the bones. There are considerable differences from one family to another in the conduct of religious rites and the nature of shrines and, since religion is primarily a family concern, few people know what their neighbours do. Not uncommonly one finds a practice said to be impossible by some people accepted as normal by their neighbours.

Lovedu religion is not distinct from magic. The very terminology of the two is identical: *thugula* is a shrine, dedicated animal, or a sacred object once in the possession of the ancestors, but it is also any charm of bone or herbs concocted by a doctor. *Diphaba* are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget, as well as to ward off witches from the village. *Hu vrelela* means both to pray and to utter a spell. *Hu phasa* is used both to approach the gods and with medicines when sending back disease to a witch; one may also *phasa* on the charms in the village gate on the arrival of beer in order that more may come to the village. In a sacrifice for rain, the magical rites are of as great importance as the purely religious; and *hu phasa* in case of illness is thought to have a compelling force. It cannot fail; if it does, there must be some other cause, for an ancestor can never refuse to be placated by the *phasa* rite.

The merging of religion with magic and medicine is everywhere evident, but nowhere is it more prominent than in the cult of possession. This cult is not indigenous; it came with the Thonga and, since its first reception some thirty years ago, has gained considerable popularity.

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771 794 177 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-Tongs and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion. Among Shangana-Tongs, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 753 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: *Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body'* and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolatela was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthwasa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature. [828] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwashe in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), or *munchebche* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 755 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit wishing to manifest itself, a *lelopo* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known in the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.

794 765 535 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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RELIGION. In common with the other Bantu tribes of South Africa, the people of the Lowveld have ancestor worship. The form which it takes here bears many resemblances to that found among the Venda and also to that of the Shangana-Tonga though it differs from both in a number of ways. Characteristic of the religion of Lowveld tribes are the predominance of the beer offering to the almost complete exclusion of the blood sacrifice, the use of shrines and dedicated goats or cattle, the powers attributed to old beads and other objects once in the possession of the ancestors, the prominent part played by women, the virtual equality of ancestors on the mother's and father's side and the cult of the *dejaw* in which old men deceive women and the uninitiated by acting the part of ancestors supposed to be returning to the village after certain ceremonies. 771

The creator-god, to whom however no worship is directed, is known as Khudzwane, use of the term *Modimo* in this sense being in the Lowveld probably a Christian innovation. Belief in a sky-god, such as that of the south-eastern tribes, is absent, while spirits such as the mountain and river spirits believed in by Venda, and Tikoloshe, Impundulu and other half-mythical creatures who play so important a role in the everyday life and beliefs of Pondo and Xhosa are quite unknown in the Lowveld. Instead, one finds the *dejaw* or *dacojaw*, ancestral spirits who come after sunset after important religious ceremonies in the royal family, during the *kamana* drumming and sometimes, among Lobedu, at the installation of an important headman, and call in thin, wailing voices. Often they whistle out their own names or throw stones at the village, scolding people for having broken customs, till beer is brought to them and they are appeased. They are ancestors, yet they are only half-men with one leg and one arm instead of two;[1] they dwell in the sacred woods, and when they come no one is to leave the village, women and children shutting themselves up securely in their huts. The fact that the part is acted by a few old, trusted men is not known to many. 776 [171] [887]

The sacred place at which offerings are made is not the cattle kraal 778

[1] Among Venda, *dzedjawi* are thought to be mountain spirits with one leg, one arm, &c., the sight of whom brings death to the traveller. They have no connexion with ancestor worship and are said to be mostly of Sotho origin. This is clearly a borrowing.

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by the institutions and by the reciprocal duties and responsibilities between individuals and groups inherent in the social structure.

Effects of Culture Contact

This picture of the world view of the Lovedu presents living practices and conceptions, not a dead and reconstructed past. Christianity has, indeed, modified some aspects of the culture: Christians are prevented from performing their kinship obligations in the traditional manner; they have accepted European ideas of trade for profit and use institutions such as the work-party for the exploitation of their fellows; but witchcraft, which they are supposed to have rejected, is as a result of increased tensions even more rampant among Christians than pagans. Christians substitute God for the ancestors, but continue to believe that the queen makes rain, albeit by the will of God. They tend to discredit the powers of charms but not of *mupaga*, while 'heat', *makhama*, and 'shadow' are still real forces, and the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and misfortune still hold sway. Even these minor modifications have to be viewed in the light of the fact that Christians constitute only about 5 per cent. of the tribe and are relatively isolated.

The influence of Western culture as a whole is more insidious. The knowledge acquired by young men working in the towns and returning to the tribe holds implications as regards the nature of the universe and the destiny and purpose of man which they cannot harmonize with the traditional world view. They tend to despise what the old men cannot or will not make intelligible to them, such as the significance of the *digoma* and the *mudajani* which appear to them to be shams. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect for their elders and for traditional values and institutions. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older, begin to play a part and to have a stake in the culture. Moreover, they are sensitive to insinuations that their doubts are due to the white man's insidious influences and soon repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

The younger generation tend to shirk unpleasant responsibilities. Thus Jim refused to take over the family office of keeper of the rain-medicine, fearing the risk of sterility which handling of this medicine entails. The absence of many adult men, who are away as migrant labourers, makes the organization of the great ceremonials difficult. Reconciliation and the restitutive sanction are no longer the great forces they used to be, since the closely knit system of reciprocities, everyone's dependence upon day-to-day mutualities and the imperativeness for social life of co-operation, no longer exert the irresistible pressure on the parties to carry out compromises reached in the courts. Aggrieved litigants, reluctant still to invoke European intervention, increasingly resort to magicians who have developed a whole new system of revenge magic to even up matters. The trend is to put their faith in magical retaliation rather than in the sanction of reciprocity.

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753 mother—are important in ancestor worship. Any of these forebears may seize
769 a man and make him ill, require a dedicated animal or a shrine in his or her honour, and, in fact, one may find shrines in one village or kraal to kin of several different lineages. In practice the mother's mother is an ancestor who most often causes illness in her grandchildren because of her great love for them.

621 The core of a large kraal or village (20 to 80 huts) is usually the minor lineage, but there are always also affines and cognates, quite apart from the spouses of agnatic members of the lineage who themselves are usually cognates. In kraal matters it is by virtue of being not an agnate, but a member of the kindred (*mubgo*), that a man has a voice. The core of the district is
602 sometimes also the lineage of the district head, but the lineage is not a
631 political group and the influence and authority of its head are not a function of his relationship, agnatic or other, to the people living in the district.
643 Districts, of which there are 140—with an average area of 1 square mile and population of 250—are linked to the queen on the pattern of cattle and wife exchanges. Districts are either held by descendants of one of the original agnatic lineages of the nuclear ruling group, or they have been allocated to *vofanoni* (wives of the queen) or to immigrant alien groups. They all send wives to the queen, who thereby becomes their son-in-law (*muduhulu*) and, by allocating them to other district heads and to royal relatives, she becomes parent-in-law (*vamakhulu*) to the latter. Those lineages of the royal nuclear group who send wives to the queen are both 'brothers' (agnates) and relatives-in-law (affines) to her. The use of the mechanism of the social system to align groups into reciprocal relations forges a great network of ties radiating from the queen to all strategic points in the society. It was in this way that large numbers of alien refugees were incorporated into the tribe and became related to one another. Payments of tribute and services to the queen are thus looked upon as the fulfilment of kinship obligations, in return for which the queen not only gives land and protection from enemies, but also transforms the clouds into rain and so frees men from fear and uncertainty.

602 Thus the kinship ties that bind subjects to the rain queen are interlocked with the values and institutions supporting her divinity. The homage in
641 wives that is paid to her for giving men the blessings of rain, is also the
643 means of forging the network of kinship ties. The kinship ties, again, convert political tribute and services due to the queen into morally sanctioned ceremonial exchanges between relatives-in-law; and just as there is no need for military virtues and military organization to deter enemies, since the queen, merely by withholding rain, can secure the defeat of the foe, so also there is no need to rely upon force to secure the willing allegiance of subjects who are treated to the beer that they bring, ostensibly as tribute to a sovereign but in reality as gifts from parents-in-law.

643 The queen is accordingly the pivot of the nodal institutions of the society.
772 The benevolent forces in the universe are, as the Lovedu sometimes
182

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say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu political pattern follows that of the centralized states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation.

643 772 182 [642]

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical. A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors.

773 [821] 773 776 [842]

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them,

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they deprecated his lack of practical sense and wondered whether he was losing his reason. What is significant to the Lovedu is not the origin but the maintenance of the order of nature. Interest in the continuity of natural forces centres, however, not on an abstract system, but on the benefit of man or rather of the Lovedu people. Among these forces the most important are those governing the auspicious movements of clouds and their transformation into rain. But they stand in no relation to the forces that brought the world into existence. Among Lovedu, in contrast for example to Oceanian peoples, there is consequently complete discontinuity between mythological origins, or the forces that operated at the dawn of the world, and present realities or the forces maintaining the existing order. Even the ancestor gods do not bridge this gap, and man's dependence upon them—and hence the force of religious sanctions—derives not from their relationship to the beginnings of things but from kinship principles.

Myths play an insignificant part in Lovedu life. Almost the only myths are legends of the institution of the present political order which give a generalized account of the migration of the royal nuclear group from Rhodesia and of the reigns of the various chiefs. There is no attempt in them to intensify the beliefs or validate the institutional arrangements underlying the sacred kingship. It is not these myths that give warranty to the queen's mystical credentials and to the complex of customs that supports them. Indeed today scant credence is accorded by the younger men to the legendary royal ancestry which traces the descent of the nuclear group to the Karanga of Monomotapa in Southern Rhodesia, for the Lovedu find it difficult to believe that they are related to a people who now appear to them to be inferior, lacking the prestige and aristocratic pretensions of their reputed ancestors. In one version of the myth the Lovedu broke away from Monomotapa under the younger 'chosen' son to whom the previous chief had given the rain-charms. He fled south as a result of his conflict with the eldest brother who had legal precedence. In another, it is a daughter who, having committed incest with her brother, escapes with the rain-charms and her infant son from her outraged father.

The legends are further concerned to explain the settlement of the Lovedu in their present environment: their choice was determined by the absence of red earth which would soil their loincloths and the abundance of *murula* trees and mounds of edible termites, both of which are valued and ritually significant items in their diet. A later dissension between two claimants to the throne is presented as a conflict between chief son and chosen son, and again the victory of the chosen son vindicates the divine right of the rain-maker against legal precedence, and in that way appears to justify the present flexible system of succession as against the challenge of the Northern Sotho emphasis on primogeniture and certainty. Just as the title to becoming ruler of a new tribe is in one version validated by the incest of brother and sister, so the later and equally momentous change from kings to queens is brought into relation with father-daughter incest.

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But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasizes in very general terms the importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials. 773

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formulations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going its ordained way is implicitly rejected in their conceptions. The assumption is that cosmic forces are controllable and, in fact, controlled at every turn by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *vuŋaga* (the evil aspect of which is *vuloi*), i.e. by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digoma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail. 821 772 643 [71] [769]

Vuŋaga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these attributes or powers (*maada*) reside are mainly *melimo* (medicines) or *mere* (plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct 789 755

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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugɔ*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*figɛhɛla*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *ḷerɛ*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

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171 The *gɔmana* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the
778 ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend
881 *gɔmana* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an outsider. The *gɔmana* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *zwidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as
772 something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and
821 magic (*vuŋaga*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digɔma*. The seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digɔma*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal
811 evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain
821 concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu. To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: man and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may
772 sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of
811 the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from conditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desiccation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon
821 the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Leswa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *ḋere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches.

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'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mashɔthɔjɔ* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death.

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Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is

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1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

5. The Lovedu asked them how they managed to live without fire. The Kheoga said: "What is fire? what does it do?" The Lovedu said: "We warm ourselves by the fire and cook the food with it." Then they gave them cooked food. When they had eaten they found that it tasted sweet. So they asked the Lovedu for fire. They wanted to cook with it and to warm themselves. When it went out they returned again to ask for fire. Then they began to work with it. 173

6. Now the Lovedu desired the country and its wealth. They wanted to take possession of it. But they were unable (to do so), as they found that it had its possessors. So they planned to fight and to drive the Kheoga out of the country. 173 726

7. Now they thought that their weapons could be the fire. So they ordered the young men to seize fire-brands. They surrounded the villages of the Kheoga to set fire to the country that the fire might burn the villages together with the people. The young men did so. The fire burnt everywhere and laid the villages in ashes. The Kheoga were in great distress. They left their villages and fled. But there was no spot for them to get away, for the fire surrounded the whole country.

8. Some ascended the hills, they were protected by the large rocks, where the fire could not come. Others climbed upon trees. These burnt altogether, for the grass was very tall, for it had not been burned since the beginning. Many people died a terrible death. Only very few escaped. Even to-day these people have not yet become a tribe again. Their kin has not yet increased similar to others.[16]

9. So the country became property of the Lovedu until to-day. The Lovedu gained their country by fighting for it with fire. 173 773

10. Furthermore they say that on their journey from Mashonaland the Lovedu were in great troubles, when they found a dried-up country —a country without water. The large rivers were far from them. They were looking for much water and did not find it. It is said that their chief chose young men to look for water for the tribe. He himself went with them. They were searching but they missed it.

11. They say that the chief had taken with him the calabash which his father had given him to produce rain. So he tried to make the rain fall where they were. After a little while there fell a heavy rain and filled all the rivers and watercourses. When they returned to their shelters, they arrived wet to the skin. The people got water for drinking and cook-

[16] They have inter-married with the Lovedu and other tribes.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

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ing. It is said that this was the first miracle of that chief, for in Mashona- 773
land his brother had produced the rainfall.

12. The name of the first chief who left Mashonaland is Magaphele. 173
It was he who took possession of the country of Kheoga by fighting with fire. The second chief is Mohale. There is not much known about him.

13. The third chief is "Kheale kha Mmamohhale a Leḍaža."[17] This is his praise-name. He produced rainfall just like his fore-fathers.

14. The fourth chief is "Phedola-Khefhedola-Maru-a—ḍaža."[18] [551]
This is his praise-name. They praise them on account of the clouds, they say: "They transform the clouds so that the rain must fall."

15. He—Phedola—had a son who was the first-born[19] When the 173
king was about to die, he gave the younger son the rain-horn. But the people did not know that the chief had given him the horn of chieftain- 643
ship. They thought that they would find that he who had the great name of chieftainship[20] would be he who had received the rain-horn. The name of the eldest son was "Maḍaže" (the Filler) that of the younger one was Makhoba (the Finisher). Therefore they said: "Chief is Maḍaže! He will fill the rivers with rain-water. As to Makhoba that means he will empty the rivers, so that we shall have no water." Therefore they proclaimed Maḍaže their chief.

16. They drove the younger brother away so that he had to leave 173
the Lovedu-country. He left together with the troop which trusted in him. He went upwards and came to "Nareni"[21] and settled on the mountain of Khevela.[22]

17. Now in Loveduland Maḍaže was not able to produce rainfall. That country was a country of sunshine and hunger without intermission. There at Khevela rain was falling continuously every year; it was a country of corn, for the rain was falling.

18. Then the head-men of Loveduland began to cry and to complain that they did not know that it was Makhoba who had been given the rain-

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[17] Unknown names

[18] "Transformer—clouds are filled."

[19] —and therefore heir to the Crown according to the law.

[20] See [19]

[21] "At the Buffalo" name of the country in the South of Loveduland from the name of the tribes living there. They praise the buffalo.

[22] Near the confluence of the Selati-and Olifant-river.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu political pattern follows that of the centralized states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation.

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Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical. A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors.

773 [821] 773 776 [842]

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them,

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772 they deprecated his lack of practical sense and wondered whether he was losing his reason. What is significant to the Lovedu is not the origin but the 821 maintenance of the order of nature. Interest in the continuity of natural forces centres, however, not on an abstract system, but on the benefit of man or rather of the Lovedu people. Among these forces the most important are those governing the auspicious movements of clouds and their transformation into rain. But they stand in no relation to the forces that brought the world into existence. Among Lovedu, in contrast for example to Oceanian peoples, there is consequently complete discontinuity between mythological origins, or the forces that operated at the dawn of the world, and present realities or the forces maintaining the existing order. Even the ancestor gods do not bridge this gap, and man's dependence upon them—and hence the force of religious sanctions—derives not from their relationship to the beginnings of things but from kinship principles.

•773 Myths play an insignificant part in Lovedu life. Almost the only myths are legends of the institution of the present political order which give a generalized account of the migration of the royal nuclear group from Rhodesia and of the reigns of the various chiefs. There is no attempt in them to intensify the beliefs or validate the institutional arrangements underlying the sacred kingship. It is not these myths that give warranty to the queen's mystical credentials and to the complex of customs that supports them. Indeed today scant credence is accorded by the younger men to the legendary royal ancestry which traces the descent of the nuclear group to the Karanga of Monomotapa in Southern Rhodesia, for the Lovedu find it difficult to believe that they are related to a people who now appear to them to be inferior, lacking the prestige and aristocratic pretensions of their reputed ancestors. In one version of the myth the Lovedu broke away from Monomotapa under the younger 'chosen' son to whom the previous chief had given the rain-charms. He fled south as a result of his conflict with the eldest brother who had legal precedence. In another, it is a daughter who, having committed incest with her brother, escapes with the rain-charms and her infant son from her outraged father.

The legends are further concerned to explain the settlement of the [783 Lovedu in their present environment: their choice was determined by the 262 absence of red earth which would soil their loincloths and the abundance of *murula* trees and mounds of edible termites, both of which are valued and ritually significant items in their diet. A later dissension between two claimants to the throne is presented as a conflict between chief son and chosen son, and again the victory of the chosen son vindicates the divine right of the rain-maker against legal precedence, and in that way appears to justify the present flexible system of succession as against the challenge of the Northern Sotho emphasis on primogeniture and certainty. Just as the title to becoming ruler of a new tribe is in one version validated by the incest of brother and sister, so the later and equally momentous change from kings to queens is brought into relation with father-daughter incest.

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But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasizes in very general terms the importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials. 793

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formulations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going its ordained way is implicitly rejected in their conceptions. The assumption is that cosmic forces are controllable and, in fact, controlled at every turn by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *vuŋaga* (the evil aspect of which is *vulɔi*), i.e. by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digoma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail.

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Vuŋaga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these attributes or powers (*maaḍa*) reside are mainly *melimo* (medicines) or *mere* (plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct

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754 human being who has been killed by a witch to be his slave. The *khiḑuḑwane* is not an ordinary corpse, though witches do call corpses out of their graves in order to cut off portions of their body for medicine, a procedure that can be prevented by magical protection of the grave. Only a person specially killed for the purpose can be a *khiḑuḑwane*; when they bury him, it is only his shadow that goes into the grave; the real person has been enslaved and put in a large earthen pot or in a cave. At night he hoes for his master, cuts poles for building, or goes on nefarious errands. If you meet a *khiḑuḑwane*, you faint at the sight, and even after medical treatment your body may feel dried up, as though it has no blood.

That the fear of *zwiḑuḑwane* is very real to the Native, and backed by what is to him convincing evidence, is shown in the case of Madume. In November, 1937, Madume, a man residing near us, died. Ever since his wife's death he had lived with (*hu gaula*) a woman whom he had never properly married and, after his death, it was rumoured that he had been killed by the mother of his son's wife for the sake of her daughter, who was jealous that her husband's father should be fonder of, and show more favours to, a concubine than to his legitimate daughter-in-law. The mother of the girl had first, so it was said, wanted to kill Madume's wife, but her daughter had argued that it would be better to kill Madume himself, since he might pick up some other woman and they would have the same trouble over again. How much of this story had actually been given by the diviner and how much was sheer surmise we were never able to discover, but a month after the death people began to be afraid to go near his village at night, as he had been seen standing at his gate. The concubine, afraid to remain at home at night, went to sleep with neighbours, whence she would return at dawn to do her household duties. One morning when it was just getting light, she rose to go home. On her way she suddenly ran shouting into the nearest village and fell in a faint at the entrance. People rushed to help her and called in Madume's sister
[757] to revive her in the manner usual in such circumstances: by holding smoking chips under the nose to cause sneezing (*hu ctsemudisa*). She told them she had seen three *zwiḑuḑwane*, a man called Khishweni who had died long ago in the neighbourhood, and two children, dancing and singing on the road. From this evidence the conclusion was immediately come to that Khishweni must have been killed by the same witch as Madume, since both were walking about, and so great was the fear of going out at night that the women of the neighbourhood could not be persuaded to attend a girl's initiation ceremony which had begun before this episode.

775 Contact with Europeans has led to the conception of *khipogo* (spook) which must not be confused with *khiḑuḑwane*. A *khipogo* is the ghost of a dead person, but the sight of a *khipogo* does not, like that of a *khiḑuḑwane*, make one faint or dry up; it only makes one's heart jump in fright. Such a ghost can be laid by means of medicine (*diphaba*) on the grave. Children often run to their mothers with scared faces and bated breath to say they have seen a *khipogo*, sometimes even in broad daylight.

754 Night-witches can be male or female, but the great majority are female.

CHAPTER VIII

FERTILITY AND THE DRUM CULT

The setting of the sacred drums in a mystical cult—initiation into the secrets of the whistling ancestors—calendric observances connected with fecundity, masks, and mummeries.

794 BESIDES the girls' puberty ceremony and the circumcision of boys, there are other initiation ceremonies among the Lovedu. One is the *vyali* (often looked upon as the women's counterpart of circumcision because of its regimentation), contemporaneous with which is the boys' *vuhwera*, consisting largely of masked dancing; another is the *gomana* for men. These are closely interwoven with a fertility and rain cult which, because of its association with sacred drums, one may call the drum cult. Their educational object, never very strongly marked in Bantu initiation schools, pales into insignificance before the ceremonial. Indeed the *gomana* as a 'school' is only an aspect of *gomana* ceremonial as a whole, the primary function of which is to secure rain. The *vyali-vuhwera-gomana* complex is characterized by esoteric masks, mummeries, and mysteries and by a category of values which we may term the 'mystical philosophy' of the Lovedu. We shall give merely a brief picture of the complex, because, at the time of writing, the first *vyali-vuhwera* held for thirty-five years is still in progress and our ideas as to its true meaning are far from being settled.

794 796 The sacred drum cult has many ramifications. The *swiqajani*, supposed to be ancestral spirits coming to earth to take part in *gomana* singing and drumming of the sacred drums, have become incorporated into other aspects of the culture. They appear in the bush near the village whenever a harvest offering has been made in the families of royal relatives; they come at the installation of a new district head and at the 593 death of close relatives of the queen. On these occasions they join in the singing and dancing of *lengu* songs, songs associated with the *vyali* of men and which, in addition to the above-mentioned occasions, are employed also when women dance for rain. The type of instrument by ●[776] means of which the *swiqajani* whistle or blest out their songs and messages is used also by the Bird, the ruling spirit of the *vyali*.

534 778 Drums are much used in Lovedu life; they are played in the *guha* dance to the accompaniment of reed pipes, they are important in all initiations except circumcision, they are beaten for days at the dancing of possessed people, and it is significant that the public recognition by the queen of a new district head at his installation consists in the handing over of a drumstick (*khiba kha gwa*). Drums are of two types: the long cylindrical drum played with the hands as it lies on its side and the *gwa*, a rounded drum with handles, played by means of a drumstick as it stands in an upright position. The sacred drums (*digomana*) of the tribe are of the *gwa* type, but, unlike ordinary *gwa* drums, are played by hand, not with a drumstick. They are four in number, each with its special

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name, and are kept at present in a village beside the bush in which the last three rulers lie buried. Their keeper is a descendant of Malegudu, eldest son of Mugodo, who fought with Mujaji for the throne. These drums are not to be seen by the public, nor are people, except inmates of the royal district, supposed to pass anywhere near there. In appearance and decoration they are no different from ordinary drums, but they are made in a special way and it is said that the maker 'will see them with his eyes but never hear them with his ears' (*i.e.* he will be put to death when his work is done). The largest is *phajajr*, which stands about 4 ft. high; next in size is *pappe*; then comes *pehakure*; while the smallest and most important of all is *ragwadi*, to which is attributed powers even of locomotion, because in 1892, when Albasini set fire to the royal village, it was the only one of the *gumana* drums that was not burnt. While all four *gumana* drums are said to contain a human skull instead of the stone that one usually finds inside it, *ragwadi*, the smallest, has the facial skin of a human being placed (in strips, it is said) under the resonator of ox hide and has, smeared on the outside, the body dirt of the person (said to be always a chief councillor or other important person of royal blood) killed for its manufacture. This drum is thought to be closely associated with the welfare of the tribe. Should the chief have occasion to escape from enemies, she should take with her this drum, and it is said that, when the heir to the throne receives instruction in the use of rain medicines just prior to the death of the ruling chief, she must be sitting upon it. In some of the neighbouring tribes the sacred drums are pierced on the death of the chief.

The care of these sacred drums, involving periodic smearing with fat and ochre to keep out weevils and moths, renewal of the skin resonators, building and repair of the hut in which they are kept, is the work of a special section of people, those of Raoothata, whose totem is *ghwa* of Uulebye. Uulebye is in Phalaborwa, where this drum cult is much stronger than among the Lovedu. These Raoothata are also responsible for closing the *nyali* initiation at the capital when they come at its end with their weird-costumed dancing performers, the *magagobye*. Thus once again the *gumana* and the *nyali-ewhuwa* are linked into a common complex. The sacred drums, played only on special ceremonial occasions and by men, not women, who are usually responsible for drumming, are looked upon as gods (*modimo*). The praise of *phajajr*, the largest, is 'Leg of *phajajr* of Mulale [the old chief]; if it is not a god we can throw it away rattling to the pool' (*Goto la phajajr a Mulale ka ggo ne a se modimo re ga laja re khagolosa ra ise madiwani*). The Thavina and Nareni, tribes to the south of the Lovedu, offer to the sacred drums the first-fruits, and everywhere their beating is associated with rain and the agricultural year. Not only are the drums gods, but their sound is thought to be very pleasing to the *midjajani*, those ancestral spirits who, when the drums are sounded, come and sing and dance. The knowledge that their part is played by initiated men does not appear to detract from their importance in the eyes of those who are in the secret. The instrument used consisted in the old days of the tibia of a human being with a feather inserted (and there is reason to believe that some of these are still extant) but to-day

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Though made by men or women, there is something almost super- 881
natural about a *gwma*: its manufacture is called 'giving birth to' (*ku* 778
dzwala digwma) and though, for example, in the case of a dancing *gwma*,
every one knows that some person is playing the part, this in no way
detracts from its importance. Many of the *digwma* are masked figures in
costumes made of grass, reeds, or leaves. Some are mummeries with a
meaning attached; others are simply interesting or wonderful objects.
One *gwma*, *dzu* (lion), consists of a sound made by passing the hand down
a stick on a piece of hide held over a pot. These *digwma* are traditional
in initiations, but very often new ones are invented and, since different
regiments or areas come on many ceremonial occasions with their own
digwma, there may be a mild competitive element in the showing of
digwma, especially in *khoba* and *nyali*. Laws taught in initiation ceremonial
are also referred to as *digwma*. But the greatest of all *digwma* are the [534
gwmana drums, which are looked upon as gods and are associated with 776
the ancestors and religious ritual. *Digwma* vary from laws or mummeries 781]
to semi-gods. The element of awe, so conspicuously absent in Lovedu
religious practices, is found in their attitude towards *digwma*—not that
there is any display of awe towards them or in their presence, but that in
referring to some of them people talk as though of something awesome or
god-like. Even the *zwiqiqiwi*, ancestral spirits, who come to earth when [769]
gwmana drums are played or at religious ceremonies, are thought of as
digwma, which in this manner become part of religion itself.

The greatest *gwma* of the *nyali* is *khinqiqiwi* or *khinqiqala*, referred to also as the great Bird of Muhale or of Rhodesia who, like most *digwma*, is believed to come from a pool in the river. It is a *gwma* of the men and manifests itself only when there is moonlight, returning, it is said, to its pool when the moon is dark. But it is always there, secreted in its enclosure. The girls have to sing whether it is there or not, and often, though the moon is dark, it whistles its directions and commands. It consists of a light, semicircular framework about 4 ft. high, over which are put strings of the *mugo* thorn tree (*Acacia rehmanniana*), which have been placed in water to become black. Surmounting it all is a small head crowned with an ostrich or other feather. It is seen only occasionally, when it comes dancing into the *nyali* courtyard at night, and, in spite of bright moonlight, its black colour makes it difficult to discern it clearly. It speaks and sings by whistling through an instrument similar to, but larger than, that used by *zwiqiqiwi*, made of the leg-bone of cattle.

This Bird is the ruling spirit of the *nyali*. It has many praises used by the girls in its honour. Coming as it does when the green foods of summer are being eaten and the grass is long, it is the embodiment of plenty and has daily to receive from each initiate summer foods and beer. All the time it is there every one in the area who makes beer has to bring one calabash to its enclosure. If this is not observed the person may be fined. The Bird regulates the whole procedure of the *nyali*, ordering which songs have to be sung, telling the girls when to dance, when to stop singing, what to do. At times it even gets angry and then, if it is dancing, it may stamp out the courtyard fires. Any infringement of the rules of the school are referred to as 'breaking the tribe' (*ku vwa lejaqari*)

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Ancestral caprices and complaints and rites to appease them—the universe of the ancestors a replica of the everyday world—relations of magic, morality, and religion—possession by spirits as a religion and socio-psychological phenomenon.

NATURE spirits and hero-gods have no place in the Lovedu scheme of things. There is, however, Khuzwane, the creator, who made all things, including men, and left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when these rocks were new and soft. But no one knows what has happened to him and no one ever thinks of him. The gods of the Lovedu are their ancestors, deceased fathers and mothers who guard one in death as they did in life. Each family has its own ancestors, and religious observances are thus peculiarly a family concern.

Ancestors have various attributes. They are one's protectors and no harm can befall one unless they, the ancestors, are neglectful. Witches, powerful as they are, can neither enter the village nor cause sickness without their connivance; hence the procedure in divination, even in the clearest case of witchcraft, of inquiring whether the spirits should be appeased. Disease cannot enter nor epidemics break out if only the ancestors are watchful enough and well-disposed. Again and again one finds this idea expressed in prayers; 'Protect us from epidemics [winds]', they say; while the queen in a prayer at her harvest ceremony put it even more positively: 'As regards life, we have been very well, but now we are being killed by that epidemic which you have allowed to come', referring to smallpox. There can be no success without the co-operation of the ancestors. Medicine cannot help nor doctors heal if the ancestors are not with one. This idea, reminiscent of our 'By the will of God', is expressed in the phrase, 'We do not say our doctor, [will heal]; we say our doctor and the ancestors'. It appears also in a prayer we heard on behalf of an absent son working in town, when a goat, dedicated to his grandmother (father's mother), who had made him ill two years before, was being given the new corn: 'Here is the child; here he is, mother. We ask that you let him be happy and cool (give him health). Tell all the other spirits [certain names mentioned], and we who remain, *we say our thing with the gods.*'

The phrase '*nadimo lalane*' (spirits, sleep) which rounds off so many prayers, and the constant fear of waking up (*ku dzosa*) the ancestors, causing them to stand (*ku ema*) and cause trouble, appear at first as a peculiar contradiction, as though people do not wish their gods to be watchful. The term *lala* is, however, idiomatic, expressing peace, things being as they should be, as in the phrase, '*Ha na mulao; shago la lala*' *(There was order; the country slept)*, implying that the rains were good and all was well; while *ku dzosa* in this sense means stirring to anger rather than waking up from sleep.

The ancestors are responsible for the fertility of the crops. True, nothing could grow without rain, for which the queen is responsible and

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RELIGION. In common with the other Bantu tribes of South Africa, the people of the Lowveld have ancestor worship. The form which it takes here bears many resemblances to that found among the Venda and also to that of the Shangana–Tonga though it differs from both in a number of ways. Characteristic of the religion of Lowveld tribes are the predominance of the beer offering to the almost complete exclusion of the blood sacrifice, the use of shrines and dedicated goats or cattle, the powers attributed to old beads and other objects once in the possession of the ancestors, the prominent part played by women, the virtual equality of ancestors on the mother's and father's side and the cult of the *dajaw* in which old men deceive women and the uninitiated by acting the part of ancestors supposed to be returning to the village after certain ceremonies. 771

The creator-god, to whom however no worship is directed, is known as Khudzwane, use of the term *Modimo* in this sense being in the Lowveld probably a Christian innovation. Belief in a sky-god, such as that of the south-eastern tribes, is absent, while spirits such as the mountain and river spirits believed in by Venda, and Tikoloshe, Impundulu and other half-mythical creatures who play so important a role in the everyday life and beliefs of Pondo and Xhosa are quite unknown in the Lowveld. Instead, one finds the *dajaw* or *dawajaw*, ancestral spirits who come after sunset after important religious ceremonies in the royal family, during the *kowana* drumming and sometimes, among Lobedu, at the installation of an important headman, and call in thin, wailing voices. Often they whistle out their own names or throw stones at the village, scolding people for having broken customs, till beer is brought to them and they are appeased. They are ancestors, yet they are only half-men with one leg and one arm instead of two;[1] they dwell in the sacred woods, and when they come no one is to leave the village, women and children shutting themselves up securely in their huts. The fact that the part is acted by a few old, trusted men is not known to many. 776 [17] [887]

The sacred place at which offerings are made is not the cattle kraal 778

[1] Among Venda, *dhajani* are thought to be mountain spirits with one leg, one arm, &c., the sight of whom brings death to the traveller. They have no connexion with ancestor worship and are said to be mostly of Sotho origin. This is clearly a borrowing.

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say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu political pattern follows that of the centralized states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation.

643 772 182 [642]

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical. A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors.

773 [821] 773 776 [842]

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them,

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278 cure the symptoms, and whether for that reason and its psychological
757 effect or because of a truly curative value, men have great faith in the
755 medicines. There are undoubtedly ingredients in Lovedu medicines which cannot be empirically related to either symptom or cure, since they operate mainly by a technique of analogies which we relegate to the magical world. Such are animal products like hair, skin, excrement, and ovaries used in a variety of ways—for instance, for barrenness and indigestion; minerals like ironstone used for strengthening babies; and sea or river products, sand and shells, indispensable for keeping witches out of the village. But to Lovedu men and women the use of such ingredients in no way differs from the use of a herb: both are thought to have curative value and for them our distinction between magical and scientific treatments, between cause and effect and false analogy, does not exist. Just as a herb may have properties for curing disease, so, for example, the backbone of a python is effective in curing general debility or backache. The bone is pounded and the powder inoculated into scarifications along the back, by which means the immense power of the python is thus imparted to the patient. But note the sequel. So powerful is this medicine that the patient, when his time has come, will have difficulty in dying. His eyes will remain alive though the body is dead until once more the python powder is applied by being burned under his nose that he may inhale the smoke. This strengthening and the reversal of its influence are like injection and desensitization in our medical practice.

758 When we pursue Lovedu conceptions as regards the nursing and treatment of patients, we have once more to regard them from their
[515 point of view. Cleanliness and hygiene are very remotely related to health.
777] Flies are freely tolerated because it is unlucky to kill them, not because, as is held in some other tribes, abundance of flies means riches in cattle. Invalids are not given a special diet, so that instructions by European doctors that a mother should feed her ailing baby on vitamin-containing foods eg fruits are ignored unless medicine is given to be mixed with the food. It is equally fatal to appeal to the curative powers of nature: an invalid will impute unwillingness to help, ignorance or even sinister designs, if you tell him that nature will heal him and give no medicine. It is medicine and medicine alone that is thought to heal. But even medicine is never allowed much time in which to do its curative work. If one drug is not effective within a week it will be changed for another. Often a number of medicines are used at the same time, so that if one is ineffectual the other may heal. In every case we attended we found Native treatment was being given at the same time as, and often to the detriment of, our own. Nor would our protests be of any avail. Even in hospitals there are secret chewings of herbs and surreptitious steamings. Though it is admitted that certain medicines may not 'agree' when used together, use of the wrong medicine is not thought to have any harmful effects. At the most, a medicine merely does not heal; it never definitely harms the patient. Inexactness in the quantity of medicine taken is accompanied by a laxity in the carrying out of doctors' instructions which, though of no consequence where Native medicines are used, may do immense harm if the medicines are European. A careful

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bones, her husband chased her away. A person with an unpleasant face very often earns the reputation of being a witch, even though nothing has been definitely attributed to him. A very old person, too, is apt to be thought a witch; his long life is attributed to his bartering the lives of younger relatives for his own. Just as people with grievances are suspected of witchcraft, so successful ones are thought to be specially liable to being bewitched—those who reap better crops than others, successful hunters, those favoured by their European masters. On the other hand, their success is also liable to be attributed to witchcraft on their part.

It has been said that witchcraft is a reflection of the intense hatreds of which the Bantu mind is capable. True, the European is appalled at the seriousness of the crimes attributed to witches for the most trivial reasons. The mother's brother's wife kills the child of her husband's sister who is living with them because he eats too much: 'he finishes our corn'; because a woman no longer loves him, a man not only causes intense suffering to her during a prolonged birth, but also kills the child; jealous of the large crop reaped by his neighbour, a man sends lightning to destroy his whole harvest. These things do not, however, present themselves in this way to the mind of the Lovedu. A Lovedu argues, not from real cause to effect in such matters, but from effect to cause, which makes it all appear in a somewhat different light. A child dies and he looks around him for a possible cause. He thinks of possible motives and enemies, but can find none. He consults the dice, which point to a woman of such-and-such a totem. The only one to answer this description is the mother's brother's wife. She happens to be known as ungenerous, perhaps she was one day heard to comment on having an extra mouth to feed. The misfortune is thus projected upon her: but it is not a psychopathic, it is an approved cultural escape technique or compensation. In cases of illness or death, people tend to seek the cause in the direction of traditional jealousies. A wife of the queen dies in childbirth. The cause cannot be a jilted lover, because she and the father of the child were on the best of terms. But he is a married man, and women are known through jealousy to cause difficult childbirth to the lovers of husbands. The death must have been caused by his wife (even though she lives miles away). Nothing is done in the matter; moreover, there is no general agreement in the verdicts of different doctors. Six months later a young girl in the village dies suddenly of blood poisoning; her mother is known to have had quarrels with the deceased wife of the queen. It is therefore generally rumoured that the grave must have been treated to 'send back' death and the death of the child indicates that her mother was the witch responsible. Nothing more is said of the lover's wife.

Witchcraft provides an explanation of the worst evils, such as sickness and death, that befall man; it is the principle of evil, the Bantu Satan. Illness caused naturally or by ancestors is generally curable; it is only witchcraft that really kills. It was at first a source of great amazement to us that a man could find it possible to live on socially good terms with some one who had killed his father, attending the same beer-parties and able to converse in friendly fashion. But unless the case has been publicly dealt with and the witch smelt out, the evidence is considered incomplete,

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754 in spite of one's own convictions. Moreover, it does not follow that
761 the witch has any evil designs upon one, though he has killed some
●777 one else. Personal adjustments with the witch are more easily achieved than we might imagine; they are even imperative, partly because witchcraft is so universal a cause of death that in this respect the witch is almost part of the inevitable order of things, partly because, unless a confirmed witch, he is not regarded with horror by the whole society, and partly because he may be an influential and respected man.

Witchcraft serves also to explain the differential incidence of misfortune or death which we generally leave unexplained; but it is not often invoked in this respect. An old, dried-up tree stands in a field. People often rest beneath it at hoeing time. One day, while two children are sitting in its shade, it falls down and kills one of them. The Lovedu realize that dead trees are liable to fall down. But it has long been standing there. Why has it fallen just on that day and, moreover, at that particular time when the children were there? Further, what made it kill one, leaving the other unhurt? This combination of circumstances must, they feel, be due to some malignant controlling force directed against the child. Or, when people recover from a disease such as smallpox in one district, but succumb to it in another, the differential effect in the latter is ascribed to the work of a witch. The occasion for evoking witchcraft as an explanation in certain circumstances is an aspect of witchcraft, but it is not an explanation of its nature and psychological basis and only part of the explanation of its function.

754 Witchcraft is employed to account for unusual or anti-social behaviour.
828 Hysteria might be attributed either to witchcraft or possession. A girl ran away from her own puberty ceremony, an unheard-of and reprehensible action. Her relatives said she must have been bewitched into doing it, so, instead of being punished, she was given treatment to remove the baleful influence. Attributing certain types of anti-social action or the breaking of some customs to witchcraft makes it possible for the society to withstand successfully many blows; an issue is avoided and the transgressor made to feel himself incapable of such actions but for the witchcraft. We must also remember that abnormalities need not necessarily evoke comment. A person may be born an imbecile, but it may be considered quite normal. This is so because there is a place in the society for the weak-minded, sometimes even as jesters of the court. Personal defects or limitations do not, to the same extent as among us, disable a man from performance markedly below the standards required in spheres in which he can be useful; and thus there need not arise an intolerable situation from which escape is sought by psycho-pathological devices or the projection of one's misfortune as witchcraft upon others. Finally, to attribute death to witchcraft, and to set about taking steps to send it back to its owner, probably provides greater emotional satisfaction to the bereaved than the feeling of impotence in the face of an uncontrollable, natural force. The same kind of emotional need is answered when a man with a grievance feels that he can, in the last resort, employ medicine to gain his ends, and people not infrequently indirectly hint to their enemies the possibility of their doing so.

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789 from the supernatural. While anyone who knows a cure for an ailment is manipulating the forces of nature and using *vuŋaga*, there are doctors
755 who, by virtue of long training, know many medicines, have learnt how to divine and have been imbued with additional perspicacity and powers as a result of a special initiation. Medicine functions by virtue of the properties, actual or ascribed, of matter; the principles underlying the operation of medicines assume mechanical cause and effect and even the divining bones are read according to rule.

756 There are, however, two types of doctor who fall into a different category: the *lelɔpo* doctor, directly possessed and guided by an ancestor spirit, who largely confines his activities to curing possessed people, and the *muɡome* or 'smeller-out' who is generally a foreigner. People using the forces of nature for evil purposes are *valɔi* (witches and sorcerers) and are dealt with in another context. *Vuŋaga*, it will be seen, is the use of impersonal power inherent in matter, which is extracted by the expert (*ŋaga*) and applied in the interests of the health and well-being of men; it is also the exercise of personal qualities or skills, either inherited or acquired through spirit possession or guidance.

Ancestors

769 Ancestors can influence for good and evil the fortunes only of their own descendants, who in the case of the chief's ancestors are taken to include
●777 the whole tribe. Their control over the forces of nature is not explicitly formulated; and what is expressly stated is not always confirmed in Lovedu religious practices. The ancestors are clearly conceived to exercise an overall control. A man will always assert that no harm or illness can befall him if his ancestors are watchful enough, for they have power to ward off all evil
[754] and misfortune. It is said that even witches cannot, without the will of the ancestors, enter a village or deliver the last fatal blow that kills a man. But in practice the will of the ancestors either is not interposed, for no ascertainable reason, or is ineffective to ward off attacks. If some great sorrow overtakes a man, it is said that 'his ancestors have had an accident' implying that he has been temporarily deprived of their protection and is at the mercy of his
[755] enemies. Even medicines are said to be ineffective without the co-operation of one's ancestors, the conception being not merely that their goodwill is essential but also that *vuŋaga* belongs to the ancestors. In fact, however, the ineffectiveness of medicines is never in any concrete case attributed to the lack of such co-operation.

769 Ancestors are appealed to and thanked for good crops, fertility, plenty, and all manner of good fortune and success. The desire to be remembered
777 and given tendance is attributed to them, and they may themselves cause harm and sickness to descendants who neglect them; but somewhat incon-
753 sistently a man may with impunity neglect them for many years and give them tendance only when misfortune overtakes him. Ancestors may be approached and propitiated or thanked by means of offerings and prayer

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and the use of *dithugula*, objects such as beads which have once been in their possession; but they can also be constrained by medicine or the properties of matter. 769 777 753

Ancestors are capricious: their complaints as seen in the divining bones are usually about being neglected; but they may cause illness to those they love most in order to receive recognition, have their name perpetuated, or their beads worn. They are said to 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult labour, to afflict children with sore eyes, and even to prevent the queen from making rain. Their complaints need imply no omission or neglect on the part of the afflicted descendant, but merely some special desire that could not have been anticipated. The degree of either neglect or tendance bears no relation to their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, since the ascription of misfortune to the ancestors is always *ex post facto*: hence the paradox that a family that is assiduous in its tendance of the ancestors may suffer more ill health and misfortune than one that has neglected the ancestors for a long time.

Dithugula are instrumental in controlling nature not only indirectly through the ancestors but also directly by virtue of the substances used in them. A *thugula* may be a shrine to an ancestor (male or female), an animal dedicated to him, old beads or objects of iron to which, owing to their having once been in his possession, power to influence him is attributed. But a *thugula* may also be any charm of herbs concocted by a doctor and worn for protective purposes. The queen's rain-medicines are *dithugula*. The most important religious ceremony of the year, the annual offering of beer to ancestors as thanksgiving for the harvest, is also called *thugula*. *Dithugula* thus constitute a category of objects, usually closely associated with the ancestors (though they may be made by a doctor), through which they may be approached, and which have special virtue particularly to give health and protection against ills and epidemics. 778

Dithugula are found in every lineage which, through its shrines, dedicated animals, and charms, secures the general welfare of its members. The queen's *dithugula*, her rain-medicines, sacred objects, and shrines through which she intercedes with the royal ancestors, are the ultimate symbols of her power and the safeguards of the welfare of the country; and just as certain medicines (*diphaba*), which are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget their complaints, are pegged round the village by the paternal aunt or sister of its head to protect it against witches, so also the queen may *thugula* the whole country by sending boys to peg medicated sticks on its boundaries as a protection against evil, particularly epidemics that might threaten it from outside. [769]

The queen's control

The basis of the queen's control over nature is her divinity. So bound up is she with nature that her very emotions affect the rain. The complex of royal institutions includes the conceptions that she must be without 643

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783 charms or *digoma*. *Makhuma* which arises from critical transitions causes mainly stomach trouble and general debility in men and cattle; but it also causes weakening of the mystical powers concentrated in sacred objects. These ritual forces do not strike down the guilty person: it is, for example, not the husband who will be revenged if the adulterer approaches the hut of his wife; or when a woman has procured an abortion, it is not she but her innocent lover who will be affected with *dere*, the most dreaded disease among the Lovedu. The harmful effects of all these forms of impurity are not sanctions against the acts or events causing the impurity, but sanctions for taking the necessary precautions to remove the impurity and prevent it from spreading to others, or from causing some calamity not necessarily affecting the guilty person. And, as so often happens in Lovedu society, it is generally *ex post facto*, and as an explanation of some illness or evil that these conceptions are invoked and steps are taken to put things right.

784 The concatenations of actions and conditions that must be avoided lest they bring about misfortune and evil to men are wider than what is included in the conceptions of 'heat', *muridi*, and *makhuma*. Many things or natural objects brought into relation with men have evil consequences and must be avoided: they are taboo (*hu ila*). Burning a certain kind of wood in the village causes quarrels; working in the fields the day after the first rain is taboo, not sanctioned by a penalty but the breach of which is a bane (*lesola*) that may portend evil. The breach of these taboos is disapproved but leads to no organized reaction or public indignation even where it affects the welfare of all, as in the case of a wrong burial. A man who sleeps with his wife while she is still suckling a child may thereby cause the death of his child; but it is his own foolish and inconsiderate conduct that causes the mother's breast to *khuma* (become polluted and weakened), and it is not the concern of outsiders. He is a fool rather than criminal.

753 Many things in nature are recognized as directly affecting man adversely; various foods and drinks cause stomach troubles; poisonous weeds may kill cattle which, like men, occasionally die of old age; many minor illnesses are attributed to natural causes, e.g. one may contract malaria by walking in the dew in the early morning. Epidemics may be brought about naturally by the air or wind (*phefo*). 'Ward off from us these winds' is a constant plea [821] in prayers to the ancestors. Hot, dry winds which drive away rain-bearing clouds or dissolve them in thunderstorms or gales are thought to be specially detrimental to the rain, and it is the duty of the ancestors to keep away such winds. Even anxiety or worry wears a man down (*hu sefa mutho a hosechwa*, lit., scrapes a man thin). A woman who is prone to break her pots is not [828] bewitched; she has *khifyaisa*, a natural propensity for breaking, which can be cured by medicine.

677 The Lovedu also have the conception of natural accident (*gosi*) and of luck (*leshuto*), though bad luck is sometimes attributed to breach of obligations to kin, to malicious gossip, or to the misconduct in one's absence of one's wife.

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An omen or bane (*lesola*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesola*, and so can a *leshega*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *ţola* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 787 825

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*vusola*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahava*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahava* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahava* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahava*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 777 602 [753] [769]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (Vulsi)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *vulsi* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Vulsi* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Vulsi* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *vulsi* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *vulsi* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*vulsi vya vusiu*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*vulsi vya matsiare*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 754 [577]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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754 standing of ordinary men; sorcery is the manipulation of lawful means for unlawful ends.

The night-witch belongs to an unholy fraternity whose members meet at night to dance to their drums and deliberate upon their deeds of darkness. She uses no medium of destruction and no medicine or spells, but has inborn powers to do what is physically impossible to ordinary men. She goes herself on her nefarious errands or uses familiars. Witches are almost invariably women, partly no doubt because it is difficult to conceive of women having the facilities to purchase medicines for purposes of sorcery, partly also because they are endowed with more mysterious powers than men. The sorcerer, usually a man, whose machinations involve the use of medicines and spells, is a day-witch because his power is derived from ordinary natural techniques 'of the day'. The essence of sorcery is the criminal use of the potency of medicines which can be, and usually are, used in the service of legitimate ends.

754 Many medicines are specifically good or bad and their use cannot traverse their intrinsic nature; but some of the most important are good and hence 673 moral, or bad and hence immoral according as they are used for socially approved or socially disapproved ends. *Madabi*, for example, has the power to transmute the nature of things. It is right for a husband to manipulate *madabi* in a way that will cause wild animals to appear while his runaway spouse works for her lover, for in this way he may frighten her into returning to him. But a jilted lover who takes revenge upon a girl is guilty of sorcery if he uses *madabi* to change her sex when her child is about to be born and thereby endangers her life. Such an act is unlawful vengeance, which is sharply distinguished from lawful restitution; it reflects a desire to injure another for personal motives which are not in harmony with approved social values.

754 Witchcraft and sorcery can always be counteracted. A favourite method of dealing with a witch is the use of reprisal magic whereby the evil is sent 789 back to him, but there are many charms and medicines, all relying on the power of *vuyaga*, by means of which witchcraft can be combated or rendered harmless. Villages are protected against witches and sorcerers by charms circling the village or placed at strategic points, while the witch within the village is treated by *ku fera*, i.e. a drug is introduced into his food which has the power of making him forget his frustration and seek compensation in day-dreaming and doddering. After witchcraft or sorcery has been established by divination as the cause of an evil, and the culprit has been identified (the diviner mentions no name but gives certain attributes, such as sex, clan, locality), it is open to the victim to make an accusation and risk the legal proceedings that will inevitably follow. But resort to law is not entirely satisfactory since appeasement, not the hardening of animosities that accusations occasion, is the function of law. Moreover, the initiation of legal sanctions against a witch may spur him to greater activity.

•777 Witch beliefs reflect the Lovedu notion that almost all the misfortunes

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts. 777

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*ruŋaga*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare. 754 789

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *mahava*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the bones, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased. 829 777 753 [821]

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups is the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *gɔsha*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted. 181

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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There is nothing morally wrong in sex or the sex act; not only is sex play among small children connived at, but premarital sex relations are institutionalized. It is only having a child before marriage that is immoral. For adultery restitution must be made, yet a husband who is jealous and watches his wife too closely is despised, and most men and women have extra-marital lovers (*vatavo*). The Lovedu attitude is less strict than that of the Tsonga living among them, for Tsonga married women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, and the compensation and fine for adultery are far higher than among the Lovedu. The Lovedu attitude to sex is matter-of-fact, and obscenity in ritual does not have a prominent role. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of promiscuity; they learn from their proverb that 'a woman's pubes may break up a family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are undeveloped.

To anyone brought up in the West European culture, where every breach of the moral code is also a sin in the eyes of a God who may punish the wrongdoer either in this life or the hereafter, an arresting aspect of Lovedu culture is that there is only a vague connexion between the ancestor-gods and morality. It has been said for the South Bantu in general, and by more than one authority, that the ancestors 'are the guardians of the moral code, it is they in the first instance who are thought of as visiting on their descendants punishments for some omission or commission'[1] There is among Lovedu a vague idea that failure to carry out one's kinship obligations may bring ancestral displeasure in the form of bad luck, and there may also be some connexion between such displeasure and *mahava*, the force generated by complaints of living kin, which causes illness. But a careful study of Lovedu religious practices over a period of years has brought to light no single instance in which ancestors have complained about anything not immediately concerning their own personal relations with their descendants—their right to tendance, remembrance, and propitiation; the manner of their burial; their desire to be told of major events in the lives of living kin. No ancestor has ever been known to concern himself with the theft, witchcraft, murder, or adultery of any descendant, nor do they trouble about the breaking of taboos which prevent rain and vitally affect the welfare of all. Lovedu ancestors are not upholders of custom in general; they are concerned only with those customs and taboos which affect their own welfare and that of their kin. Even royal ancestors do not concern themselves with the breaking of taboos that lead to drought. This is not a reflection of their carelessness or supineness, for they are quick to complain if, for example their graves are desecrated. On one occasion in 1938, when two men had cut firewood in the bush near the royal burial grounds at Maulwi, the *midajani* wailed all night to indicate their displeasure. Again when Mologwane, deceased chief councillor and brother of the queen, 'held her

[1] A. W. Hoernlé, 'Religion in Native Life', in *Thinking with Africa*, edited by Milton Sandler, 1948, p. 100. See also, W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, 1928, pp. 381–90.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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was related to all except homesteads 10, 11 and 12: a sister of the head of homestead 1 was married in No. 13; a son in No. 4 of this cluster had married a Porcupine woman in No. 5; they had a distant mother's brother's son in No. 9 and they were related in the same way to two wives in the Pig group.

The Porcupine brothers for their part had a sister married in homestead 4 (Crocodile) and a daughter-in-law from No. 9. They therefore had affinal bonds also with two wives in the Pig group, sisters of this daughter-in-law.

The Pig group had married women from No. 9 and therefore had links also with No. 9's cross-cousins in the Crocodile cluster and with No. 9's affines, the Porcupines.

The manner in which kin of various kinds co-operate with each other and with neighbours could be seen very clearly when Enoch, head of homestead No. 9 had to meet a gift-exchange obligation involving the sending of beer to the head of a neighbouring district. The beer, made from mealies from Enoch's own fields was brewed by his mother and by his sister from homestead No. 8. When it was ready, a messenger was sent to notify (*rapa*) all their relatives (*moloko*). Calabashes for carrying the beer were borrowed from the neighbourhood and early in the afternoon a collection of women and a few men foregathered in the courtyard of Enoch's mother. There were ten calabashes and one petrol tin of beer, six baskets of Kaffir-corn and three half-filled enamel basins of grain into which the calabashes of beer were put for carrying. The grain was contributed by kin—by the cross-cousin in homestead No. 1; by the husbands (*badukulu*) of the two sisters in homesteads Nos. 6 and 8; by two father's sister's daughters living outside the area and by a sister of the 'wife' of his mother, also outside the area, all of whom were present for the occasion. Women from the whole neighbourhood turned out to carry the beer. After the eldest sister of Enoch had poured a little beer on the ground with a prayer for luck on the journey and had drawn a magic circle round the mouth of each calabash with a charm, the party set out with ululations of joy and much talking and noise. Kin of all kinds and neighbours all contributed to the success of the enterprise and all took part in the feasting at their destination where the beer was consumed and a beast slaughtered for their entertainment.

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881 they sleep by the 'mother' of the lodge (*maḓala*) near the fire. Those a little older set their traps and catch mice, which they roast by the *khisibe* fire; but relish and wild fruit is usually forbidden to them and they may not, though they often do, drink water. Sick boys, elsewhere subjected to hardships and taunts, are nursed and given soft food, not the hard *khivonclo* of the novices. The novices who go out to hunt certainly resent the malingering of the lazy ones (*magɔtha*), who are strong enough, but stay at home on this or that pretext. But the true spirit of the *vudiga* is seen, not so much in the beatings that the shepherds (*medabi*) administer, for they are beaten as much as if not more than, the novices, but in the actions and attitude of the older men. There are *medidi*, one regiment senior to the *medabi*, who are never beaten, but may be fined; and older than they are the old men (*vakhalabye*). They are kindly greybeards, some of them officials of the lodge and some who do no work (*vuraliziḓ*). Some of them constantly intercede for the young and weak boys who are threatened with punishment or trials beyond their strength or endurance, or 'stand for' those deserving novices who had been obedient or generous or respectful in their childhood. Above all, these old men, mellow with age and mature in wisdom, conditioned to a culture founded upon compromise and easy relations, not only restrain excesses, but add to the beauty of the performances by chanting their refrain of sayings and proverbs, encouragements and admonitions. It is they, not the shepherds with their whips, that give the tone to the proceedings.

The stage after this period of seclusion is called the 'change' (*hu fedulchwa*). The boys sit by the fire facing the rising, not the setting, sun, as was the case in the previous three months. Of course, we must not expect precision: the 1919 fire ran north-south, not east-west; the ideal always gives way to the practical, for the east-west disposition was rendered difficult, though not impossible, by the slope of the ground. In other respects also it was the spirit not the letter of the law that determined various arrangements. After the 'change' life is somewhat different in the lodge. The boys used to do homage (*lɔsha*) to a *morula* tree near the fire as if it were their ancestor (grandparent). But the tree
[778] mysteriously withers and, after the change, is replaced by a pole (*murakadu*). No teaching is done from either tree or pole as is the case in other tribes, but it is associated with a whole series of ritual acts. After the 'change' no longer shepherds but women bring the food; boys perform within sight of women; some of the food taboos are raised, but
[762] relish, though always brought, is forbidden and still thrown into the refuse heap. Apart from these and many other changes, we must also mention the visit by the novices to the village in order to 'beg for salt'. Then they sing the praises of salt, the seasoning virtues of which they now fully appreciate, having gone without it for so long. But on their return the pole has gone; their grandparent has died.

And now we press on to a day of great doings. The novices go out to
[535] 'scratch [as fowls do] for food'; only this means a spectacular dance before the women. That night, the last night in the lodge, it is *khilalamusi*, the night of standing, though many quietly dose off or escape to rest in the bush near by; there is none of the concentration we expect on

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occasions of importance. The boys are shown several sacred objects (*ngoma*), each with its own meaning; and the proceedings end with the naming of the lodge and the new regiment that has been created. Next morning the boys remove the clay that 'disguised' them during their seclusion. They are given a loin cloth, which they wear back to front, their hair, except for a circular crown, is shaved and they are smeared with fat (not ochre among the royal Lovedu). They are 'people from the refuse heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), a name they discard only when, a week later, their heads are completely shaved. As they leave, the lodge, with all in it, is burnt down.

The *vudiga* is not at an end yet; it has merely entered a new stage in which the discipline is further relaxed. The novices leave the lodge with double-pointed sticks, covering with their hands the two ends, which are fashioned like the *glans penis*. In that manner they go about whenever they are in public; the action is said to impress upon them the necessity of concealing the object and meaning of circumcision. When they arrive at the village their mothers appear dancing with joy and choose out their sons, not always correctly, because their heads are bent down and their bodies have grown a good deal in the lodge. A goat is killed for them; it is the goat 'of vomiting the rats', for as men they must cast out the things of their childhood. Then for the next week they are in a state of semi-seclusion, but there are still many observances. They appear in public only in the bent, humble attitude, they carry their sticks, and they wear their loin cloths the wrong way round. Nevertheless, the 'gathering up' (*hu aluha*) into the society proceeds apace. They have a special enclosure made for them in the veld, the *khikhudo* (hiding place or secluded spot), in which they spend some time of the day. But they are scattered, as each group of villages has its own secluded spot; and their separateness and solidarity is further broken up by sleeping at home and herding for their own people. They do not speak, especially not to women, but at night at home they have contests of riddles (*nyzbo*) with the old women who come to visit them, exactly as after a marriage ceremony. This stage ends with the 'seizing of the lion' (*hu tsuara dau*). One night the shepherds go out with bullroarers, the whirling of which produces the roar of the lion. The boys give chase and he who catches the 'lion' is praised by the old men.

Finally come the last ritual acts. The boys are taken down to the river to lift the 'stomach of the cow', a log tied to a stone in a pool, and then to 'kindle a fire on the river' (done on a log in the water), for a man must be both strong and clever; he must be able even to make fire in the water. After these tests there is the final ordeal at the cave to which the boys are taken one by one, are beaten and given their last admonitions. At the cave the double-pointed stick is discarded, the fat removed from their heads and, if two brothers have attended the same lodge, the elder beats the younger on the way home to remove the presumption of belonging to the same regiment. At home the initiate's mother must *soothe* him by a gift to 'open his mouth', and next day each of the boys, accompanied by a shepherd, goes to visit some relative, who will feast him with meat and beer.

CHAPTER VIII

FERTILITY AND THE DRUM CULT

The setting of the sacred drums in a mystical cult—initiation into the secrets of the whistling ancestors—calendric observances connected with fecundity, masks, and mummeries.

794 BESIDES the girls' puberty ceremony and the circumcision of boys, there are other initiation ceremonies among the Lovedu. One is the *vyali* (often looked upon as the women's counterpart of circumcision because of its regimentation), contemporaneous with which is the boys' *vukuera*, consisting largely of masked dancing; another is the *gomana* for men. These are closely interwoven with a fertility and rain cult which, because of its association with sacred drums, one may call the drum cult. Their educational object, never very strongly marked in Bantu initiation schools, pales into insignificance before the ceremonial. Indeed the *gomana* as a 'school' is only an aspect of *gomana* ceremonial as a whole, the primary function of which is to secure rain. The *vyali-vukuera-gomana* complex is characterized by esoteric masks, mummeries, and mysteries and by a category of values which we may term the 'mystical philosophy' of the Lovedu. We shall give merely a brief picture of the complex, because, at the time of writing, the first *vyali-vukuera* held for thirty-five years is still in progress and our ideas as to its true meaning are far from being settled.

794 796 The sacred drum cult has many ramifications. The *zwidjani*, supposed to be ancestral spirits coming to earth to take part in *gomana* singing and drumming of the sacred drums, have become incorporated into other aspects of the culture. They appear in the bush near the village whenever a harvest offering has been made in the families of royal relatives; they come at the installation of a new district head and at the [533] death of close relatives of the queen. On these occasions they join in the singing and dancing of *lenge* songs, songs associated with the *vyali* of men and which, in addition to the above-mentioned occasions, are employed also when women dance for rain. The type of instrument by [776] means of which the *zwidjani* whistle or blast out their songs and messages is used also by the Bird, the ruling spirit of the *vyali*.

534 Drums are much used in Lovedu life; they are played in the *guke* ●776 dance to the accompaniment of reed pipes, they are important in all initiations except circumcision, they are beaten for days at the dancing of possessed people, and it is significant that the public recognition by the queen of a new district head at his installation consists in the handing over of a drumstick (*khiba kha gome*). Drums are of two types: the long cylindrical drum played with the hands as it lies on its side and the *gome*, a rounded drum with handles, played by means of a drumstick as it stands in an upright position. The sacred drums (*digomane*) of the tribe are of the *gome* type, but, unlike ordinary *gome* drums, are played by hand, not with a drumstick. They are four in number, each with its special

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name, and are kept at present in a village beside the bush in which the last three rulers lie buried. Their keeper is a descendant of Malegudu, eldest son of Mugodo, who fought with Mujaji for the throne. These drums are not to be seen by the public, nor are people, except inmates of the royal district, supposed to pass anywhere near there. In appearance and decoration they are no different from ordinary drums, but they are made in a special way and it is said that the maker 'will see them with his eyes but never hear them with his ears' (i.e. he will be put to death when his work is done). The largest is *phagagr*, which stands about 4 ft. high; next in size is *payge*; then comes *pakubare*; while the smallest and most important of all is *ragwadi*, to which is attributed powers even of locomotion, because in 1892, when Albasini set fire to the royal village, it was the only one of the *gomowa* drums that was not burnt. While all four *gomowa* drums are said to contain a human skull instead of the stone that one usually finds inside it, *ragwadi*, the smallest, has the facial skin of a human being placed (in strips, it is said) under the resonator of ox hide and has, smeared on the outside, the body dirt of the person (said to be always a chief councillor or other important person of royal blood) killed for its manufacture. This drum is thought to be closely associated with the welfare of the tribe. Should the chief have occasion to escape from enemies, she should take with her this drum, and it is said that, when the heir to the throne receives instruction in the use of rain medicines just prior to the death of the ruling chief, she must be sitting upon it. In some of the neighbouring tribes the sacred drums are pierced on the death of the chief.

The care of these sacred drums, involving periodic smearing with fat and ochre to keep out weevils and moths, renewal of the skin resonators, building and repair of the hut in which they are kept, is the work of a special section of people, those of Ravothata, whose totem is *ghwo* of Uulebye. Uulebye is in Phalaborwa, where this drum cult is much stronger than among the Lovedu. These Ravothata are also responsible for closing the *nyali* initiation at the capital when they come at its end with their weird-costumed dancing performers, the *magogoya*. Thus once again the *gomowa* and the *nyali-nabowa* are linked into a common complex. The sacred drums, played only on special ceremonial occasions and by men, not women, who are usually responsible for drumming, are looked upon as gods (*vadimo*). The praise of *phagagr*, the largest, is 'Leg of *phagagr* of Mulaule [the old chief]; if it is not a god we can throw it away rattling to the pool' (*Goto la phagagr a Mulaule ha ngo ne a se vadimo ra go laga ra Mugulaule ra ise madiwa*). The Thavina and Nareni, tribes to the south of the Lovedu, offer to the sacred drums the first-fruits, and everywhere their beating is associated with rain and the agricultural year. Not only are the drums gods, but their sound is thought to be very pleasing to the *midzimu*, those ancestral spirits who, when the drums are sounded, come and sing and dance. The knowledge that their part is played by initiated men does not appear to detract from their importance in the eyes of those who are in the secret. The instrument used consisted in the old days of the tibia of a human being with a feather inserted (and there is reason to believe that some of these are still extant) but to-day

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they use mostly two pieces of wood slightly concave on the inside in which a piece of sinew or reed is temporarily inserted. The language being tone-bound, messages and songs can be understood when whistled. Not all ancestral spirits, but only those of the Lovedu proper and of some of the important groups, such as the Khaba and Nareni, are thought to be able to visit the earth as *zwiqiqiwi*.

The most important feature of the drum cult was the beating of the sacred drums in an enclosure near the village, usually in the afternoon and evening on six successive days twice every year: in the spring just before the sowing and in winter after the harvest thanksgiving. The spring drumming was preceded by propitiation of the royal ancestors by means of a libation on their graves in Daja Forest, where the earlier chiefs lie buried. There was a special procession which no one was to see on pain of death, the Mulodoni River had to be crossed at a special spot called *Khipabo-eukobb* (washing place of great people) and it is maintained by some that a black ox was also slaughtered. The district head at Daja, who was responsible for clearing a way to the graves, had to plant near the royal graves a little of every seed cultivated. The people would then see, it is said, which grew best and would plant much of that. The *gomana*, the beating of the sacred drums, 'was the chief thing that had the power of asking rain from the ancestors'. The sounding of the drums at harvest-time was a thanksgiving. The first harvest *gomana* after the circumcision took the form of an initiation, in which the neophytes were introduced into the drum ritual and the secret of *zwiqiqiwi*, and received cuts on their faces as a sign that they had passed through it.

Though the sacred drums are still kept and the Raoethaja people are still called to repair the hut in which they are placed, the regular beating of *gomana* drums has fallen into disuse. The last *gomana* initiation held officially by the queen in the tribe was in 1892, just before the accession of the present queen. It is difficult to account for this lapse when among neighbouring tribes the cult is still fully carried on. Some say the reason lies in the ritual murders that are associated with the drums, but since it is an accepted principle that a sheep may satisfactorily take the place of a human being and, moreover, this difficulty must somehow have been overcome in other tribes, this reason does not appear good enough. Possibly the cult was introduced from the south and had not become sufficiently assimilated or taken deep enough root to survive the lethargy induced by European contact. Perhaps the rain-making powers of the queen herself made it largely unnecessary. It is not impossible that it will suddenly spring back to life, as did the *ryali* in 1938–9 after a lapse of over thirty years.

Though the queen herself now holds no *gomana*, the institution is not dead. Elements such as *zwiqiqiwi* have taken permanent root and the queen has allowed a stranger, Rasekwain, a rain doctor of the *kwena* totem who came to live on European-owned land under her jurisdiction, to hold a *gomana* with, of course, his own drums, and in 1929, when he came to ask that boys from the royal village should be allowed to attend the initiation, she gave her consent. He holds one *gomana* a year, receiving

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881 every morning from about five o'clock till after sunrise, is looked upon as a burden that has each time to be 'lifted' (*ku rula*) by the order of some old woman or man until the arrival of the Bird, when it will rule the girls at its own pleasure. Only on rare occasions, when an important visitor comes and presents the older women with a gift of snuff or money, can initiates be excused altogether for an evening. It is a hardship, too, to go all through the winter, mild though it is in the lowveld, with no covering over the upper part of the body—so much so that one married woman in the 1939 initiation pretended she was pregnant in order that she might cover her body. When she was discovered, however, she was severely beaten. The discipline of the *nyali* is not so strict that initiates are not able occasionally to absent themselves unnoticed from the singing. If discovered, they are beaten, sometimes by the queen herself. More serious cases in which an initiate has been absent for several days are treated more drastically: a whole procession of women carrying the drums sets out to her village where they pull the thatch off the roofs of the houses and exact a fine of a goat, which is killed and eaten by women and initiates alike. Breaches of the rules in the *nyali* are punished in the 'school' itself: when a number of girls shaved their hair, an action strictly forbidden during the year of initiation, not only they but all their age-mates were beaten for the offence. As a result, the offenders were pinched and ill-treated by their fellow initiates, who had been punished on their behalf. Initiates who quarrel among themselves are beaten when they gather in the enclosure to sing. There are no hardships connected [778] with food, but on various occasions, when the girls are taken out to be shown secret objects (*digwa*), they are beaten—and one may see the marks of the sticks on their bare backs when they return. Sometimes there is an ordeal, such as being made to crawl along a path strewn with the velvet stinging-bean which causes intense irritation and itching over the whole body.

But such hardships occur only on special occasions and are by no means the order of the day. We should also be careful not to construe the beatings in terms of our conceptions. Where we have seen them, they were half serious, half playful—for instance, when the attendant of the Bird, amid merriment from the onlookers, chastised late-comers to the evening performance, the force of the blows being spent innocuously upon the skirts of the girls as they ran past him to take their places. The hardships and beatings certainly do not depress even the smallest of the girls. During the *mawale* season they had to make a large quantity of cider which was consumed by initiated women, who gave a little also to the men, and, on one occasion, when the courtyard became overgrown with grass, the initiates were made to weed it. These tasks over a period of a whole year indicate clearly that work is not a major hardship.

881 A most essential aspect of the *nyali* is the showing of *digwa*, usually 778 in some secluded spot to which the initiates are taken, but also on occasion at home in the evening, when there will be dancing all night (*Mbilolo-ewi*—night of standing). The connotation of the word *gwa* is difficult to grasp. A *gwa* is something secret and wonderful, something which it is a privilege to see and which is usually shown to initiates during an initiation.

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Though made by men or women, there is something almost supernatural about a *gwasi*: its manufacture is called 'giving birth to' (*ku demula digwasi*) and though, for example, in the case of a dancing *gwasi*, every one knows that some person is playing the part, this in no way detracts from its importance. Many of the *digwasi* are masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, or leaves. Some are mummeries with a meaning attached; others are simply interesting or wonderful objects. One *gwasi*, *dzu* (lion), consists of a sound made by passing the hand down a stick on a piece of hide held over a pot. These *digwasi* are traditional in initiations, but very often new ones are invented and, since different regiments or areas come on many ceremonial occasions with their own *digwasi*, there may be a mild competitive element in the showing of *digwasi*, especially in *khobe* and *nyali*. Laws taught in initiation ceremonial are also referred to as *digwasi*. But the greatest of all *digwasi* are the *gwasi* drums, which are looked upon as gods and are associated with the ancestors and religious ritual. *Digwasi* vary from laws or mummeries to semi-gods. The element of awe, so conspicuously absent in Lovedu religious practices, is found in their attitude towards *digwasi*—not that there is any display of awe towards them or in their presence, but that in referring to some of them people talk as though of something awesome or god-like. Even the *zwiliqiani*, ancestral spirits, who come to earth when *gwasi* drums are played or at religious ceremonies, are thought of as *digwasi*, which in this manner become part of religion itself.

The greatest *gwasi* of the *nyali* is *khinqiqwi* or *khinqiqula*, referred to also as the great Bird of Muhale or of Rhodesia who, like most *digwasi*, is believed to come from a pool in the river. It is a *gwasi* of the men and manifests itself only when there is moonlight, returning, it is said, to its pool when the moon is dark. But it is always there, secreted in its enclosure. The girls have to sing whether it is there or not, and often, though the moon is dark, it whistles its directions and commands. It consists of a light, semicircular framework about 4 ft. high, over which are put strings of the *mugo* thorn tree (*Acacia rehmannana*), which have been placed in water to become black. Surmounting it all is a small head crowned with an ostrich or other feather. It is seen only occasionally, when it comes dancing into the *nyali* courtyard at night, and, in spite of bright moonlight, its black colour makes it difficult to discern it clearly. It speaks and sings by whistling through an instrument similar to, but larger than, that used by *zwiliqiani*, made of the leg-bone of cattle.

This Bird is the ruling spirit of the *nyali*. It has many praises used by the girls in its honour. Coming as it does when the green foods of summer are being eaten and the grass is long, it is the embodiment of plenty and has daily to receive from each initiate summer foods and beer. All the time it is there every one in the area who makes beer has to bring one calabash to its enclosure. If this is not observed the person may be fined. The Bird regulates the whole procedure of the *nyali*, ordering which songs have to be sung, telling the girls when to dance, when to stop singing, what to do. At times it even gets angry and then, if it is dancing, it may stamp out the courtyard fires. Any infringement of the rules of the school are referred to as 'breaking the rible' (*ku vuna lejagwi*)

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881 of the Bird. One man was fined a goat for beating his wife. The Bird
●773 said, 'You've beaten my *mujaguni*' (married initiate); another, an important official in the *nyali*, was fined for swearing at an initiate who made a mistake in her answers to the Bird. From the time of its arrival, the women of the village may not get up and begin stamping in the early mornings before the Bird has made itself heard, and it is even said that *Khinjiguni* does not like cocks near the village, because they crow before he has begun to whistle and so disregard his precedence.

The arrival of *Khinjiguni* is a culminating point in the *nyali* and comes after long and elaborate preparations. For months before its arrival, men have been erecting various enclosures beside the village—one enclosure and hut to house the Bird itself, leading into a large courtyard in which the singing and drumming of the initiates is to take place once the Bird has arrived. At the far end of the courtyard is a row of de-barked poles set up in a specially medicated furrow, backing a carefully prepared platform on and around which the initiates stand when singing in the mornings and evenings. It is looked upon by the initiates as a kind of refuge from the Bird should he come too near. In front of this *lewalo* stands the *khulumoni* shrine of the *nyali*, a long medicated pole of *musoso* (*Terminalia sericea*) forking at the top end into a circlet of branches. Round this pole a circular mound has been built, containing a river stone like many religious shrines. Here it is that the initiates have to stand when conversing with the Bird. Besides the enclosure, there are other preparations for the arrival of the Bird. From February and March, when the grass is long enough, bundles of *lejaje* rush (*Mariscus sp.*) to be worn by the initiates once the Bird has arrived, are woven, dancing skirts of a special kind of reed strung together in pieces about 1 in. long are made, and pointed, flat pieces of wood, two for each girl, are prepared for use while singing. No significance is attached to their manufacture.

A great deal of the ceremonial of the *nyali* centres on the Bird and, in the ritual conversations that take place morning and evening between the women and the Bird, special terms peculiar to the *nyali* are employed: mealies are 'teeth of Shangana-Tongs'; beer is 'fat of the crocodile'; native potatoes are 'fingers of the baboon'; firewood is 'bones of the giraffe'. Every day some girls and women are detailed to carry the drums at about four o'clock in the afternoon to the enclosure, there to await the pleasure of the Bird. Sooner or later the Bird whistles out '*mulaw a Khidiguw*', the opening phrase of the praise of the head of the initiates, whereupon one of the girls (any one—not necessarily the chief girl herself) mounts the shrine and replies in a loud voice, 'I've been waiting here a long while, Bird of Muhale', adding one of its many praises. 'Whose *nyali* (initiate) are you?' asks the Bird. 'I am the *nyali* of So-and-so' (giving the name of her father). The Bird will then, whistling metaphorical phrases, order the drums to be beaten, indicating what song is to be sung. The sounding of the drums is the signal for all the initiates to come to the enclosure, which gradually fills as they arrive in twos and threes. After much singing and drumming, the Bird may ask, 'What have you brought me?' to which the initiate, replying, answers, 'Crocodile's fat', or whatever she has brought. In the 1938-9 *nyali* there

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was at the royal village an arrangement whereby a certain number of girls brought beer every evening (six to eight calabashes), while in the mornings each initiate came with green mealies, nuts, or any appetizing dish. These are put down at a certain spot from where the *lumati* and *lumatyoma*, men who act as go-betweens when the Bird is crying, interpreting if necessary what he says, carry it all into the Bird's enclosure, where it is consumed by old men. During the *nyali* these old men sleep in that enclosure if they like, and greatly enjoy the good food brought for the Bird. Sometimes, when too much for them has accumulated, they may send some to the queen or district head. Later the Bird orders the girls to eat their supper, which they have brought with them, and after a long time gives the order to stop, '*Kwanga*'. After a while the Bird asks for his wood. Each initiate has brought one piece of wood, with bark removed, lest, it is said, scorpions which are apt to be found in the bark bite the Bird, and at the order of the Bird all proceed to a spot near the entrance to the Bird's enclosure. Here at a given signal they throw down their wood with a great noise and rush back to their platform of safety. If the moon is bright, the girls will be told to don their dancing skirts and do their whirling dance and, if it likes, the Bird itself will come dancing in, keeping to the shadows, and with one or two men always near to act as guides. They are given the order to stop by the Bird at about ten or eleven o'clock at night or eight o'clock in the morning.

Towards the end of the *nyali*, when *mmaretlo* songs are sung, the older men come and dance before the women, waving ox tails in their hands. They would, in the *nyali* of old, wave the tail over the head of a woman they liked and, if she acknowledged it by bowing the head and clapping with hollowed hands, she was giving her consent to be his lover during the initiation. For a remarkable feature of the *nyali* was promiscuous sexual intercourse between men and women in which initiates could take part only at the end. In the 1938–9 *nyali* there was no such intercourse: it was thought that the young married men were too 'wild' (owing to modern conditions) to tolerate a position in which the older men could have free access to their wives in the initiation, and it was said that the great preponderance of women over men might lead to great jealousies and conflicts between the women for the favours of the old men.

Towards the end of the initiation a number of important events takes place. There is, first of all, a ceremony in which the old men tie up the hair of initiates—which during the year has grown to a length of an inch or two—in tufts all over the head with strings of the bark of *mmamirri* (*Rhabdotia Galpinii*). After this the women belonging to the previously initiated regiment come into the enclosure one by one, dancing and shouting the praise titles of any area in the country. They are followed by the initiates, beginning with the office-bearers, and the ceremony therefore takes a full day or longer. While this is going on, one of the girl initiates, who is addressed by the praise-title of a wife (*mainosi*) of the queen, is taken to have her hair shaved and is dressed in a leopard skin with a collarette of beads round the neck. On her return a mat is spread for her to sit on and she does obeisance in the normal manner (not the manner of initiates). Another office-bearer (*mwrisi*) is given a standard

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881 of feathers to shade the head girl. After much dancing, cloths are tied round the initiates in the manner common to the possessed. This ceremony foreshadows the end of the initiation and indicates to the whole country that it is drawing to a close. The last month is devoted to
881 dancing: every area that is holding a *ngoli* sends its initiates to dance
535 before the queen, some coming with *rubuwa*, others without. Last of
●778 all come the people of Ravothata with the *magogbya* and it is their
[292] performance that closes the 'school'. The *magogbya* have more imposing costumes even than the *rubuwa*, characterized by the stuffed baboon and duiker that surmount them. After a number of important *digwa* have been shown, there is a grand finale one night (*khilolowa*), when the Bird hangs its head sideways and says, 'My head aches and I know my end has come.' A *-gwa* of the women, the Butterfly (*khirowuch*), dressed in leaves, comes dancing in at the girls' entrance to tease and chase the Bird. Before sunrise, when the Bird has returned to its hut, some of the initiates (those who have come for a short time only) may be taken to 'touch the Bird', a terrible ordeal. Then next morning they are all taken to the river, where they are shaved and given new clothes to wear. They are now 'things from the rubbish heap' (*ruigwamothokha*), like boys after circumcision: they walk in a bent position, may not speak freely, receive gifts, and at night ask riddles (*dinyche*) specially associated with initiations. The enclosures are burnt. After a final washing in the river the initiates return to ordinary life and activities. A small operation is performed on initiates at the river on the last day. Among some tribes
[304] it consists of deflloration, but among the Lovedu it is said to consist of a cut above the clitoris which is so small that it causes no pain or inconvenience.

881 At the time when the initiates make preparations for the arrival
242 of the Bird (February–March), the boys of those areas that have the
535 *rubuwa* as well are taken out into the bush every day to learn how to weave the elaborate costumes associated with this initiation. These are of two types: a light one, said to be for hunting, and a heavy one. Both costumes have skirts of loose-hanging grass, flung out in a circle by the gyrations of the dancer, as well as comely waist, arm, and leg bands and under-skirts of woven grass. The light costume has in addition broad shoulder bands crossing over chest and back and a mask resting upon the shoulders, veiling the face and open at the top. The heavy costume is far more imposing. Besides a woven waistcoat, there is an immense covering for head and shoulders, rising to a crested summit, flecked by what gives the impression of scales arranged in rows or projecting wings, and fronted by a snout like that of a crocodile. The dance reminds one, now of the prancings of a male bird courting its mate, now of a lizard convulsively shaking its whole body as it runs upon a rock. The lizard-bird suggests a weird dragon-like mythical monster, but its appearance belies its functions and qualities, though perhaps not the mystical meaning of the *digwa* of the 'school'.

[778] The enclosure for *rubuwa* boys is made beside that for the Bird. Here, after having being beaten with medicated sticks, the boys spend their time, except when out hunting or dancing, their food being brought to

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the *nyali* courtyard by their sisters. They are taught a few 'laws' or formulae associated with the *vukwera*, but their main activities are learning to make the elaborately woven costumes and later to dance in the *nyali* courtyard. Towards the end of the initiation they spend most of their time going about to dance, accepting invitations from other district heads and paying their respects at the royal village. They do beautiful movements to the drumming of their own *nyali* girls. Only two dance at a time and, while they dance, attendants (*medabi*) stand near by supervising. The masked boys may whistle out the tune to which they wish to dance or may beg snuff by means of whistling (for this is their only means of conversation during their initiation). When they dance well, women and girls come to give them gifts of leg- or arm-rings. The *vukwera* is a kind of finishing school, an initiation into the secret of what the Bird is and how the costumes are made. It is almost as though this is an esoteric art, the preservation of which has become the main function of the *vukwera*. A person who enters the *vukwera* enclosure may be required to display his skill at weaving and in 1939 a man who was unable to weave (and thus showed himself to be uninitiated) was heavily fined. The fact that there is no *vukwera* held at the royal kraal, whose boys used in the old days to go for this initiation to Khada or to the *Tsonwi*, a section of the Khada, suggests that the institution is a more recent adoption than the *nyali*.

It is not easy for a European to appreciate the meaning and value of such institutions as *nyali* and *vukwera*. Most of their features cannot be explained by the Lovedu themselves. They are the result of a long, historical development which, in the absence of all evidence, may never be unravelled. The *nyali* has many aspects. One of the most important is that of a crossing or initiation similar to circumcision. The initiates are often called *vomedi* (crossers) and initiation may be referred to as 'to cross over' (*ku ecla*). It is conceived as a period of hardship, a crossing for which medical treatment and ancestral blessings are essential. Respect for those older than oneself is emphasized: the initiates must be humble; but older people, especially the old men who remain in the Bird's enclosure, live royally on the beer and delicacies brought daily by initiates. There is emphasis, too, on the importance of the rank of district heads and chief, and the learning of praises of all the areas, followed towards the end of the initiation by inter-district visits, is an important feature.

Intermingled with and overshadowing the *nyali* as an initiation is the *nyali* as a fertility and rain cult, related to the *gumana* drum cult and serving the same purpose. The *nyali* lasts a year, a full agricultural cycle, and some of its stages are associated with the seasons: the typical *nyali* dress of the girls cannot be plaited till the grass has grown long; the Bird arrives only when there is plenty of food. The singing of *nyali* songs is believed to bring rain. Even before the rains of the summer of 1938-9 had fallen, it was said in Uulovedu that the year would be one of plenty on account of the *nyali*. These expectations were more than realized, for not only was the summer rainy, but even the winter, which is normally dry, was exceptionally wet. Stress is laid in the *nyali* on grass and vegetation: the girls wear plaited bandoliers of grass which are said by

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784 some to render them fertile; the *digoma* are almost all made of grasses,
789 reeds, or leaves; the remarkable *vuhwera* costumes are made of various
778 special kinds of grass; and on one of the most important excursions made by the *nyali* girls, called *maiglini* (at the locusts), they are made to collect the bark of various kinds of trees. The *nyali* as a fertility rite is most clearly seen in the sexual intercourse at the order of the Bird which used to be indulged in towards the end of the initiation on the approach of spring. The true meaning of the Bird is difficult to discover, though it is significant that it is associated with moonlight, comes from a pool, and declares on its departure that it will leave mists behind it. In one praise song of the Bird it appears to be referred to as *vaqaja*, the ancestral spirits: 'I have heard you, Bird of ours and Rahufa of Muhale. The father of giving has gone, O *vaqaja*. There remain only things for which one must pay' (*Gi hu phulaphuak nomi yenu le vuRahufa a Muhale rahufa khi ile, vaqaja, hu vak kha muthago fela*). This Bird, *goma* of the old men, is related to the *gomana* cult, using the same method of whistling through an instrument.

881 The Lovedu appear to have borrowed *nyali* and *vuhwera* and the
784 *gomana* drum cult from neighbours. Some elements, like *nyiglajani*,
771 have become firmly embedded in a number of institutions; others, like *vuhwera*, are looked upon more as entertaining appurtenances without any very serious meaning beyond that of giving pleasure. But the sacred drum cult clashes to some extent with the rain cult of the queen and there is little doubt that to this fact one must partly attribute the failure to best *gomana* drums in recent years.

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643 171 Sofala had formerly to take poison when disaster or a natural defect fell upon them. Among the Lovedu, tradition decrees that the queen shall have no physical defect and must poison herself, not when she is old, but at the end of the fourth initiation (*vudiga*) of her reign. The emergence of physical imperfections and the holding of the fourth *vudiga* cannot both determine the date of suicide. In fact, no reign has been cut short because of bodily defects, though the conception of the relation survives. The queen is believed to be immune from disease and it is thought that her first will be her last illness; it is even said that Mujaji III's elder uterine brother was excluded from the throne because of his weak ankles. At the same time, not kings, but queens are wanted, there are no tests of physical fitness as are recorded for tribes in the north, and in the legends [173] of the Lovedu and of tribes which, following the Lovedu, have ritual suicide, physical defects do not figure as a theme. In this complex, heirs to the throne have been disqualified or chiefs have been deposed because of inability to make rain, disobedience to their sovereign, or adultery with his wives. Among the Mamaila, a branch of the Lovedu, one chief is said to have become a cripple because he forced open the door which magically yields to the touch of the true heir, and the Nemesis that overtook him is attributed to his sin, not to his defect. Impotence disqualifies in the north, but Mujaji II was barren and, in the pattern as adopted in some tribes, such as the Khaba of Maake, barrenness of the queen is expected; for, as the queen may have no official husband, it is a virtue to have no children. That conception is not accepted by the Lovedu, for Mujaji II's barrenness was a source of sadness and strife and every effort was made to cure her. Physical fitness is an aspect of the perfection and divinity of the queen, but it has no practical relation to the right of succession.

643 178 171 177 The relation between the length of a reign and the initiations is far more obscure. In many tribes where ritual suicide is enjoined (Thavina, Khaba, Urwa), the number of 'schools' is said to be seven. The 'schools' are there held more frequently, and possibly there is some connexion with the number of sacred drums (*digwa*), for the Khaba have seven and the Lovedu four. The chief's life, as we have seen, is intimately bound up with the drums; both drums and 'schools' are great *digwa*, objects or activities in which power is concentrated. Power is also concentrated in *dithugula*, a category of objects chiefly associated with the gods. The distinction is not that between magic and religion; the *digwa* and *dithugula* appear to belong to different cultural complexes. The one was characterised, we may suppose, by 'schools', drums, and cults linked up with national calendric observances, dramatization of the crises in life, and the sanctity and power of the chief; the other, by sacred beads, shrines, reincarnation of ancestors in dedicated animals, and ritual suicide of the chief. In the process of merging, the great *digwa* were, we suggest, grafted on to the royal institutions and brought into relation with the life as well as the death of the chief. This is little more than speculation, for it is difficult to isolate the oldest cultural substrata and their distinctive patterns.

The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly,

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634 for land would then be regarded more favourably should he one day
425 return. The fruits of the soil are dealt with in much the same manner.
423 A man may graze his cattle inside or outside the district, but the cattle posts of the old days were within the district only. We have mentioned the rivalries of herdboys of different districts; we may add that some district heads, because of traditional values and limited grazing land, object to fencing. District heads sometimes reserve valuable trees for themselves, and it is they who give permission for the cutting down of large and shady trees or indigenous fruit-trees (though they be on the landowner's land). Honey found in trees, but not that found in the ground allotted, belongs to the district head. Some heads allow only residents to cut grass, making others pay. Hunting and water rights are not so regulated, but digging of clay is sometimes, if illegally. The
[778] preservation of large forests, a national asset, as places of the gods or of refuge in time of war is the concern of the queen, so that, for instance, Mujaji II had her cattle driven into the gardens of some people, including a district head, who had cleared part of the Levyeni forest and had not begged pardon by sending a *mujamusi* to her.

634 Some distinctive cultural and administrative arrangements of the
643 districts have already been mentioned. There are many others. All
651 district heads used to have, and many still have, certain fields cultivated for them. The queen also has such fields in her districts, and since 1927 each district head has had to cultivate a field (*muvemo*) in his district for the queen, an innovation suggested by the European to enable the queen to help her people during famines. The experiment has turned out very differently. These fields are badly cultivated, for years some district heads bring no mealies, the failure only sporadically leading to the penalization of the head and his district, and the mealies are always converted into beer for entertainments at the capital that benefit only the local residents. The storage of mealies is impracticable and a system of distribution is not implied in cultural arrangements. A district head unwillingly surrenders land and sometimes expropriates first one then another landowner, so that there is much dissatisfaction and even refusal to cultivate the *muvemo*.

634 In many respects district heads are like chiefs. They are often called
651 'chief' (*khosi*) and, like the queen, have medicines to safeguard them in their position of authority. A district head is not only the most important person in the district, the centre of its political and legal life, the man who is responsible for the welfare of his people, but the obligations of district residents towards him emphasize both his position and the reciprocities between ruler and subject. It is expected that his subjects shall bring him beer periodically, and sometimes it is held that he should be invited to every beer party held in his area, partly because he is responsible for order at the beer drink and partly because it is his due. All his subjects must make *marula* cider for him in the proper season, and similarly, when at certain ceremonies, held by him for the well-being of the district, beer is required, every resident must contribute. The most important occasion is at the harvest thanksgiving and the beer brought is regarded as being in return for the land given by the head to his people. On the pattern of

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769 which royal ancestors only can withhold; differences in the harvest
24 between one area and another are often attributed to fights between the
782 witches of the two areas, and even variations in yield between one man's field and his neighbour's may be due to witchcraft. Yet one finds in prayers many a request for a good harvest, even though there are no special ceremonies devoted to this end. A man pouring a libation for a sick child said among other things, 'Give us corn; when we plough let us also reap. Why are you stinting us?' And it is significant that the only regular religious observance is the harvest offering of beer made of each year's new corn in villages where there are shrines or dedicated animals. When any one dies, there is thought to be danger that the fertility of the [764] crops will depart with him or her. Hence, when a gourd of seeds of every kind is placed in the grave together with a firebrand and calabash of water for the journey, some of the seeds are scattered over the body with the words, 'Do not depart with all the corn and seeds,' and very often the grain belonging to the deceased is treated with medicine in order that it may remain fertile.

769 Above all, the ancestors complain, a fact which lies at the basis of
782 Lovedu religion, for by far the greater proportion of religious rites are those performed in response to ancestral complaints. One might at first think it strange that the gods, in life just ordinary, well-disposed people, should in death be so liable to bring trouble upon their kin. Sometimes it is thought to be a sign of love: when Masilu's grandmother had made him ill because she wanted a goat dedicated to her, his mother said, 'No wonder his *gogo* seized him. She was always so fond of him.' But chiefly it is the nature of ancestors to complain; as the Lovedu phrase it, 'When people sleep (*i.e.* are dead), they ought to complain' (*Hi nwba ne khi lala fane na mwengi ba ndzala*). When there is illness, they are, as it is phrased, 'seen in the divining bones'; it is they who sometimes 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult childbirth, and sometimes, but far less than among the Nguni, their complaints cause dreams. Our close friend [788] Walter, coming to seek work in Johannesburg, dreamt disturbing dreams of his dead father, who appeared to say that he was needed at home. He thereupon returned home and, when he arrived, his mother took him to a doctor, whose bones declared that the dead father was annoyed at not having been told of the journey to town and had to be appeased (*ba pheme*). Walter was well educated, but he had failed in his last examination and felt doubly frustrated. He had great ambitions of reforming the political system of the tribe, from which his education had divorced him, and in town he was dissatisfied that nothing was open to him but the unskilled work of his uneducated compatriots.

769 An ancestor may complain about the way he has been buried, and if he
782 has died far from home, may demand to be 'brought back home' in a
● 778 ceremony in which, besides the dedication of a beast or goat, a goat is killed and eaten, its bones being buried as though it were a person. But this 'bringing home', involving the making of a shrine, applies only to those dying at a distance and does not resemble the 'bringing home' of the Zulu, among whom it is part of death ceremonial. At times the gods complain of neglect. But in the majority of cases no definite reason for

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the complaint is either given or required; and frequently no special spirit is mentioned. It is enough to know the cause of the trouble and what rite is necessary to placate the gods. Even complaints of neglect are usually put positively: 'He complains that you should give him (his shrine) a libation'. The ancestors desire mainly to be remembered: they want their beads worn, their name revived, a beast or goat dedicated to and named after them. They also like to be told about journeys undertaken or marriages, in much the same way as the living, and to be approached with a libation. Yet, unlike the Nguni, they never complain of being hungry; nor are the gods said to drink the libation or even its spiritual counterpart, but are merely pleased to be given their due. There is no such thing as resting secure because you have done all that is necessary for the gods; there is always some ancestor who can cause trouble, and it is best to wait and see what is wanted. Moreover, the ancestors are wayward; there is no knowing what they may desire. Mambeuli asked to be buried at Khikhwi, but after his death he caused sickness, saying, 'Why did you bury me in the valley in the sun' (instead of in the ancestral grove), and a black sheep had to be sacrificed on his grave. Similarly, Mulogwane, brother of the queen, who in 1934 became a Christian on his death-bed, withheld rain in 1935 because they had buried him in a Christian cemetery. Religious rites among the Lovedu tend, therefore, to be addressed to those spirits that cause trouble and in the absence of illness there may be no rites at all.

Certain objects which were once in the possession of the ancestors are used in religious ceremonial and are thought to have special powers of protection and healing. These objects, consisting of ancient beads of glass or native-worked iron or copper, native-wrought assegais, hoes, axes, iron rods with spiked heads, are handed down in the family and carefully cherished. Very often when a daughter leaves to be married, she is given a few beads to take with her for use when she is ill. Such charms are called *thagula*. Illness caused by an ancestor can generally be cured by a ceremony known as *ku phasa*: a mixture of ground grain and water is poured over beads or other *thagula* objects in the presence of the patient while a prayer, scolding the spirits and asking for health, is made. The beads are then worn by the patient till he recovers. After *ku phasa* on beads for any one, he may wear them at any time with protective results, and small children generally wear many old beads. Masenibe called here 'my hospital' (*spitola na ga*) to illustrate their powers to us in European idiom. Patsane says, if he does not wear the crocodile bone that was his father's, he gets ill or dreams much of dead people. Association with the ancestors, not anything inherent in these objects, gives them their powers, for we have seen an old Boer gun brought out as a *thagula* at an offering. Yet for a charm to heal it is not essential that it should have been in the possession either of the complaining ancestor himself or of his family. Sometimes the gods, through the dice, mention beads or other objects not known in the family at all. It is then concluded that they have been lost and steps are taken to procure them from some one else or from the queen, who has many. Then when they pray, it will be mentioned: 'We are replacing the lost bead.'

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769 782 825 Offerings may be poured on the ground or on *thugula* objects. Sometimes, however, the ancestors desire a shrine or a dedicated animal. The queen herself and some others have dedicated cattle, male or female, according to the spirit represented; a few families have sheep, while the majority have goats. Fowls are neither dedicated nor killed for the gods. But we have one instance of a dedicated snake, that in the Relela family, to which in 1939, at their burial grounds in the depths of the forest, libations were offered when the *syali* initiation began in that district; the conception is wholly alien to the Lovedu, though the Relela have been so long linked with, as to be indistinguishable from, them; and the snake, said to whistle, is described as like that dreaded monster, the 'mountain snake' which is often thought of as a mamba but strikes terror like the omen it is. The use of these different animals is traditional in, and bears no relation to the wealth of the families concerned; some have a dedicated animal, others merely a shrine, while many have both. The dedicated animal receives the name of an ancestor, father or grandfather in the case of the head of the lineage, or of any complaining spirit that has demanded such *thugula*, and it is believed that his spirit (*moya*) has entered into it. Some dedicated animals are credited with abnormal powers: Mamujaji's agitation one day, while being driven to the dip, correctly presaged unpleasantness with the dip inspector; Malegudu is the fiercest bull in the land, like the warrior whom he represents. Though some people unceremoniously pour beer-offerings down the throat of dedicated animals, it is generally claimed that, unlike ordinary animals, they readily drink beer, but the claim is contradicted by the mealie leaves put over the beer to coax the animal to drink. In 1938, when Malegudu, called from the herd to drink the harvest beer, remained immovable, every one was afraid to approach him, but it was considered sufficient to throw the beer over him from a distance, so that by licking himself he might partake of the offering.

• 778 Shrines, which are to be found generally on the left-hand side of the entrance to the sleeping hut of the chief wife, vary in appearance and contents. A shrine may consist of a small mound of earth, containing the [124] bones of a sacrificial goat; it may be a sacred plant or tree, usually *pipiguani* (*Hypoxis villosa*) or *lezwe* (*Haemanthus sp.*) and *mutabu* (*Ficus capensis*), a black river stone, a long stick, or even a piece of a certain kind of ant heap (*khiphoni*). The queen's own shrine is a mound under which are buried the bones of a goat slaughtered some twenty years ago when it was set up. Mashishimali's shrine contains no bones, but consists of a *pipiguani* lily and a river stone, both visible above ground. Ramatiti has three shrines and one dedicated goat, all of which have arisen out of illness caused by ancestral complaints. Of the first, the shrine of his father, nothing is visible above ground; it consists of a buried piece of ant-heap, used instead of a goat because Ramatiti is not the chief son, who should have the dedicated animal, and a black river stone which keeps the spirit cool and appeased (lying down), as well as the three plant substances [124] *mufiru*, *lesupo* (*Alipedia sp.?*), *vulamapi*, which are placed in most shrines to make the ancestors 'forget'. The other two are mounds containing the bones and heads of goats, one representing his mother, the other, like the live goat, his mother's brother, his wife's father.

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In the actual working religion of the Lovedu the commonest and most conspicuous rite is *ku phasa*, consisting of a prayer and the pouring on to earth or *thupula* of a mixture of ground, sprouted grain and water, a mixture colloquially referred to as *mujawa lesclo* (the rinser of the winnowing basket). More rarely *ku phasa* is merely spitting out water in the courtyard to the accompaniment of such prayer. There is no formulated distinction in principle between the two forms; the Lovedu say that the dice decide which is to be used. We found water squirted in illness caused by complaints of the living; in some cases of difficult birth; where in the initiation of a possessed woman the spirit was begged to manifest itself; and in one exceptional instance water was squirted on the face of a corpse addressed in prayer before it was buried (usually the corpse is merely addressed when the grains are put into the grave). The efficacy of *ku phasa*, which is also used magically to render witchcraft ineffectual, appears to lie in its 'cooling' effect. *Ku phasa* is performed in connexion with a large number of cases of illness and bad luck and is the recognized approach in asking for blessings on a journey or an undertaking. Hardly a week passes without some one in the neighbourhood having to *phasa*, and generally the prayer in these cases takes the form of a 'scolding' (*ku rukasa*), in which the spirits are asked why they are causing illness and told to be satisfied. One does not *phasa* without also using charms in the mixture to make the spirits forget, and the officiator may be male or female, whomsoever the dice have indicated. Rites of thanksgiving, except for the customary harvest beer, are almost unknown. We came upon such a rite only once when the bachelor brother of Madinji returned home after an absence in town of thirty years and she performed *ku phasa* in the presence of the family, saying, 'Spirits of Mambeuli, this is one of your fowls. We thought he was lost; now he is back. Keep him as you have kept the rest of us. If he goes away, let him soon remember and long for his home.'

The only regular offering is the annual harvest beer given to dedicated animals and shrines, though even this may be neglected: the village may be moved without the shrine, or the dedicated animal die without being replaced. We ourselves witnessed the setting up of a shrine and dedicated sheep after twenty years' neglect in the chief house of Sedena. Much more formal than ordinary rites of *ku phasa* is the harvest offering, which may take place any time between July and November, for there is here no rule that the queen should take precedence. The officiator is a woman where possible, the *khadi*, who is specially called to come, and real beer, called *mapholo* and made of eleusine, is prepared for the ceremony. If eleusine is not available, red kaffir corn (*mabhabo*) may be used, but no other grain is acceptable to the spirits. In its preparation, which is in the hands of old women or girls below the age of puberty, care must be taken that the eleusine is stamped, not ground on the grindstone, and that none of it is tasted before the gods have been given some. Ordinary beer is tasted to see if it is ready, but *mapholo* is smelt or tasted by stirring with a twiglet. Though the married women of the village play no part in the religious rites on such occasions, it is the duty of the chief wife in whose courtyard the ceremony will take place to smear with dung the place

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XVI. RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

(a) AT THE LILY SHRINE

(b) A TYPICAL LOVEDU SHRINE

[facing p. 289]

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

RELIGION. In common with the other Bantu tribes of South Africa, the people of the Lowveld have ancestor worship. The form which it takes here bears many resemblances to that found among the Venda and also to that of the Shangana-Tonga though it differs from both in a number of ways. Characteristic of the religion of Lowveld tribes are the predominance of the beer offering to the almost complete exclusion of the blood sacrifice, the use of shrines and dedicated goats or cattle, the powers attributed to old beads and other objects once in the possession of the ancestors, the prominent part played by women, the virtual equality of ancestors on the mother's and father's side and the cult of the *dajaw* in which old men deceive women and the uninitiated by acting the part of ancestors supposed to be returning to the village after certain ceremonies. 771

The creator-god, to whom however no worship is directed, is known as Khudzwane, use of the term *Modimo* in this sense being in the Lowveld probably a Christian innovation. Belief in a sky-god, such as that of the south-eastern tribes, is absent, while spirits such as the mountain and river spirits believed in by Venda, and Tikoloshe, Impundulu and other half-mythical creatures who play so important a role in the everyday life and beliefs of Pondo and Xhosa are quite unknown in the Lowveld. Instead, one finds the *dajaw* or *dowajaw*, ancestral spirits who come after sunset after important religious ceremonies in the royal family, during the *Asmana* drumming and sometimes, among Lobedu, at the installation of an important headman, and call in thin, wailing voices. Often they whistle out their own names or throw stones at the village, scolding people for having broken customs, till beer is brought to them and they are appeased. They are ancestors, yet they are only half-men with one leg and one arm instead of two;[1] they dwell in the sacred woods, and when they come no one is to leave the village, women and children shutting themselves up securely in their huts. The fact that the part is acted by a few old, trusted men is not known to many. 776 [17] [88]

The sacred place at which offerings are made is not the cattle kraal 778

[1] Among Venda, *dadjaw* are thought to be mountain spirits with one leg, one arm, &c., the sight of whom brings death to the traveller. They have no connexion with ancestor worship and are said to be mostly of Sotho origin. This is clearly a borrowing.

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

or back of the hut, as among Zulu-Xhosa, but a shrine in the courtyard of the chief hut. Lowveld shrines vary from family to family but are easily recognisable. A shrine may consist of a mound of earth, a stick and river pebble, a spot where a thithikwane lily has been planted or a long stick planted in the earth like the Shangana-Tonga shrine. The contents of these shrines also vary within a general pattern: the Lobedu royal family place the bones of a sacrificial goat or ox in the mound; other families bury two black river pebbles and a piece of a special kind of antheap, and there are many further variations. Always there are, in addition, charms given by the doctor to prevent the ancestors from causing trouble. Instead of a shrine, or even along with it, one may find a beast or goat dedicated to the ancestors, usually bearing the name of one of them, which will at all important offerings be made to drink of the beer given to the spirits.[1] Important national offerings, especially supplications for rain, are made at graves of deceased chiefs or the sacred wood in which chiefs are buried. Great importance is attached to objects, especially old beads, hoes, spears that have once belonged to the ancestors. These are handed down from generation to generation, are placed beside the shrine when an offering is made or may even be used instead of a shrine in a beer offering. Old beads are peculiarly important for ensuring the health of any one wearing them and are used in the curing of many illnesses caused by neglect of ancestors. Sacred drums are to be found in every tribe; these are the *Ramaru* drums, thought to be inextricably bound up with the welfare of the tribe as a whole. Among the more southerly tribes of the area, these drums are smeared with the first-fruits when the chief eats the first-fruits, beaten on all important occasions such as the harvest offering and pierced on the death of the chief.

The officiator in important offerings is generally the father's sister or, if she be dead, the eldest sister in the family; but if she lives too far away the head of the family himself may officiate. In general, the officiator calls on ancestors both on his father's and on his mother's side and there may even be two shrines, side by side, one for the father's line, one for the mother's. There is no evidence of any differentiation between the four lines of grandparents to the exclusion

[1] The Venda pour the beer on the beast.

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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and the use of *dithugula*, objects such as beads which have once been in their possession; but they can also be constrained by medicine or the properties of matter. 769 771

Ancestors are capricious: their complaints as seen in the divining bones are usually about being neglected; but they may cause illness to those they love most in order to receive recognition, have their name perpetuated, or their beads worn. They are said to 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult labour, to afflict children with sore eyes, and even to prevent the queen from making rain. Their complaints need imply no omission or neglect on the part of the afflicted descendant, but merely some special desire that could not have been anticipated. The degree of either neglect, or tendance bears no relation to their satisfaction or dissatisfaction, since the ascription of misfortune to the ancestors is always *ex post facto*: hence the paradox that a family that is assiduous in its tendance of the ancestors may suffer more ill health and misfortune than one that has neglected the ancestors for a long time. 753

Dithugula are instrumental in controlling nature not only indirectly through the ancestors but also directly by virtue of the substances used in them. A *thugula* may be a shrine to an ancestor (male or female), an animal dedicated to him, old beads or objects of iron to which, owing to their having once been in his possession, power to influence him is attributed. But a *thugula* may also be any charm of herbs concocted by a doctor and worn for protective purposes. The queen's rain-medicines are *dithugula*. The most important religious ceremony of the year, the annual offering of beer to ancestors as thanksgiving for the harvest, is also called *thugula*. *Dithugula* thus constitute a category of objects, usually closely associated with the ancestors (though they may be made by a doctor), through which they may be approached, and which have special virtue particularly to give health and protection against ills and epidemics. 778

Dithugula are found in every lineage which, through its shrines, dedicated animals, and charms, secures the general welfare of its members. The queen's *dithugula*, her rain-medicines, sacred objects, and shrines through which she intercedes with the royal ancestors, are the ultimate symbols of her power and the safeguards of the welfare of the country; and just as certain medicines (*diphuba*), which are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget their complaints, are pegged round the village by the paternal aunt or sister of its head to protect it against witches, so also the queen may *thugula* the whole country by sending boys to peg medicated sticks on its boundaries as a protection against evil, particularly epidemics that might threaten it from outside. [769]

The queen's control

The basis of the queen's control over nature is her divinity. So bound up is she with nature that her very emotions affect the rain. The complex of royal institutions includes the conceptions that she must be without 643

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season pro-
821 pitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gwana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time,
821 people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain
789 in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*ku lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle,
773/ or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lenga*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[789] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufuga* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale disperses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with
821 her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digoma

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
799 of man consists of *digoma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *goma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
811 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *nyali-ombera* (fertility cult) is one. A *goma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *goma* which is said to 'bite'

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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *gama*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794 881

With the *vyali-vukwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*vyali*) and for boys (*vukwera*), are associated many *digama*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khindgane*, Bird of Muhale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *vyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *gama* and a symbol of the royal ancestors.

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *vyali-vukwera* with its great *digama* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digama*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalaborwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir sits on the smallest drum while being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vudimo* (gods) as well as *digama*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gamana* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [794 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digama* are the *vuidajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thapula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gamana*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *lenge* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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171 The *gnoma* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend
•778 *gnoma* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an
821 outsider. The *gnoma* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *swidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and
772 magic (*swapa*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of
821 the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digoma*. The seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digoma*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal
811 evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a
821 much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu. To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: men and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of
772 the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from con-
811 ditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desic-
821 cation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

S:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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is thought to be so deeply attached to her daughter's children that she is always troubling them—wanting them to be named after her, to be given her beads to wear, to have a dedicated goat or shrine set up. One therefore sometimes finds three or four shrines in a homestead.

The Local Group

The local group reflects the balance that is achieved among the Lobedu between agnates on the one hand, and on the other, relatives on the mother's side and affines (one and the same thing depending on the generation from which they are viewed).

A random group of thirteen homesteads forming a neighbourhood, is shown in Figure 8. They are closely linked by agnatic,

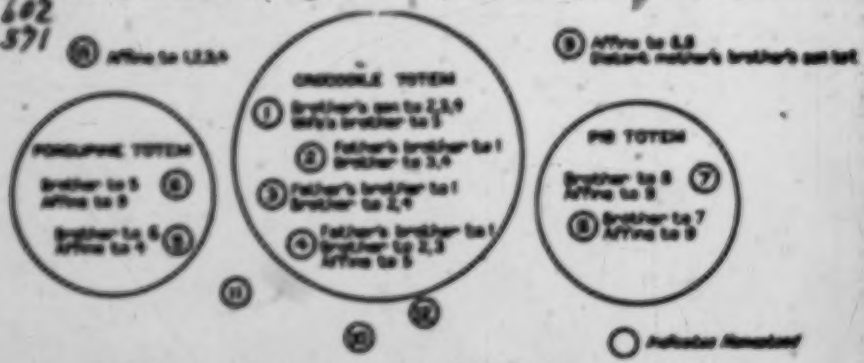

FIG. 8. Agnatic, cognatic and affinal ties in a neighbourhood.

cognatic and affinal ties and share in many economic, ritual and recreational activities.

These homesteads fall into three main clusters of agnates belonging to the Crocodile, Porcupine and Pig totems near which are two homesteads No. 9 and No. 13, which have affinal and cognatic links with these clusters, and three unrelated homesteads, Nos. 10, 11 and 12, the last-named being foreigners, Tsonga, who had little to do with the rest.

The Crocodile cluster (homesteads 1, 2, 3 and 4) had originally been a single homestead which had broken up on the death of the father, head of the district. Other close agnates lived a little further off, not shown on the diagram. This cluster

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Though made by men or women, there is something almost supernatural about a *gwa*: its manufacture is called 'giving birth to' (*ku dzwala digwa*) and though, for example, in the case of a dancing *gwa*, every one knows that some person is playing the part, this in no way detracts from its importance. Many of the *digwa* are masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, or leaves. Some are mummeries with a meaning attached; others are simply interesting or wonderful objects. One *gwa*, *dau* (lion), consists of a sound made by passing the hand down a stick on a piece of hide held over a pot. These *digwa* are traditional in initiations, but very often new ones are invented and, since different regiments or areas come on many ceremonial occasions with their own *digwa*, there may be a mild competitive element in the showing of *digwa*, especially in *khubu* and *nyali*. Laws taught in initiation ceremonial are also referred to as *digwa*. But the greatest of all *digwa* are the *gwama* drums, which are looked upon as gods and are associated with the ancestors and religious ritual. *Digwa* vary from laws or mummeries to semi-gods. The element of awe, so conspicuously absent in Lovedu religious practices, is found in their attitude towards *digwa*—not that there is any display of awe towards them or in their presence, but that in referring to some of them people talk as though of something awesome or god-like. Even the *muiljaani*, ancestral spirits, who come to earth when *gwama* drums are played or at religious ceremonies, are thought of as *digwa*, which in this manner become part of religion itself.

The greatest *gwa* of the *nyali* is *khinglwani* or *khinglwala*, referred to also as the great Bird of Muhale or of Rhodesia who, like most *digwa*, is believed to come from a pool in the river. It is a *gwa* of the men and manifests itself only when there is moonlight, returning, it is said, to its pool when the moon is dark. But it is always there, secreted in its enclosure. The girls have to sing whether it is there or not, and often, though the moon is dark, it whistles its directions and commands. It consists of a light, semicircular framework about 4 ft. high, over which are put strings of the *mugu* thorn tree (*Acacia rehmannana*), which have been placed in water to become black. Surmounting it all is a small head crowned with an ostrich or other feather. It is seen only occasionally, when it comes dancing into the *nyali* courtyard at night, and, in spite of bright moonlight, its black colour makes it difficult to discern it clearly. It speaks and sings by whistling through an instrument similar to, but larger than, that used by *muiljaani*, made of the leg-bone of cattle.

This Bird is the ruling spirit of the *nyali*. It has many praises used by the girls in its honour. Coming as it does when the green foods of summer are being eaten and the grass is long, it is the embodiment of plenty and has daily to receive from each initiate summer foods and beer. All the time it is there every one in the area who makes beer has to bring one calabash to its enclosure. If this is not observed the person may be fined. The Bird regulates the whole procedure of the *nyali*, ordering which songs have to be sung, telling the girls when to dance, when to stop singing, what to do. At times it even gets angry and then, if it is dancing, it may stamp out the courtyard fires. Any infringement of the rules of the school are referred to as 'breaking the ribs' (*ku rwa lejaori*)

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The immortality of Lovedu spirits is of practical importance in their working religion only for two or three generations back; beyond this they are hardly remembered. The spirits that cause most trouble are one's grandparents, and in religious practices these tend to be the most important. Both sides of the family, that of one's father and that of one's mother, are equally important; both cause trouble and both must be placated; and this is an accurate reflection of the social structure, of relationship reckoned bilaterally, and of the cattle links. The configuration of the ancestral world is no different from that of the ordinary world. It is therefore not surprising that all four lines of grandparents are recognized. Even when a spirit in the line of the father's father is being placated, the line of the father's mother may also be mentioned: thus we have heard an officiator in a *phase* ceremony calling, not only upon his father's younger brother, the spirit troubling its granddaughter, but also upon his father, father's father, elder brother, mother, and elder sister. Dedicated goats to male ancestors tend to, but do not always, run in the male line. As in social or political arrangements, the male line may recede before the female; it may even, as far as ancestors are concerned, become almost completely obliterated. In the Matsui family, for instance, the father's father's line is neglected, except for *his phase*, when they cause illness, but the father's mother's line is all important. It is to the latter that the beast Mamujaji is dedicated and it is to this beast that the new corn is given every year. This emphasis reflects the links with the queen which the family wishes to emphasize, for Mamujaji, the ancestor of the father's mother, was mother of Mujaji I.

The coherence of the social and the ancestral worlds is seen even in regard to the implications of the *mayemale* system. Biological relationship not socially recognised is of no importance in religion, and not only can the biological father of an illegitimate child or his relatives never cause illness, for the 'gods follow the cattle' (*modimo e tsela dikhomo*), but the queen's ancestors cause illness in children of any of her wives, whoever their father may be, and it is the queen who is often required to *phase* for them. In the gathering together in worship of all relatives the social system is similarly reflected. When after many deaths or much illness in a family the dice order a *mukhuro*, a religious gathering of all relatives, not only the lineage but relatives on both sides (*malugo*), including those by marriage, meet. Each brings a basket of corn as a contribution towards the beer for the occasion, but a relative who is on bad terms with the others will, of course, simply stay away.

Not only the scheme of institutionalised social relations, but the nature of these relations in ordinary life is reflected in religion. The fact that the gods were known in life is largely responsible for many of the outstanding characteristics of Lovedu worship. We must not expect a behaviour pattern of humble worshipper to omnipotent god. Awe and trepidation characterise the attitude to the mysterical secrets of great *digoma*, but they constitute a category poles apart from the ancestors and *dithugula*. People pray to ancestors as men to men, scolding them or reminding them of their duties to their children. The following prayer, uttered when Pheduli was brought home, is typical: 'We say, here is your corn, Pheduli.

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*modimo wetu*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me an liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious
753 (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's
786 daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite unexpectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*ha phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of the girl, *phasa* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognised as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phasa*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, '*If it is* I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Ha phasa* in these circumstances recognises psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mahadu* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not

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of the lines of the father's mother and mother's father, such as is mentioned by Stayt for the Venda. The complete absence of any awe or reverence when the Bantu approach their ancestors is seen in the loud talk, jokes and laughter of all except the officiators themselves, and the discussions that frequently take place between the officiator and his neighbours in the middle of proceedings as to what he should do next and how he should do it. As is the case with Europeans, some families are more religious than others, and the very human tendency to forget the gods when things go well is well marked. Some people are always giving to the gods, telling them of all important happenings in the family, giving them a share of any beer that arrives at the kraal, asking their blessings; others forget to perform even the harvest thanksgiving and, unless illness or other trouble comes to show the anger of the ancestors, years may elapse without any religious ceremony taking place.

THE DOCTOR. No religious ceremony of any importance takes place without the co-operation and advice of the doctor; indeed the majority of offerings that are made are done on the advice of the doctor, who determines in every case all such details as which charms are to be used, whether any special relatives have to be present, what if any beads are to play a part. The great doctor is a figure of inter-tribal importance; he works not in one tribe but in many, a fact which largely accounts for the uniformity in the religious practices of different tribes, in contrast to the diversity found in any one tribe. All doctors are not, however, of the same importance. The herbalist, of whom there are hundreds, both male and female, has a limited sphere. He has inherited from his parents or some other relative, often, in the case of a woman, from her husband, one or more medicines or type of medical treatment such as the cutting of veins for blood-letting and a cure for epilepsy, and this he dispenses to all who come.

The doctor, *par excellence*, is the bone-thrower who combines with his divining an extensive knowledge of medicine. There is nothing spectacular about the Sotho doctor; he wears no special or distinguishing dress; his methods are not directed to securing any dramatic effects. Unlike the doctor in Zulu-Xhosa society who is called to his profession by the spirits, undergoes a long period of *ukutwasa* during

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24 (*Phaseolus aureus*). Several varieties of sugar-cane (sweet sorghums) are planted on the boundaries of fields or between the other crops.

Njago beans are ancient groundnuts which require a good deal of attention by way of mounding, restrictive taboos and careful pulling up, although they are very welcome as a change of diet. In this respect they [17] resemble peanuts, which were popularized by the Shangana-Tongs not so long ago. These nuts sometimes answer well where other crops have failed; in certain years they may flourish while the cereals wither in the sun. Then you may hear people say, but it is only by way of joking among the Lovedu, that the Shangana-Tonga witches have called the cereals to undergo circumcision (*ku cha*). Some people in the valleys are half-inclined to believe the claims that the Shangana-Tonga make for their witches, because it is undoubtedly uncanny that, when the nuts succeed the cereals fail, and vice versa. But usually the claim is ascribed to the desire of these outcast people to assert their importance—the Lovedu know nothing of inferiority complexes, but they are shrewd judges of human nature.

Sesamum used to be popular in the valleys and is said to be an old crop of the Roka. But peanuts have ousted this wholesome, albeit very troublesome, crop. You will be told that the reason lies in the growing laziness of people; this is a reason given for the neglect of many other old crops, but in truth we have here merely a shift in the application of the available resources. A delightful commentary on some of the values of the society, though we must warn the reader not to judge them from our standpoint, is the name *lewoyo-modimo*, 'sesamum of the gods'. It is [162] a wild variety, unsuitable for human consumption, but good enough for the gods. It is not given to the gods, yet it reminds one of the sprouted eleusine merely mixed with water that is offered to the gods with the words, 'This is not water. Truly it is beer.'

261 There are other crops and the variety furnishes a well-balanced diet. But that is not considered to be the virtue of variety. A food is good if it fills. That is why they prefer their hard cakes of porridge to our watery oatmeal. They are inured to that feeling of fullness since the day of their birth, when Grandmother rammed porridge down their throats. But there is comfortable fullness and uncomfortable fullness—that after a good porridge meal and that after eating too much *njago* bean. The stomach is not insensible to certain distinctions, though they are not our distinctions. Filling is not the only virtue of a food. Some foods relieve the monotony of the round of porridge and blackjacks, and some are [14] tasty dishes or rare delicacies. But no one thinks of the virtues of a balanced diet, for nutritive and protective qualities of foods are not recognised. The old diet, simple though it might be from our point of view, was sufficiently varied to maintain people in good health; but it is not realized that, precisely because it was so simple, even a small change might eliminate essential ingredients. That change has not yet come among the Lovedu, but it is near at hand. Subsidiary crops are becoming less popular. You still see cowpeas, mung beans, water melons, even *lavar*, sweet potatoes, and native beans. Yet, on the whole, what is most impressive is the growing reliance upon cereals and pumpkins, and the

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[24] annually tilled, though the actual extent varies considerably according
[31] to the vagaries of the weather, the surplus in the granaries, the availability of implements and animals, and other factors. We do not think that in present conditions the absence of man-power in the towns is a material
29 factor. On the contrary the man-power available is more than sufficient
964 as long as present methods are employed. The introduction of the plough has liberated more energy than is absorbed by work among Europeans; the number of inactive men has increased rather than decreased. It is the shortage of animals and implements, rather than of men, that is most impressive. Even European labour and European ploughs and cattle are employed by the Natives; they come from the neighbouring farms and can do the work more economically than the Native with his inadequate resources. But it is not lack of human material, it is the impossibility of making the ploughs and animals go round, that necessitates such ex-
24 pedients. In the companies and partnerships, those who contribute the
976 essentials, the cattle or the ploughs, are the dominant partners, and the others must often wait until late in the season before their needs can be attended to. The partnerships thus lead to tensions and strife, and hiring of services is becoming more popular. Yet on the whole the system works with remarkable smoothness. If it worked perfectly, the Natives would realize much more forcibly that it is not lack of industry that, as they think, is at the bottom of their troubles, but the inadequacy of the land and of their material resources.

231 Although animal husbandry ranks as a very poor second economic activity, it is still of sufficient importance to warrant a few remarks even in such a general account as this. Pastoral activities are not arduous; in the old days they were worthy of the metal of adult men who went armed to herd the cattle and supervised the milking. But to-day children herd
[22] and there are practically no cows to be milked. Cattle are individually owned both by men and women, but the kind of ownership, except in the case of some 15 per cent., is entirely different from what we understand by the word. For the vast majority of cattle are linked to the chain of *masumalo* (bride-price) exchanges and as such the individual's rights over them are subject to many restrictions. The primary value to the
[262 Natives of cattle is not economic, but social; he regards cattle as food
●782] only in the last resort, though there is no taboo against killing them. Cattle are not killed as sacrifices. Ownership of cattle is not the chief or
[554] even a very important method of reckoning status. A man will complain, not because he has no cattle, but because he cannot brew beer to maintain his prestige. The dung of cattle is used for smearing, cattle that die are eaten, and cattle are killed in time of starvation so that the meat can be exchanged for mealies. But cattle are, generally speaking, much too large units of value to be of use in economic exchanges. Finally, the needs of cattle do not determine the routine of the day. They are taken out late, after the dew has dried and the herdboys have had their morning meal; and they come back almost unnoticed without disturbing the arrangements of the village. In a sense, however, their needs set limits to the harvesting season; crops which are not reaped by the beginning of July are practically at their mercy. Yet, despite all this, cattle are regarded

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for medicines. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion. 231 431 [12] [241] [242]

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels. 231 [79] [242] [262] 224

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses: 124

Muvidividi (*Ekebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young. [212]

Muvidisa-eyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal. [273 278]

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to terminos and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *muvilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the [278 784]

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is the interest of a sister in the house established by her cattle that she may on occasions even exercise some control in her brother's choice of a wife. Dwagu wanted to marry Mabula, who was already married. His sister's husband then said, 'We shall not allow you to use my cattle to marry that woman. She will bring nothing but trouble.' If the wife obtained by means of the sister's cattle is badly treated by her husband, she may run to his sister, who will intervene on her behalf, or even in extreme cases arrange for her to live permanently away from her husband, who could then never claim a return of the bride-price from his wife's parents. Mubale, whom we knew well, had, under the influence of his second wife, chased away his chief wife, who ran to his sister. She advised the wife to make some pardon beer and take it as a peace-offering, but when he refused this his sister arranged for the woman to live with a widow in the village next door to her. Now, when Mubale's second wife quarrels and refuses to cook for him, he takes refuge with the wife he chased away till the storm is over!

The influence of a sister is reinforced by her religious position. At the annual harvest offering to the gods, it is always the eldest sister in the family who has to officiate. She is the one best able to intercede with the spirits. Any displeasure or secret grievance against her brother on her part may have the effect of stirring up the spirits to cause illness in his household, especially among his children (certain other relatives also have this power, but one hears most often of the sister). Hence it is said, 'The sister should roast pips; if she roasts the village [is angry] it will go up in flames' (*khadi e hadiga dithaga; yo hadiga motse u yo tsu*). Sometimes a sister may threaten her brother, saying, 'If I complain, nothing will be good in your village.' On the death of the father, it is the eldest sister who, together with the father's brother, divides out the inheritance, and, at the only installation of a district head that we were able to witness, the emblems of office were handed over to the young heir's sister for him, though he was already in his twenties. In view of all these facts, a man's sister has great influence over him and may be called to remonstrate with him, more especially in matters affecting his own household when even his parents have been unsuccessful. But she has no right to interfere without just cause and, if she were to make needless trouble, her brother would very soon ask her to leave his village in peace.

Not all sisters play the role that has been ascribed in general terms to a man's sister. Though every sister is potentially priestess and guardian of her brother's household, in practice all these offices are seldom combined in one person. In religious ceremonies affecting the family as a whole, the eldest daughter of the chief wife would officiate; in case of illness, a man's uterine sister might be asked to officiate. If the sister whose cattle has been used is younger than her brother, she may have little influence as compared with her elder sister; furthermore, where the sister is a woman of no personality, her influence may be negligible. It is a man's uterine sisters that play the biggest part in his life, for in this, as in everything, the individual family is always asserting itself as against the larger, polygynous family group. A classificatory sister, one by the mother's sister or father's brother, or one by a wife of the father other

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they use usually two pieces of wood slightly concave on the inside in which a piece of straw or reed is temporarily inserted. The language being tone-bound, messages and songs can be understood when whistled. Not all ancestral spirits, but only those of the Lovedu proper and of some of the important groups, such as the Khaba and Nareni, are thought to be able to visit the earth as *zwiljejani*.

The most important feature of the drum cult was the beating of the sacred drums in an enclosure near the village, usually in the afternoon and evening on six successive days twice every year: in the spring just before the sowing and in winter after the harvest thanksgiving. The spring drumming was preceded by propitiation of the royal ancestors by means of a libation on their graves in Deja Forest, where the earlier chiefs lie buried. There was a special procession which no one was to see on pain of death, the Mokodoni River had to be crossed at a special spot called *Khipabo-eakolobi* (washing place of great people) and it is maintained by some that a black ox was also slaughtered. The district head at Deja, who was responsible for clearing a way to the graves, had to plant near the royal graves a little of every seed cultivated. The people would then see, it is said, which grew best and would plant much of that. The *gwamse*, the beating of the sacred drums, 'was the chief thing that had the power of asking rain from the ancestors'. The sounding of the drums at harvest-time was a thanksgiving. The first harvest *gwamse* after the circumcision took the form of an initiation, in which the neophytes were introduced into the drum ritual and the secret of *zwiljejani*, and received cuts on their faces as a sign that they had passed through it.

Though the sacred drums are still kept and the Raretheja people are still called to repair the hut in which they are placed, the regular beating of *gwamse* drums has fallen into disuse. The last *gwamse* initiation held officially by the queen in the tribe was in 1892, just before the accession of the present queen. It is difficult to account for this lapse when among neighbouring tribes the cult is still fully carried out. Some say the reason lies in the ritual murders that are associated with the drums, but since it is an accepted principle that a sheep may satisfactorily take the place of a human being and, moreover, this difficulty must somehow have been overcome in other tribes, this reason does not appear good enough. Possibly the cult was introduced from the south and had not become sufficiently assimilated or taken deep enough root to survive the lethargy induced by European contact. Perhaps the rain-making powers of the queen herself made it largely unnecessary. It is not impossible that it will suddenly spring back to life, as did the *nyali* in 1938–9 after a lapse of over thirty years.

Though the queen herself now holds no *gwamse*, the institution is not dead. Elements such as *zwiljejani* have taken permanent root and the queen has allowed a stranger, Rasekwalo, a rain doctor of the *lenze* totem, who came to live on European-owned land under her jurisdiction, to hold a *gwamse* with, of course, his own drums, and in 1929, when he came to ask that boys from the royal village should be allowed to attend the initiation, she gave her consent. He holds one *gwamse* a year, receiving

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585 431 walk in single file. The bride (and sometimes her companions too) weeps, fearful of the new life full of responsibilities. They visit the boy's cattle-linked sister to be offered a goat and as a reminder that it is that sister who with her cattle has erected the new home. There may be a dumb show as the girls, marching up and down, display their final reluctance to give up the bride and, by contrast, the old women humorously mock the girls. At the gate of the boy's village they have to be carried in, and at last, as they humbly crawl to enter the hut, some one pours water on the roof and you hear the song, 'Little bride of ochre, seek shelter, you are raining wet'.

This is merely the general plan; there are many embellishments and many variations. But of some significance and worth mentioning as illustrative of the comprehensive nature of the ceremonial are the last few gifts just before the bride leaves home. There is a goat or 10s. to 'lift' the bride from maiden to wife, for every important new step she takes may, in Lovedu phraseology, be made the occasion for asking something; another goat to 'take out the stamping block', symbolizing the transference of the bride's chief economically productive power; and still another to 'finish the complaints' of the bride's mother. Among neighbouring tribes there are similar gifts, but sometimes with different names and often, though having the same name, with different functions. A study of their reinterpretation by, and merging with the purposes of, each culture cannot be undertaken here. To two points we may, however, briefly refer. Occasionally among the Lovedu there are reciprocal feasts entailing the slaughter of a beast, first by the bride's and then by the bridegroom's family, and ending with an extra beast given by the latter to 'fill up the *maeyusalo*'. These feasts belong to a very different pattern, found, for instance, among the Urwa, where bride and bridegroom before the final acts are made to sit together on a mat, are offered advice and given presents. Secondly, and in strong contrast to many other tribes, the bride comes to her new home without any presents from her people. The troop of girls carry a twisted basket (*Mbirudzumu*) in which there are certain grains from the bride's village, but everything else except the grains, even her clothes, have been given her by the bridegroom. Her people give her nothing whatever to set up a new home. Household utensils she does not need, for she cooks in the hut and uses the pots and furniture of her mother-in-law until, with the coming of a younger daughter-in-law, she becomes independent and has her own cooking hut.

585 ●782 In a really orthodox marriage among the Lovedu there is a religious ceremony. It is preceded by the slaughter of the 'goat of killing' brought by the bridegroom; a leg is given to him and from the skin the bride's *thoyoma* (skirt) is made. Thereafter a prayer is offered to the gods on behalf of the girl: 'Here is the women. We let you know that she is leaving us. She is going to the place where she is married. Let her be happy there; let all she does there be right; let her be smeared with fat [have children]. We have no complaint against her [i.e. we shall not cause illness through being angry and so also you should not]; we have given her beads to help her so that she may make a good home where she

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is going.' It is, of course, an extempore prayer, not bound to any set words. After this rite there is no need to elope; it is *ha nego*, to marry with proper rites, not *ha pala*, to run away surreptitiously. Yet the secret elopement by night is so interesting that it frequently follows, and in any case the slow journey of the troop of girls, who must be persuaded at every step, is always part of the ceremony.

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The final stage of the marriage ceremonial consists of several successive steps lasting a month or longer. Again a whole series of new gifts (*mamusa*) passes and new rites are enacted. From early morning until late at night the bride's companions are busy—cooking, stamping meslies, bringing water for the inmates of the village to wash in, and in other ways. At night there are contests of riddles between the visiting girls and the boys and girls of the village; they are ordinary riddles (*dithai*), not those curious *dinyetho* that end the initiations, but the pattern of the institution is the same. There is, for instance, the *ha nusa* of the girls at every turn and their exaggerated politeness. Then, after a week, having fetched wood and distributed among themselves the gifts received, the bride's companions go home, crawling out of the village and accompanied some way by the boys. The bride is now alone and, still in her finery, she begins to do the household work. When she menstruates for the first time, she secretly 'flees the moon' (*ha shawa mwedi*), running to an old woman, who takes her back with beer of 'shunning the moon' and a goat is killed for her. This shunning of the menses is a minor detail in marriage ceremonial, with rules and observances, however, in which the virginity of the bride, the part played by the go-between, the division of the beer and meat, the reciprocal duties of the *nomukhulu* and the *nafukulu*, the one giving beer, the other returning a goat, are once more emphasized.

[641]

But all the rites and ceremonies are equally full of meaning, not only for the purpose in hand, but for the whole social structure. About three or four weeks after the marriage the bride goes to her home with the goat or 10s. of 'pouring out her bridehood' (*ha shulla nwanyai*), and thereafter, according to ideal standards, the bridegroom may exercise full marital rights. This 'pouring out', with its associated observances, is still universally carried out, though the couple may already have received permission to cohabit. If the bridegroom migrates to town, as sometimes happens, before the home-bringing of the bride, the breach of orthodox rules, implied by the premature permission, is avoided. After a while the bride returns and brings the beer to 'open the way' for her mother. In the old days the boy's people then sent the *ha hakela* goat, the goat 'of asking permission' for the consummation of the marriage. At the stage when permission to cohabit is given, the couple are ritually mixed, the ceremony varying from mutual inoculation to common steaming under a blanket: it is a rite pregnant with meaning and with the associations it acquires as being a part of many other ritual occasions. The bride becomes an apprentice to her mother-in-law, there are avoidances and gifts (*mamusa*) to remove them and so, at every stage, the marriage ceremonial is cut to the configuration of the social structure, fitted into its foundations and walls, and made to merge into the smallest details of its ornamentation.

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XIV. THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

(a) DIAGNOSING THE CAUSE OF ILLNESS

(b) THE SHAMAN POURS MILK TO APPEASE THE ANCESTORS

[facing p 209]

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against sorcery: when the doctor made Nogumbi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *Molowo* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*ba phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they stand up (*wo rwa*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*lowya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*ba goba*). The *lowya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *lowya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Phodoli, whose wife's death was attributed to *lowya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *lowya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstruating woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafo*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafo*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *gwe* or *rukudzi rya wundi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 50 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *gwe*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Gwe is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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CHAPTER XIII

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Ancestral cupidity and complaints and rites to appease them—the universe of the ancestors a replica of the everyday world—relations of magic, morality, and religion—possession by spirits as a religion and socio-psychological phenomenon.

Native spirits and hero-gods have no place in the Lovedu scheme of things. There is, however, Khazwane, the creator, who made all things, including men, and left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when these rocks were new and soft. But no one knows what has happened to him and no one ever thinks of him. The gods of the Lovedu are their ancestors, deceased fathers and mothers who guard one in death as they did in life. Each family has its own ancestors, and religious observances are thus peculiarly a family concern. 776 769

Ancestors have various attributes. They are one's protectors and no harm can befall one unless they, the ancestors, are neglectful. Witches, powerful as they are, can neither enter the village nor cause sickness without their connivance; hence the procedure in divination, even in the clearest case of witchcraft, of inquiring whether the spirits should be appeased. Disease cannot enter nor epidemics break out if only the ancestors are watchful enough and well-disposed. Again and again one finds this idea expressed in prayers; 'Protect us from epidemics [winds]', they say; while the queen in a prayer at her harvest ceremony put it even more positively: 'As regards life, we have been very well, but now we are being killed by that epidemic which you have allowed to come', referring to smallpox. There can be no success without the co-operation of the ancestors. Medicine cannot help nor doctors heal if the ancestors are not with one. This idea, reminiscent of our 'By the will of God', is expressed in the phrase, 'We do not say our doctor, [will heal]; we say *our* doctor and the ancestors'. It appears also in a prayer we heard on behalf of an absent son working in town, when a goat, dedicated to his grandmother (father's mother), who had made him ill two years before, was being given the new coat: 'Here is the child; here he is, mother. We ask that you let him be happy and cool (give him health). Tell all the other spirits [certain names mentioned], and we who remain, *we say our thing with the gods*.' 769 769 782 782

The phrase '*vadima lalowe*' (spirits, sleep) which rounds off so many prayers, and the constant fear of waking up (*ku dzosa*) the ancestors, causing them to stand (*ku ema*) and cause trouble, appear at first as a peculiar contradiction, as though people do not wish their gods to be watchful. The term *lala* is, however, idiomatic, expressing peace, things being as they should be, as in the phrase, '*Ha na malaw; shaga la lala*' (There was order; the country slept), implying that the rains were good and all was well; while *ku dzosa* in this sense means stirring to anger rather than waking up from sleep. 769 782

The ancestors are responsible for the fertility of the crops. True, nothing could grow without rain, for which the queen is responsible and 769 241 782

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769 which royal ancestors only can withhold; differences in the harvest
24 between one area and another are often attributed to fights between the
782 witches of the two areas, and even variations in yield between one man's field and his neighbour's may be due to witchcraft. Yet one finds in prayers many a request for a good harvest, even though there are no special ceremonies devoted to this end. A man pouring a libation for a sick child said among other things, 'Give us corn; when we plough let us also reap. Why are you stinting us?' And it is significant that the only regular religious observance in the harvest offering of beer made of each year's new corn in villages where there are shrines or dedicated animals.
[764] When any one dies, there is thought to be danger that the fertility of the crops will depart with him or her. Hence, when a gourd of seeds of every kind is placed in the grave together with a firebrand and calabash of water for the journey, some of the seeds are scattered over the body with the words, 'Do not depart with all the corn and seeds,' and very often the grain belonging to the deceased is treated with medicine in order that it may remain fertile.

769 Above all, the ancestors complain, a fact which lies at the basis of
782 Lovedu religion, for by far the greater proportion of religious rites are those performed in response to ancestral complaints. One might at first think it strange that the gods, in life just ordinary, well-disposed people, should in death be so liable to bring trouble upon their kin. Sometimes it is thought to be a sign of love: when Masilu's grandmother had made him ill because she wanted a goat dedicated to her, his mother said, 'No wonder his *gogo* seized him. She was always so fond of him.' But chiefly it is the nature of ancestors to complain; as the Lovedu phrase it, 'When people sleep (*i.e.* are dead), they ought to complain' (*Hi nathu ne khi lala fase ve ruanegi hu ndzala*). When there is illness, they are, as it is phrased, 'seen in the divining bones'; it is they who sometimes 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult childbirth, and sometimes, but far less than among the Nguni, their complaints cause dreams. Our close friend
[787] Walter, coming to seek work in Johannesburg, dreamt disturbing dreams of his dead father, who appeared to say that he was needed at home. He thereupon returned home and, when he arrived, his mother took him to a doctor, whose bones declared that the dead father was annoyed at not having been told of the journey to town and had to be appeased (*hu phasa*). Walter was well educated, but he had failed in his last examination and felt doubly frustrated. He had great ambitions of reforming the political system of the tribe, from which his education had divorced him, and in town he was dissatisfied that nothing was open to him but the unskilled work of his uneducated compatriots.

769 An ancestor may complain about the way he has been buried, and if he
782 has died far from home, may demand to be 'brought back home' in a
778 ceremony in which, besides the dedication of a beast or goat, a goat is killed and eaten, its bones being buried as though it were a person. But this 'bringing home', involving the making of a shrine, applies only to those dying at a distance and does not resemble the 'bringing home' of the Zulu, among whom it is part of death ceremonial. At times the gods complain of neglect. But in the majority of cases no definite reason for

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the complaint is either given or required; and frequently no special spirit is mentioned. It is enough to know the cause of the trouble and what rites is necessary to placate the gods. Even complaints of neglect are usually put positively: 'He complains that you should give him (his shrine) a libation'. The ancestors desire mainly to be remembered: they want their beads worn, their name revived, a beast or goat dedicated to and named after them. They also like to be told about journeys undertaken or marriages, in much the same way as the living, and to be approached with a libation. Yet, unlike the Nguni, they never complain of being hungry; nor are the gods said to drink the libation or even its spiritual counterpart, but are merely pleased to be given their due. There is no such thing as resting secure because you have done all that is necessary for the gods; there is always some ancestor who can cause trouble, and it is best to wait and see what is wanted. Moreover, the ancestors are wayward; there is no knowing what they may desire. Mambeuli asked to be buried at Khikhuti, but after his death he caused sickness, saying, 'Why did you bury me in the valley in the sun' (instead of in the ancestral grove), and a black sheep had to be sacrificed on his grave. Similarly, Mulogwane, brother of the queen, who in 1934 became a Christian on his death-bed, withheld rain in 1935 because they had buried him in a Christian cemetery. Religious rites among the Lovedu tend, therefore, to be addressed to those spirits that cause trouble and in the absence of illness there may be no rites at all.

Certain objects which were once in the possession of the ancestors are used in religious ceremonial and are thought to have special powers of protection and healing. These objects, consisting of ancient beads of glass or native-worked iron or copper, native-wrought assegais, hoes, axes, iron rods with spiked heads, are handed down in the family and carefully cherished. Very often when a daughter leaves to be married, she is given a few beads to take with her for use when she is ill. Such charms are called *thugula*. Illness caused by an ancestor can generally be cured by a ceremony known as *ku phase*: a mixture of ground grain and water is poured over beads or other *thugula* objects in the presence of the patient while a prayer, scolding the spirits and asking for health, is made. The beads are then worn by the patient till he recovers. After *ku phase* on beads for any one, he may wear them at any time with protective results, and small children generally wear many old beads. Maseriba called hers 'my hospital' (*spitala aa ga*) to illustrate their powers to us in European idiom. Patsere says, if he does not wear the crocodile bone that was his father's, he gets ill or dreams much of dead people. Association with the ancestors, not anything inherent in these objects, gives them their powers, for we have seen an old Boer gun brought out as a *thugula* at an offering. Yet for a charm to heal it is not essential that it should have been in the possession either of the complaining ancestor himself or of his family. Sometimes the gods, through the dice, mention beads or other objects not known in the family at all. It is then concluded that they have been lost and steps are taken to procure them from some one else or from the queen, who has many. Then when they pray, it will be mentioned: 'We are replacing the lost bead.'

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769 Offerings may be poured on the ground or on *thugula* objects. Some-
782 times, however, the ancestors desire a shrine or a dedicated animal. The
825 queen herself and some others have dedicated cattle, male or female, according to the spirit represented; a few families have sheep, while the majority have goats. Fowls are neither dedicated nor killed for the gods. But we have one instance of a dedicated snake, that in the Relela family, to which in 1939, at their burial grounds in the depths of the forest, libations were offered when the *vyali* initiation began in that district; the conception is wholly alien to the Lovedu, though the Relela have been so long linked with, as to be indistinguishable from, them; and the snake, said to whistle, is described as like that dreaded monster, the 'mountain snake' which is often thought of as a mamba but strikes terror like the omen it is. The use of these different animals is traditional in, and bears no relation to the wealth of, the families concerned; some have a dedicated animal, others merely a shrine, while many have both. The dedicated animal receives the name of an ancestor, father or grandfather in the case of the head of the lineage, or of any complaining spirit that has demanded such *thugula*, and it is believed that his spirit (*mwya*) has entered into it. Some dedicated animals are credited with abnormal powers: Mamujaji's agitation one day, while being driven to the dip, correctly presaged unpleasantness with the dip inspector; Malegudu is the fiercest bull in the land, like the warrior whom he represents. Though some people unceremoniously pour beer-offerings down the throat of dedicated animals, it is generally claimed that, unlike ordinary animals, they readily drink beer, but the claim is contradicted by the mealie leaves put over the beer to coax the animal to drink. In 1938, when Malegudu, called from the herd to drink the harvest beer, remained immovable, every one was afraid to approach him, but it was considered sufficient to throw the beer over him from a distance, so that by licking himself he might partake of the offering.

778 Shrines, which are to be found generally on the left-hand side of the entrance to the sleeping hut of the chief wife, vary in appearance and contents. A shrine may consist of a small mound of earth, containing the
[824] bones of a sacrificial goat; it may be a sacred plant or tree, usually *tiṭigwani* (*Hypoxis villosa*) or *leome* (*Hæmanthus sp.*) and *muṭabu* (*Ficus capensis*), a black river stone, a long stick, or even a piece of a certain kind of ant heap (*khiṭhoni*). The queen's own shrine is a mound under which are buried the bones of a goat slaughtered some twenty years ago when it was set up. Mashishimali's shrine contains no bones, but consists of a *tiṭigwani* lily and a river stone, both visible above ground. Ramatiti has three shrines and one dedicated goat, all of which have arisen out of illness caused by ancestral complaints. Of the first, the shrine of his father, nothing is visible above ground; it consists of a buried piece of ant-heap, used instead of a goat because Ramatiti is not the chief son, who should have the dedicated animal, and a black river stone which keeps the spirit cool and appeased (lying down), as well as the three plant substances
[824] *mufira*, *lesogo* (*Alipedia sp.?*), *vulewaja*, which are placed in most shrines to make the ancestors 'forget'. The other two are mounds containing the bones and heads of goats, one representing his mother, the other, like the live goat, his mother's brother, his wife's father.

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In the actual working religion of the Lovedu the commonest and most 788
conspicuous rite is *hu phasa*, consisting of a prayer and the pouring on to earth or *thugula* of a mixture of ground, sprouted grain and water, a mixture colloquially referred to as *mufaxwa lestlo* (the rinser of the winnowing basket). More rarely *hu phasa* is merely spitting out water in the courtyard to the accompaniment of such prayer. There is no formulated distinction in principle between the two forms; the Lovedu say that the dice decide which is to be used. We found water squirted in illness caused by complaints of the living; in some cases of difficult birth; where in the initiation of a possessed woman the spirit was begged to manifest itself; and in one exceptional instance water was squirted on the face of a corpse addressed in prayer before it was buried (usually the [764]
corpse is merely addressed when the grains are put into the grave). The efficacy of *hu phasa*, which is also used magically to render witchcraft ineffectual, appears to lie in its 'cooling' effect. *Hu phasa* is performed in connexion with a large number of cases of illness and bad luck and is the recognized approach in asking for blessings on a journey or an undertaking. Hardly a week passes without some one in the neighbourhood having to *phasa*, and generally the prayer in these cases takes the form of a 'scolding' (*hu rohasa*), in which the spirits are asked why they are causing illness and told to be satisfied. One does not *phasa* without also using charms in the mixture to make the spirits forget, and the officiator may be male or female, whomsoever the dice have indicated. Rites of thanksgiving, except for the customary harvest beer, are almost unknown. We came upon such a rite only once when the bachelor brother of Madinji returned home after an absence in town of thirty years and she performed *hu phasa* in the presence of the family, saying, 'Spirits of Mambeuli, this is one of your fowls. We thought he was lost; now he is back. Keep him as you have kept the rest of us. If he goes away, let him soon remember and long for his home.'

The only regular offering is the annual harvest beer given to dedicated 782
animals and shrines, though even this may be neglected: the village may 778
be moved without the shrine, or the dedicated animal die without being replaced. We ourselves witnessed the setting up of a shrine and dedicated sheep after twenty years' neglect in the chief house of Sedena. Much 241
more formal than ordinary rites of *hu phasa* is the harvest offering, which 782
may take place any time between July and November, for there is here no rule that the queen should take precedence. The officiator is a woman where possible, the *khadi*, who is specially called to come, and real beer, called *muphaba* and made of eleusine, is prepared for the ceremony. If eleusine is not available, red kaffir corn (*makhaha*) may be used, but no other grain is acceptable to the spirits. In its preparation, which is in the hands of old women or girls below the age of puberty, care must be taken that the eleusine is stamped, not ground on the grindstone, and that none of it is tasted before the gods have been given some. Ordinary beer is tasted to see if it is ready, but *muphaba* is smelt or tested by stirring with a twisler. Though the married women of the village play no part in the religious rites on such occasions, it is the duty of the chief wife in whose courtyard the ceremony will take place to smear with dung the place

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241 where they will pour and to carry the beer in the *khirudwana* basket used
782 in honour of the gods. The occasion is one of joy. The women have already in all likelihood sung *lesugu* songs special to the occasion amid joyous trillings while preparing the beer and, since in addition to the special beer of the gods much ordinary beer will have been prepared, a wide circle of relatives, including those of the wives, will have been invited.

When the queen held her *thugula* ceremony in August, 1938, Didi was despatched at eight o'clock in the morning to fetch home Magovo, the cow dedicated to the queen's mother, for the harvest giving should take place fairly early in the day, though in practice the rule is often observed in the breach and we have seen ceremonies take place after midday. As it is not easy to drive home one cow of a herd, all were driven and put into the *khɔrɔ* where every one had gathered. When Magovo's hind legs had been tied, the chief wife of Mulogwane, deceased brother of the chief to whose family the queen is *khadi*, appeared carrying in a basket a calabash of beer and the queen's mother's beads (*mudala*, the well-known 'beads of the water'). Pouring some of the beer in a wooden platter, she handed it to the queen, who, holding the beads in her hands, placed it before Magovo with the words, 'Here is beer, Magovo of Muhale (one of the earliest kings), beer of the new corn. We say, Stop this epidemic (winds) to which you have exposed us. Here, too, are your beads. We see neither people (subjects) nor riches; we see only that poverty which you have left for us.' The cow sipped a little of the beer, whereupon all prostrated themselves in greeting (*hu lɔsha*), while one or two women rent the air with their joyous trillings. Sometimes (but it was omitted on this occasion) the beads are placed round the neck of the cow and left there for the whole day.

The dedicated cow having been untied, all now repaired to the courtyard of the chief wife of Mulogwane, where they sat round the shrine, the queen and sons and daughters near by, wives further away, while the small children were made to kneel on the lower side of the shrine, hands together and palms up. Pouring out beer on the mound, the queen said a prayer similar to the previous one, adding that the gods must tell one another and not leave any one out. Then, drinking a little herself, she placed the calabash on the ground for the next person to take up and drink. Each one in turn placed the gourd on the ground for the next to take up, till all the relatives had drunk, when it was returned to the queen. She drank once more, saying, 'He who gives to the gods must not remain hungry,' and laid the calabash upside down on the mound. The small children lapped up the beer from the ground, and trilling and *hu lɔsha* marked the end of the ceremony.

241 Now pots of beer for the crowd that had gathered were brought out and
782 general drinking began. After a while the men took out the drums and
533 began dancing an old dance, the *matagwa*. Thereafter the women began
535 the sacred *lesugu* songs, to which men and women danced in a ring in the courtyard of the chief wife. The queen herself beat the big drum. It was now near sunset. Suddenly a wail like the bleating of a sheep was heard; another, then another, in the direction of the bush behind the

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village. It was the *zwidajani*, ancestral spirits come to join in the joy and revelry of the living. They opened the next song and joined in the singing of the women, all in the whistling language which people make out by its tone. Later more beer was brought out and when the *zwidajani* began a new song no one took any notice. 'If you are drinking beer, what are we to drink', came the wails of the *zwidajani* and a pot of beer was brought to the bush by councillors. Dancing and singing continued till the small hours of the morning, when the sounds of the *zwidajani* disappeared in the direction of Maulwi, the burial grove of the dead queens, and the revellers, happy and drunk from beer of the *thugula*, retired to bed. The spirits visit only important members of the royal group and a few other families, but beyond this there are no differences between the harvest giving of the queen and that of other people.

Ritual killings of all kinds are insignificant by contrast with the beer offering. There are, first, killings specially for the ancestors, but they are so rare that many people have never seen them. Secondly, there are occasions when the killings, clearly ritual, are not thought of as an offering or sacrifice, because nothing is given to the ancestors. And, thirdly, there are killings, not associated with ancestors or religion, in which small pieces of meat may nevertheless be set aside to 'tell' (*hu suma*) the gods of some event or to propitiate them. *Hu suma* is a conception somewhat different from our 'offer' or 'give'; it has two connotations as used in ordinary life: it is either merely to inform a superior or, by extension of this idea, to send him a share of something good one has, such as a leg of an animal slaughtered or a calabash of the beer one has brewed. In approaching the gods, sometimes one and sometimes the other conception is uppermost.

The killing which most clearly contains the conception of an offering and the primary purpose of which is propitiation of the gods is the slaughter of a black sheep for rain at the grave of a royal ancestor: the victim is immolated, small pieces of meat cut from all parts of it are set aside for the gods, and all the bones are collected and buried in the grave, together with the stomach contents. Equally stressed, however, is the eating of the meat without salt by the assembled crowd. At the installation of a district head, a beast, referred to as a *thugula*, is killed and, in so far as it is killed in a special manner and morsels of meat set aside for the gods to be cooked and later eaten without salt by children below the age of puberty, it is the vicarious submission of a gift to the ancestors. But the major portion of meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones collected, for a hind leg is sent to the queen. So little is the 'goat of killing' in marriage ceremonial regarded as an offering or sacrifice that we sought for it in vain in the context of a killing for the ancestors. Yet pieces of meat are laid on the shrine and a prayer offered, though the rest of the meat is not ritually eaten nor are the bones kept. Still further removed from an offering is the goat killed on a death to provide a skin for covering the body: its meat is eaten without salt, and all who partake of it must sleep in the hut of the deceased, but nothing is given to the ancestors and no prayer is offered. On the other hand, though the *lebpo* doctor, when killing a goat to treat a patient, sets aside pieces of meat

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782 for his ancestors, this killing, primarily medical in purpose, is not to propitiate and has no religious significance.

An interesting though unusual killing among the Lovedu is the 'bringing home' of a spirit. Maborɔmɔ, an uninherited widow living with her three children in a village of relatives, had had much illness in the family which, after consultation with many doctors, was attributed to her husband's brother Pheduli. Pheduli had been stabbed to death in a Johannesburg compound and was now complaining, 'I want to be brought home with a head of cattle.' All his relatives were asked to be present and contribute their share of corn, because 'We are placing a beast to be Pheduli'. On the day of the ceremony a young black and white bull-calf was caught and held, and, when beer (*muphaba*) was poured down its throat, the *khadi* uttered a prayer, saying, 'Drink and tell all the other spirits these matters.' Then they repaired with the same calabash to the courtyard, where all the children were called to sit near: the *khadi*, praying for health, poured the beer on a spear, battle-axe, and horn which had belonged to Pheduli, and the children drank what was left in the calabash, each one placing it in turn on the ground. The doctor, who, supervising his side of the ceremony, had been busy in a hut preparing his medicines, now came out and asked that the dedicated calf again be caught. Mixing a powder, said to consist of *muftɛra* and other medicines to make spirits forget, he told the *khadi* to smear it on some of the hairs at the end of the tail and to tie a knot. He himself then smeared the whole tail and body. Repairing to the courtyard where the *thugula* objects still lay, the doctor took out a bag of powder, which he shook up to 'smoke' the objects in its dust. Then he dug a hole where the beer had been poured.

Meanwhile the meat of a goat which had been killed was cooking in a pot. Before the killing (which we did not witness), medicine, we were told, had been smeared on the goat while the doctor uttered the words, 'Sleep, sleep here, and look after your people.' The meat was eaten without salt by the relatives as well as a few others who were present and the bones carefully collected. A dog seized hold of one and was chased by all till the bone was retrieved. Having placed the bones in the hole, the doctor inquired, 'In which direction do the Lovedu look when buried?' The *khadi* pointed to the north. Then, taking the head of the goat, he placed it facing north on top of the bones and said, 'We people all look in that direction.' He took out medicine, which he gave to the *khadi* to pour on the bones, smoked them with his powder, and ordered that the hole be filled with the stomach contents mixed with earth. The *khadi* then beat down the earth and made a small mound. Dancing and the
533 singing of *lesugu* songs now began and continued all night till at dawn the
535 *khadi* took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) thrice, saying, 'As for us, we are going, we are returning home. And you, may you remain in peace.' In the beer that was provided for this festive occasion was put some medicine, 'the powder of death', generally used after a death, lest people *khuma*; for the burial of the goat symbolizes the burial and bringing home of their ancestor, just as the dedicated goat symbolizes the immortality of his spirit.

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which 789
the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, 372
when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of
mufugo and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gumnifera*) to every village [824]
in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard
and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are
cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used [842]
that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been
smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new
fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a
brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In
return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or
groundnuts, which they eat in the *khɔrɔ*. Each married man in turn must
give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s*. or a
fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other
gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khèthe*), anything may
be given. Each boy must give 1*s*. or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping
the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on
the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine,
took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water,
which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay
five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps 821
have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the 769
close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the 782
queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khaḍa; sometimes it is Mugɔdɔ's
sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's
brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery,
instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place
only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lova* the
queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods
to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lova*, 787
but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 643
'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the 789
queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The
reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for
the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case,
no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as
to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome
spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it
was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to
do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital
approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she
impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but
they have "weakened" (*hu figchela*) it. They want me to be troubled.'
She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people them-
selves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft,
had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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778 or back of the hut, as among Zulu-Xhosa, but a shrine in the courtyard of the chief hut. Lowveld shrines vary from family to family but are easily recognizable. A shrine may consist of a mound of earth, a stick and river pebble, a spot where a thithikwane lily has been planted or a long stick planted in the earth like the Shangana-Tonga shrine. The contents of these shrines also vary within a general pattern: the Lobedu royal family place the bones of a sacrificial goat or ox in the mound; other families bury two black river pebbles and a piece of a special kind of antheap, and there are many further variations. Always there are, in addition, charms given by the doctor to prevent the ancestors from causing trouble. Instead of a shrine, or even along with it, one may find a beast or goat dedicated to the ancestors, usually bearing the name of one of them, which will at all important offerings be made to drink of the beer given to the spirits.[1] Important national offerings, especially supplications for rain, are made at graves of deceased chiefs or the sacred wood in which chiefs are buried. Great importance is attached to objects, especially old beads, hoes, spears that have once belonged to the ancestors. These are handed down from generation to generation, are placed beside the shrine when an offering is made or may even be used instead of a shrine in a beer offering. Old beads are peculiarly important for ensuring the health of any one wearing them and are used in the curing of many illnesses caused by neglect of ancestors. Sacred drums
778 are to be found in every tribe; these are the *komana* drums, thought
534 to be inextricably bound up with the welfare of the tribe as a whole. Among the more southerly tribes of the area, these drums are smeared with the first-fruits when the chief eats the first-fruits, beaten on all important occasions such as the harvest offering and pierced on the death of the chief.

782 The officiator in important offerings is generally the father's sister or, if she be dead, the eldest sister in the family; but if she lives too far away the head of the family himself may officiate. In general, the officiator calls on ancestors both on his father's and on his mother's side and there may even be two shrines, side by side, one for the father's line, one for the mother's. There is no evidence of any differentiation between the four lines of grandparents to the exclusion

[1] The Venda pour the beer on the beast.

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

of the lines of the father's mother and mother's father, such as is mentioned by Stayt for the Venda. The complete absence of any awe or reverence when the Bantu approach their ancestors is seen in the loud talk, jokes and laughter of all except the officiators themselves, and the discussions that frequently take place between the officiator and his neighbours in the middle of proceedings as to what he should do next and how he should do it. As is the case with Europeans, some families are more religious than others, and the very human tendency to forget the gods when things go well is well marked. Some people are always giving to the gods, telling them of all important happenings in the family, giving them a share of any beer that arrives at the kraal, asking their blessings; others forget to perform even the harvest thanksgiving and, unless illness or other trouble comes to show the anger of the ancestors, years may elapse without any religious ceremony taking place.

THE DOCTOR. No religious ceremony of any importance takes place without the co-operation and advice of the doctor; indeed the majority of offerings that are made are done on the advice of the doctor, who determines in every case all such details as which charms are to be used, whether any special relatives have to be present, what if any beads are to play a part. The great doctor is a figure of inter-tribal importance; he works not in one tribe but in many, a fact which largely accounts for the uniformity in the religious practices of different tribes, in contrast to the diversity found in any one tribe. All doctors are not, however, of the same importance. The herbalist, of whom there are hundreds, both male and female, has a limited sphere. He has inherited from his parents or some other relative, often, in the case of a woman, from her husband, one or more medicines or type of medical treatment such as the cutting of veins for blood-letting and a cure for epilepsy, and this he dispenses to all who come.

The doctor, *par excellence*, is the bone-thrower who combines with his divining an extensive knowledge of medicine. There is nothing spectacular about the Sotho doctor; he wears no special or distinguishing dress; his methods are not directed to securing any dramatic effects. Unlike the doctor in Zulu–Xhosa society who is called to his profession by the spirits, undergoes a long period of *ukutwasa* during

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugɔ*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*figehela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *dere*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

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2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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643 766 [789] and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mufugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

643 765 372 651 789 A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mufugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khɔrɔ* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mufugo* (*hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

372 783 177 Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite.

Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khɔba*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*vudiga*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*washe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *vyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu swa*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mufugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mufugo* is used before the accession of a new queen.

Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, i.e. firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mufugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital.

Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *gɔma* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*diphaba*) in which the products of the sea are the most powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mufugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler.

Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly reasserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be suspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite.

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

304 Scarification, except in the mutual inoculation and blood mixing of
757 husband and wife prior to their first sexual intercourse after marriage and after the death or miscarriage of a child, is a treatment that is directed less at the evils of blood than towards a strengthening of the body or part of the body by the insertion of medicine. It is used in curing headache, for
[752] sprains and broken limbs, and for all 'strengthenings', such as that prior to taking a child out of the hut for the first time or the 'fixing' of one's body against witches. For general strengthenings, incisions are made on all the joints and on other parts of the body, such as head and neck depression, which are considered important. Scarification is, with the drinking of medicine or eating of powders, quite the most common form of medical treatment; it is used in the home as much as by diviners and forms part of many other treatments, such as the vapour bath. By far the most
751 interesting form of scarification is, however, '*hu themela*' (vaccination) against smallpox in which matter from the pustules of affected persons, mixed with other medicines, is inoculated to introduce the disease in a mild form. It is done on the dorsal side of the wrist or on the forehead, a pattern which supports the claim that it was known prior to the advent of the European; moreover, the ingredients of the serum used by Euro-
[77] peans are not known. Possibly the treatment was borrowed from Arabs, who were the first to study smallpox and measles. The old method was
[164] still widely practised in the 1938 smallpox epidemic, for, though it was realized that it 'called' the disease instead of curing it, people noted that, despite European vaccination, there was still much illness.

757 Steaming and the vapour bath also form part of the practical elements in Lovedu medicine. There are various forms of steaming and smoking, all of which go by the same term. To 'loosen' a cough, chips of a certain
[783] root may be placed in a pipe with a live coal and smoked; to purify a person after a death, chips are charred on a potsherd and the smoke
[844] inhaled through a reed; before being taken out of the hut, a new-born child is held naked in the smoke of burning chips or root and bark; boils and other swellings are brought to a head by the application of the steam of boiling roots. To cure fever or general weakness of the body after an illness and for purification of husband and wife after the death of a child the procedure is more complicated. Red-hot stones are put into a large pot of medicated water and when it bubbles and boils the patient, naked except for a cloth passed between the legs, is covered with a blanket and steamed. After much spluttering and shouting, he is taken out, sprinkled or washed down with cold water and then either scarified on the joints or subjected to *hu hata*—that is, a river stone is pressed on the joints and is later taken back to the river. This treatment is considered too drastic

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they deprecated his lack of practical sense and wondered whether he was losing his reason. What is significant to the Lovedu is not the origin but the maintenance of the order of nature. Interest in the continuity of natural forces centres, however, not on an abstract system, but on the benefit of man or rather of the Lovedu people. Among these forces the most important are those governing the auspicious movements of clouds and their transformation into rain. But they stand in no relation to the forces that brought the world into existence. Among Lovedu, in contrast for example to Oceanian peoples, there is consequently complete discontinuity between mythological origins, or the forces that operated at the dawn of the world, and present realities or the forces maintaining the existing order. Even the ancestor gods do not bridge this gap, and man's dependence upon them—and hence the force of religious sanctions—derives not from their relationship to the beginnings of things but from kinship principles.

Myths play an insignificant part in Lovedu life. Almost the only myths are legends of the institution of the present political order which give a generalized account of the migration of the royal nuclear group from Rhodesia and of the reigns of the various chiefs. There is no attempt in them to intensify the beliefs or validate the institutional arrangements underlying the sacred kingship. It is not these myths that give warranty to the queen's mystical credentials and to the complex of customs that supports them. Indeed today scant credence is accorded by the younger men to the legendary royal ancestry which traces the descent of the nuclear group to the Karanga of Monomotapa in Southern Rhodesia, for the Lovedu find it difficult to believe that they are related to a people who now appear to them to be inferior, lacking the prestige and aristocratic pretensions of their reputed ancestors. In one version of the myth the Lovedu broke away from Monomotapa under the younger 'chosen' son to whom the previous chief had given the rain-charms. He fled south as a result of his conflict with the eldest brother who had legal precedence. In another, it is a daughter who, having committed incest with her brother, escapes with the rain-charms and her infant son from her outraged father.

The legends are further concerned to explain the settlement of the Lovedu in their present environment: their choice was determined by the absence of red earth which would soil their loincloths and the abundance of *murula* trees and mounds of edible termites, both of which are valued and ritually significant items in their diet. A later dissension between two claimants to the throne is presented as a conflict between chief son and chosen son, and again the victory of the chosen son vindicates the divine right of the rain-maker against legal precedence, and in that way appears to justify the present flexible system of succession as against the challenge of the Northern Sotho emphasis on primogeniture and certainty. Just as the title to becoming ruler of a new tribe is in one version validated by the incest of brother and sister, so the later and equally momentous change from kings to queens is brought into relation with father-daughter incest.

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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season pro-
821 pitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gɔmana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time,
821 people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken
789 to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district
731 heads may formally pay homage (*hu lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle, or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lesugu*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[794] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale disperses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with
821 her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digɔma

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
794 of man consists of *digɔma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *gɔma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
881 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-vuhwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *gɔma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *gɔma* which is said to 'bite'

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Lewa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *dɛrɛ*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches.

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'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mashɔthɔjɔ* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to [illegible] drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death.

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Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is

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783 not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and contagious force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an invisible
753 counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction, including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage (regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor. 'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

783 Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*. A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born
758 child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to
834 warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi* affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhuma*) to those eating it.
[826] Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leshega*) are full of *muridi* and were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings from the teeth of the *leshega*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hosts infects
[843] these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long journeys from home.

783 *Muridi* is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other
753 injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will

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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife. 783 753

Makhuma (from *hu khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figchela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*hu thuswa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold. 751 783 [304 846] [768]

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'. 783 787 789

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on 783

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783 charms or *digoma*. *Makhuma* which arises from critical transitions causes mainly stomach trouble and general debility in men and cattle; but it also causes weakening of the mystical powers concentrated in sacred objects. These ritual forces do not strike down the guilty person: it is, for example, not the husband who will be revenged if the adulterer approaches the hut of his wife; or when a woman has procured an abortion, it is not she but her innocent lover who will be affected with *dere*, the most dreaded disease among the Lovedu. The harmful effects of all these forms of impurity are not sanctions against the acts or events causing the impurity, but sanctions for taking the necessary precautions to remove the impurity and prevent it from spreading to others, or from causing some calamity not necessarily affecting the guilty person. And, as so often happens in Lovedu society, it is generally *ex post facto*, and as an explanation of some illness or evil that these conceptions are invoked and steps are taken to put things right.

784 The concatenations of actions and conditions that must be avoided lest they bring about misfortune and evil to men are wider than what is included in the conceptions of 'heat', *muridi*, and *makhuma*. Many things or natural objects brought into relation with men have evil consequences and must be avoided: they are taboo (*hu ila*). Burning a certain kind of wood in the village causes quarrels; working in the fields the day after the first rain is taboo, not sanctioned by a penalty but the breach of which is a bane (*lesola*) that may portend evil. The breach of these taboos is disapproved but leads to no organized reaction or public indignation even where it affects the welfare of all, as in the case of a wrong burial. A man who sleeps with his wife while she is still suckling a child may thereby cause the death of his child; but it is his own foolish and inconsiderate conduct that causes the mother's breast to *khuma* (become polluted and weakened), and it is not the concern of outsiders. He is a fool rather than criminal.

753 Many things in nature are recognized as directly affecting man adversely; various foods and drinks cause stomach troubles; poisonous weeds may kill cattle which, like men, occasionally die of old age; many minor illnesses are attributed to natural causes, e.g. one may contract malaria by walking in the dew in the early morning. Epidemics may be brought about naturally by the air or wind (*phefo*). 'Ward off from us these winds' is a constant plea [821] in prayers to the ancestors. Hot, dry winds which drive away rain-bearing clouds or dissolve them in thunderstorms or gales are thought to be specially detrimental to the rain, and it is the duty of the ancestors to keep away such winds. Even anxiety or worry wears a man down (*ku sela mutho a hom-* [828] *ma*, lit., scrapes a man thin). A woman who is prone to break her pots is not bewitched; she has *khifyeisa*, a natural propensity for breaking, which can be cured by medicine.

777 The Lovedu also have the conception of natural accident (*gozi*) and of luck (*leshuto*), though bad luck is sometimes attributed to breach of obligations to kin, to malicious gossip, or to the misconduct in one's absence of one's wife.

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[8] attached to possession and no socio-economic stratification of classes; for a great man, whether he be poor or rich, is first and foremost a royal relative, and the purpose of economic activities is self-sufficiency and independence. Trade is disliked and competition is absent even in craftsmanship. So marked is the disinclination to make comparisons that it is difficult to obtain any expression of opinion concerning the relative merits of things that Europeans quite naturally compare, such as the achievements of individuals or objects of craftsmanship.

Children are taught 'to be like others', not to strive to outdo them and precociousness is disliked. A child asking for sweets often says 'Give me also', even if no one else has been given any on that occasion. He begs for what others may receive, not a special advantage for himself. When favours are asked from the ancestors the prayer is quite often phrased, 'Give us also', or 'Let him have health like others'. To stress, before the ancestors, a desire for personal achievement in competition with or greater than that of others would be improper. Contrast with this the opportunities for and love of competition in Zulu society where every boy is constantly measuring himself against others, vieing with them in fights, in dress, in love-making, in dancing, for leadership and praise.

The give and take, absence of competitiveness, and lack of force in the social and political structure, make moderation the keynote of Lovedu social life. Outstanding individuals are not tolerated: a show of forcefulness on the part of a councillor one day, which appealed to us as an indication of efficiency unusual in the society, was apologized for with the excuse that he must have been drunk. Display of all kinds is disliked. The elaborate beadwork and interest in dress, so characteristic of the Zulu, are absent, and there is nothing to correspond to the institutionalized public boasting (*ukugiya*) —jumping and stabbing at an imaginary foe to the accompaniment of a string of praises—that plays so important a role in Zulu life.

Excess of every kind is deprecated. Speed is undignified. Things must be done *ga vaya*, slowly, at a regular pace, in a moderate and dignified manner. Excess in human relations, like heat in the cosmic order, is liable to bring disaster. The reaction to death is calm, quiet grief, not the funeral wail of [76] the Nguni or the terror reaction of the Tsonga. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to call down evil upon the next child born to her. Mputa was born a cripple, because, so we were told, his mother, Makwadu, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. Even in scolding moderation has to be observed, for scolding out of proportion to the offence, can, as we have shown, bring evil, even death.

Quarrelsomeness is one of the worst offences. Congruent with this out- [78] look, the murderer or the warrior who has killed an enemy must purify [8] himself to avoid becoming quarrelsome, the threat of which is so unpalat- able as to be a powerful sanction. But quarrels and conflicts do occur on [67] account of temperamental qualities, conflicting interests, and other causes; they are also precipitated sometimes through imperfections in the social

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to 512
fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe [784]
for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of 252
three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *hu thovola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for [231]
feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mabudu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the maize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *vuthithi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *vuswa*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*hu seda*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge [173]
of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for 871
their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seize hold 857
of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in [854]
no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mothers or to catch *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swazise*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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with an emotion which, though wholly unlike our humanitarian 231
attitude, finds expression in exaggerated praises. These can be understood only in relation to their immense importance in the social organization.

Lovedu cattle are a blend, it is said, of four different strains: the large, 231
humped Lovedu with backward-curving horns, the small, sturdy long- 177
horned Rhodesian, the small Swazi with incurving horns, and the recent 232
rather nondescript European breeds. In the present environment the mixture has led to inferior scrub cattle, resistent to tick-borne diseases and hardened by the stony hills. There are more cattle to-day than formerly and the distribution is far more equal, but no one believes that dipping has contributed to this result; on the contrary, dipping is regarded as a device to keep down their numbers, to subject the Native to irritating interference, behind which there are sinister motives. Recent attempts by the Administration to improve the breed by introducing thoroughbred Afrikander bulls failed because of these suspicions; the bulls were neglected and no camp was provided for them, and eventually they had to be removed. Cattle of individual owners are listed on so-called cattle lists, which primarily serve as a check upon the efficiency of the dipping; but the lists do not reflect real ownership, for they contain the cattle in a man's kraal, most of which may be merely in his care (*hu fisa*). These lists have considerably altered the incidents of the *hu fisa* contract and other aspects of Native life: they are often illegitimately used as evidence of ownership; orders of Native courts involving payments of cattle are sometimes nullified by the refusal of the owner of the list to authorize the transfer of cattle from his list to that of another; dipping and grazing fees imposed in some parts induce men, on the one hand, to distribute their cattle among different owners so as to keep down the number on any single list and, on the other, to make a charge, unauthorized by custom, for caring for the cattle of others. In short, European intervention has produced as serious changes in pastoral as in agricultural activities. Yet fundamentally the changes have left untouched the real significance and role of cattle in the society.

Cattle are not subject to as many taboos as elsewhere in Southern 231
Africa. Women do not usually herd cattle, but the reason given is that 784
not long ago the dangers from raids and wild animals necessitated 789
herding by armed men; it was regarded as a purely practical measure. Girls or women may herd when the boys are in the circumcision school, and sometimes to-day young girls who have no brothers are seen looking after the cattle. What women may do or may not do varies almost from one kraal to another. Sometimes women of any age may go into the kraals; sometimes the doctor has protected the kraal in such a way that certain classes of women (not necessarily young women) are excluded. There is a fairly uniform fear that the blood of women or a woman who has had an abortion might cause the cattle harm. But the measures to combat these dangers vary very considerably. Kraals are doctored rather than cattle; and they are protected against various dangers, one of them being the danger of women. But elaborate magical practices, elsewhere associated with increasing the fertility of the cattle or safeguarding them

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231 against misfortune and disease, are not necessary when a new kraal is
●784 built or when the medicated pegs are hammered around the fence as a
789 protection against witches. Some confine their doctoring to the kraals; others, in addition, give the cattle medicine. Bulls are never magically rendered more virile, nor are cows made more attractive by such means. There are to-day hardly any special cattle doctors, and very few cattle diseases are known or subjected to treatment. This is not the result of the breakdown of the cattle cult; it is evidence of the weakness of the cult among the Lovedu. If one were to detail all the magical practices that are to be found, the volume of which would be doubly formidable owing to their diversity, an overwhelming impression might be given; but in true perspective, regarding them against the total background they are almost too insignificant to be noticed.

231 Far more important from every point of view is the adjustment that
232 Natives are making to modern conditions. On this point we can offer
177 merely a few very general suggestions. Foremost is the problem of better co-operation between the Natives and the Administration. The objections to dipping are a symptom of misunderstanding one another's point of view. The Natives regard the restrictions as a punitive and arbitrary imposition. It is useless merely to urge that, by destroying the ticks that cause cattle diseases, dipping promotes both the increase and the welfare of the cattle. No one believes what is regarded as demonstrably false. Any one can see that cattle often die when they come back from the dip; that the rate of calving has decreased, that there are now no milch cows, that stock have degenerated, and so on. These evils are attributed to dipping, not to the hard driving to the dip, poor grazing, and inadequate care. What is more, it is believed that Europeans do not dip and that tribes that are sufficiently cunning escape the dipping regulations. Not a few advance the theory that dipping is a punishment for attachment to and preservation of old customs—surely an ironical comment upon the execution of a policy that aims at segregation and development on the lines of racial genius. The psychological aspects of these problems are no less important than their other aspects; and they are far more difficult and require delicate handling. It is easy to envisage the immediate effects, for instance, of limitation of stock, such as the starvation that will result from insufficient cultivation and the overburdening of the women with agricultural work; but when it is realized that the cattle are barely sufficient to maintain the *munywalo* exchanges upon which the social organization rests, one cannot venture to predict what the ultimate effect of limitation will be.

231 Goats are the animals *par excellence* of ritual and religious importance.
431 They also feature prominently in exchanges which promote social interrelations, such as marriage exchanges and the goodwill gifts between relatives-in-law. Second only to beer in re-establishing relations that have become strained, they are used very largely in the procedure of reconciliation, of righting wrongs by begging pardon, and in the payment of judgement debts. When a distinguished guest visits you, you honour him by killing a goat for him; when you bring beer to your *vaduhulu*, the people to whom the daughters of your lineage are married, or even to a

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relish, the winnowing being mixed with salt and pressed into a cake used as spinach or eaten alone. Children eat *dinnṭwa makhura* (flying ants) and grasshoppers; *maida*, a large red grasshopper and a few other kinds of grasshoppers, as well as swarming locusts, form part of the diet of adults. Indeed, during a famine in the 1850's, Mujaji, it is said, sent locusts, not to plague, but to succour her subjects, the Shangana-Ṭonga. Honey—not only of the honey bee but also of other insects, such as the *muga*—adds, though only occasionally, to the variety of the foods directly supplied by nature. 824 262

For nutritional purposes, a considerable body of knowledge of the vegetation is necessary. This body of knowledge expands to a veritable science when we consider its application to the arts and crafts. It is used continuously in all daily activities, such as building, fencing, renewing hoe handles, yokes, and storehouses, extracting oil or fat, and so on. In the old days it was not merely woodwork that was important; iron-making was one of the great industries. To-day, though many implements of Native ironwork are still to be found, the industry has disappeared, partly because the sources of the ore have been appropriated by Europeans and partly because of the cheapness of European-made iron objects. The smith was a specialist, but also an agriculturist and a student of the vegetation. In his industry he used, not only special ores, but also special woods. Similarly, for each of the crafts—hut-building, fencing, making stamping blocks, sledges, hoe handles, milk pails, spoons, platters, winnowing baskets, drums, and many others—different qualities in the wood are regarded as important. There are half a dozen different kinds of plants that yield fibre from which string can be made, each involving a somewhat different process. The value of certain grasses for thatching and making mats, baskets, and beer-sieves is ritualized in the taboo on cutting grass before the queen eats the first fruits; i.e. thatching grass must be left untouched until it is quite ripe in May and June. The elaborate working up of skin, though now restricted to the purpose of making skin cradles and a few women's skirts, involves considerable skill as well as knowledge of the value of oils and repellents to drive off destructive insects and even dogs. Pottery is still a live industry involving a knowledge of the qualities of clays, and what we call 'herbalism', the use of the medicinal qualities of plants, is not confined to doctors, but is to a large extent common knowledge. 824 [326] [784] [323]

A whole volume could be written on the interest of the average man or woman in the flora alone. He knows a great deal about almost every plant. Even a herdboy, as we found in discussing our list of names of plants, could mention one or two practical uses of more than half of them. Young men could add several medical or magical uses, while old men could bring the names into relation with a bewildering number of ritual, religious, and other occasions, and many had specialized knowledge, according to the nature of their occupations or interests. Speaking generally, and in terms of what is commonly known, we find that of the 500 plants we have listed, 200 have mainly economic uses. They are daily applied to such activities as building huts, thatching, making spoons. Some 20 are specially useful for making string; another 20 for

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and friends—indeed anyone—may join the group and help in the task, usually agricultural, which is being performed. But the group that collects for the occasion is not wholly fortuitous; relatives and neighbours always predominate. There is no elaborate pre-arrangement. The *lejema*-giver usually announces his *lejema* beforehand and invites some people to come. Women, who brew the beer, usually organize more than men, some of whom rely on those they can collect on their way down to the field that is to be hoed or weeded or reaped. People who are invited are not bound to give an excuse for not coming; it is far more usual to promise to come and not to come than to give an excuse which, whatever it is, can hardly be valid in a society where people are not considered to be bound by time or by their previous engagements. Moreover, the beer for the *lejema* may not yet have matured on the day fixed by the *lejema*-giver. People may have come from long distances, but they will not be annoyed; there is sure to be a beer party in progress quite near. On the other hand, the *lejema*-giver will not complain if those who promised to come do not put in an appearance, for he knows that since 'the far-off well causes thirst', it is better to drink by the way.

Often, though the beer may be ready, no work is possible on the day. The weather may be unpropitious, some important event may require rearrangement of the activities of the day, or sometimes work may be taboo because of a death or hail or the first rain after a period of drought. In these circumstances, the beer must nevertheless be consumed; it is not something that can await the convenience of man. And to those who partake, it is announced that the *lejema* has been converted into a *phɔdwa*—that is to say, the drinkers are not mere drinkers, but a potential labour force that may be expected to do a day's work at some future date. The arrangement is so vague that we cannot fit it into any of our conceptions, such as a promise to perform or a right to demand the labour. The *lejema*-giver may, if he has a good supply of corn, give beer again when he calls those who previously drank of the *phɔdwa*. A *phɔdwa* is essentially a pre-arranged *lejema* which has miscarried; but it may be fortuitous—for instance, when one has to kill a pig against which neighbours have complained. A social occasion at which one gives beer cannot be converted into a *phɔdwa*. Sometimes, when supplies are low or for other reasons no beer can be provided, a man invites a group of people to work for him in anticipation of a beer party, also called a *phɔdwa*, at a future date. But only very special circumstances justify these departures from the *lejema*.

According to our standards, activities at a *lejema* appear to be very haphazard and unorganized. Each member of the group contributes to one end, the execution of the task which is to benefit the *lejema*-giver; but the effort of each worker is not individually assessed; some may turn up when the work begins, others join in much later, even perhaps just before the workers prepare to go home. The work proceeds in a leisurely manner, without undue exertion; no special achievement is expected from any one and the organization is such that the most inexperienced and dilatory can keep pace with the most efficient. Efficiency is as little a matter for comment as inefficiency. There is no rivalry, no spirit of

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881 554 regiments. Each local *vyali* has its office-bearers, whose rank above that of the rest is emphasized in a number of ways. Chief among all initiates is the *muluvɛ*, the nearest relative of the chief or district head. She represents all the initiates, just as the queen represents the whole tribe, and so intimate is the bond between the *muluvɛ* and the others thought to be that witches wishing to harm the whole 'school' may do so through her, and in 1939, when a snake appeared in the courtyard of initiates at the royal village, the chief initiate only was 'doctored' and the snake disappeared. She is distinguished from the rest by a special kind of dress and is always given good things to eat by another office-bearer, her 'dog', whose duty it is also to run before her, barking, when the rest are given work to do or are taken to the veld. Another office-bearer is the 'shade' of the chief initiate; towards the end of the initiation, she holds a branch above the latter's head to keep off the sun. There are some half a dozen office-bearers among initiates, as well as among the women in charge; they sit at specially prepared fireplaces and their precedence is recognized in all ceremonial.

881 784 The *vyali* is of such importance that during the year that it lasts it overshadows everything else. All men's attention, all men's energies, are taken up by the *vyali*, to which everything else becomes subsidiary. Even in the *khɔrɔ*, the forum of the men, only essential cases are dealt with. All marriages are held up: any one having the temerity to take a bride to his home during the *vyali* must pay a fine of one head of cattle and a goat. To such an extent are the attention and interest of the whole country focused on the *vyali* that no rival ceremonial is tolerated. There may be no dancing other than *vyali* dancing, no singing of songs other than those sung in the *vyali*. Even the dancing of possessed people is prohibited, a taboo communicated to the various possessing spirits at a large farewell dance of all the possessed in the area just prior to the opening of the *vyali*, when they are ordered not to manifest themselves and told that none of the usual taboos of the cult will be observed for the next year. It is customary, too, before the opening of the *vyali* for each district head to bring a farewell *gɔsha* dance to the royal village, but this was omitted in 1938 owing to the length of time it would require. The flexibility of Lovedu rules is illustrated also in the permission which the queen gave in 1938 to people on a European farm who wanted to hold a *gɔsha* for Christmas, to do so, though for one day only. These rules bind even the spirits who, during the *vyali*, never come to sing and whistle when there is a harvest offering.

881 There is a period of preparation lasting about a month or six weeks in which the initiates are taught some of the songs they are to sing, the manner in which they have to greet their elders, and the way in which debarked wood will have to be collected. Only after this preparatory schooling does the official opening take place. On this occasion the doctor in control of the 'school' strengthens the girls for the initiation by means of special medical treatment and reinforces the courtyard of the chief or district head, where the initiation is held, against the entry of witches who may wish to harm the girls. The initiates are ritually beaten with medicated sticks as at the *gomana*, precedence being given to the

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The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly, 643
ritual suicide is not conceived to have any relation to the welfare of the 762
country. People do not say that the country will suffer if the physical 731
powers of the queen fail. But ritual suicide does elevate the queen to a divinity; only by her act, not because of susceptibility to the weaknesses of man, can she die. Age neither increases nor decreases her powers. She is the 'soil'; her death 'heals' or 'dries up' the soil in the double sense of defiling it (as twins do) and scorching it (as the sun does); and as they phrase it, the 'country dies with its owner'. Consequently, after the queen's death, famines come, cattle and people succumb, and many flee the country. When Mujaji II committed suicide in 1894, there followed the *matshɔna*, the three years of unprecedented drought and pests, during which, according to contemporary European observers, practically all the cattle and a third of the population died. After the death of Mugɔdɔ, likewise, there was a great famine. The only other famine vividly recorded by tradition was during the reign of a chief who, being a usurper, was unable to make rain. Though the death of a chief presages death of the country, there is no great hurry to appoint a new queen. To the unfolding of a plan that guarantees abundance, immediate needs, even the need for the life-giving rain, must be subordinated.

For an account of succession to the throne we have to rely upon the 643
memories of men who were adults forty-five years ago. The practical 762
and the ideal are confused in their minds. The generalized account we give is thus not specifically related to the death of Mujaji II unless otherwise indicated. Shortly before her death, the queen calls together her great men, sits silently looking at them for a while, and then retires to her hut. She will not see again the young boys who have gone to the *vudiga*. Long before this, Mujaji II and her inner 'council' had named the daughter of Leakhali, who was her 'sister' and great wife, as successor; she had driven both mother and daughter with their brothers from the country, but was secretly receiving and instructing the daughter. None but a small circle of close relatives knew of these arrangements; and a little later she took poison (*khitaba*) [278] in which the fatal ingredients are said to be the brain and spinal cord of the crocodile. There is a rule that the killer of a crocodile is for ever debarred from entering the capital, a prohibition patterned [784] upon the taboos against bringing into a village the wood of trees with which shrines and protective charms (*dithugula*) are made, for these trees 'reveal', and so render useless, what they create. The poison is not conceived to kill instantaneously; the queen dies in the presence of those who know the secrets, but the death is not made public. Those who pass the royal hut still greet her; even cases are still submitted as if for her final decision. Deception of the people is the aim emphasized in descriptions and in phraseology. In the old days many cattle were killed 'to deceive the people', but neither this killing, which provided at least for the funeral feast and the skin for the dead body, nor the other arrangements, had this function only. The spirit of the deceased continues, as it were, to preside over the country and no one could take over the reins 643
of government. 766

The body decomposes, it is ritually rubbed (*hu fɔrɔla*) to remove skin 789

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services to a chief, residents must also build his village and mend his huts. These privileges and obligations are not merely theoretical; they are very much in evidence and can be observed to-day in the districts as much as, if not more than, at the capital. The first edible termites found in the district must, in the case of some of the more important heads, be brought to the district head; these ants are ritually associated with rain-making and are put into the rain pots which these heads have. 634 651

The national 'schools' are sometimes held independently by district heads; in 'biting' the first fruits (*hu luma*) and in turning the first soil, the precedence of the queen is hardly recognized. The head at Ḍaja and the senior male line of the royal family have theoretical precedence in *hu luma* and, in contrast to many neighbouring tribes, there is little stress upon having the queen's field hoed first; in practice to-day her field is never ploughed first. Maunadala, it is said, in the old days paid an ox to anticipate the queen's hoeing and thus avoided threatening starvation; but dispensations of this nature, while recognizing a theoretical rule, throw into relief the much greater autonomy of the district here than elsewhere. The district head is solely responsible for *hu upa*, the rite that drives away destructive birds and monkeys when crops are ripe; to him the death of every resident is reported (the report being transmitted to the queen only when a relative of hers dies) and the resulting 'holiday' is held only in the district. Each district head has his own drums through which he controls dancing (*gɔsha*), religious observances, and some of the 'schools'. The girls' puberty rite (*khɔba*) is entirely district-controlled. 634 796

The individuality of some districts is seen in esoteric customs; elsewhere by taboo, succession ceremonial, and a distinctive community life. At Khiobeni people may construct on the edge of the village a rain-shelter (*kwado*) in which fire is made; in neighbouring areas this is taboo. Work on the day following the new moon is said to have been taboo in the old days at Matsui, though the rule is never observed to-day; in neighbouring areas there never was such a holiday. The Thɔvɔla in one district have a special dance with a special ritual. As regards succession, the queen usually merely confirms, though she maintains touch through an elaborate ceremony: she is notified of the death of the head, sends the 'mother' of the district to take part in the ceremony of installation and, in the case of heads of the royal group, the *zwiḍajani* appear. The ceremonial, however, more intimately concerns the district: there is a local 'holiday' after the death, the *gɔsha* dance is taboo for a year, girls undergo puberty initiation elsewhere, beer is made by the district to 'open the drums', and each head of a family sends a goat or 10s., 'the eye of the chief', to acknowledge their new head. The life of the district is often distinctive. Matsui is said to be wasteful and, according to one of their praises, people there, instead of stamping, for which they are too lazy, 'burn their finger-nails roasting green mealies'. Everything is rather slack and happy-go-lucky, beer drinks are apt to be unruly, the district head is at loggerheads with his uncles, and his subjects talk disparagingly of 'this district-head business of going about and drinking beer'. Bacchanalian orgies after the harvest, slack morals, and other irregularities at Matsui contrast strikingly with conditions at Bagoni, an adjacent district. At Bagoni there is a tradition 634 184 [784]

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794 shown how to dance in possessed fashion, all, it was said, lest when her
755 spirit left her she should be lazy and not know how to work. Betty
535 walked as in a dream with a wooden, expressionless look and at times appeared so exhausted that we feared she would not be able to lift the stamper when imitating stamping. This mime-show is not performed in all initiations, nor is a goat always killed, for the methods of doctors differ considerably and the patient's relatives may have no goat. Often the patient is set to dance and treated with medicines till she falls down with the spirit upon her.

794 It was now three o'clock in the afternoon, and, the initiation being
755 complete, the doctor thought it time that the spirits departed. She
535 ushered the possessed into the hut, where they all sat down, offered them
533 each a pinch of snuff, took a rattle and began her farewell song, the whole company (for the hut had filled with spectators) joining in the refrain. Next the initiate sang her farewell song, mentioning what she wanted as her accessories—several white cloths, a woollen cap, and a spear to hold when dancing. When all had finished singing, they took off their *zwiṭhamo* (clothes), which their attendants (for each possessed person has some one to help him when his spirit appears) put into bundles to take away, and lay down to sleep. After three minutes the doctor grunted and groaned as departing spirits are apt to do, sat up and began dressing in everyday clothes. The others followed her example and went outside. The patient, but a short while before so exhausted, came smiling out of the hut and scolded the people for letting her oversleep in this shocking manner (appearing to have no knowledge of her initiation). Then all washed their faces and urinated in the hedge, as women do on rising in the mornings.

794 Initiation into the cult is said to make the person well again, and all
755 into whose history one inquires claim to have been cured. Betty herself
784 had no further trouble. If, however, they become ill again, it may be a second spirit, for many people have three or four. There is, however, no further initiation; the second spirit is merely called upon to manifest itself. A second or third spirit may take possession without causing any illness, merely announcing its arrival and making known its wants when the person is possessed. After initiation the spirit manifests itself when it has some complaint or desire, when the person has broken some taboo, or when specially induced by dancing or prayer. A possessed person has to keep certain taboos: he may never eat such firstfruits as pumpkin leaves or green mealies, *morula* fruits or beer made of the newly-harvested corn without medicine given him at his initiation and renewable every year or every two years; any new thing undertaken, as when a possessed woman becomes pregnant, must be reported to the spirit. Some *malɔpɔ* may not be beaten with a green stick, lest the spirit descend upon them; others may not touch European medicine. Many of them run away from Europeans even when not actually possessed, and one man had to keep his books securely locked in a suit-case lest his wife should see them and become troubled by her spirit. The very mention of the word *lelɔpɔ* in the presence of some may cause the spirit to come. Observances are not the same for all and taboos to be observed depend largely on the doctor who

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does the initiation. There are no special burial rites associated with the cult. There is, however, a vague belief that injury to a snake in the village may in some cases harm a possessed person, an interesting belief in view of the fact that there is so little trace in Lovedu religion of the Zulu idea that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in snakes. 794 755 784

There is a special relationship between a possessed person and the doctor who initiated him: every year when the medicine needs renewal, beer or *morula* cider is prepared, the doctor, who comes with a number of disciples and attendants, is called and there is a great dance of the possessed often lasting several days. This is 'dancing for medicine' (*hu vintla tshidi*). Some possessed people have to be specially doctored before drinking the first *morula* cider and the *morula* season is always a time of *lelɔpɔ* gatherings; others are required to contribute corn at harvest time for a large *lelɔpɔ* dance at the home of the doctor. These gatherings, at which a goat may be slaughtered in addition to the cider provided, add greatly to the prestige of the doctor. There is sometimes considerable jealousy between *malɔpɔ* doctors, who, with those initiated by them, may form rival schools. Some doctors refuse to allow their followers to dance with those initiated by other doctors without special permission. At one seance, at which there had been some unpleasantness, the doctor smeared some powder into incisions on the neck, tongue, crown, and sides of the heads of her disciples. Then, taking some medicated water in her mouth, she squirted (*hu phasa*), saying, 'I "place" you. Don't you dance any more. I don't like dancing every day without my special permission. Any *lelɔpɔ* who dances where you are dancing will break her leg or be badly hurt.' The remainder of the water was given them to drink. 794 535

An interesting feature of the cult of possession is that many people when the spirit is upon them speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thɔvɔlɔ or Kharanga. Investigation into this matter, however, shows that this is not as startling a phenomenon as it might appear. When possessed, a person for the most part sits silent unless he is a doctor. If he speaks at all, this is in monosyllables, for all his wants and messages are conveyed in song. *Lelɔpɔ* songs are stereotyped and known to many because the uninitiated have to join in the refrain when rattling the accompaniment. In these songs there is usually a number of foreign words, though many consist purely of meaningless sounds, such as '*We le wee eva o wee wee wee wana wee*'. Often peculiarities in the pronunciation of vowels are interpreted as Thɔvɔlɔ. When the refrain begun (*hu suma*) by the possessed person has been taken up by the chorus, he continues with the song or interpolates his own words, usually Sotho with a few foreign words interspersed, till he wishes to stop. In this way he makes known his wishes. It quite frequently happens that no one understands the gibberish of the possessed person, and doctors generally have an attendant who interprets what they wish to convey. There are, however, numerous well-known words in general use by people when their spirit is upon them—for instance, *mufoto* or *movoto* for *lefɔla* (snuff), *bula* or *mvula* for *meetse* (water), *va ga mbaya* for *va ga ntiya* (they may beat me), *kaya* for *hae* (home). But many possessed people speak pure Sotho, and it is recognized that a newly initiated person may not 794 533 192

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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season pro-
821 pitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gɔmana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time,
821 people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain
789 in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*hu lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle,
731 or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lesugu*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[754] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale disperses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next
821 day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digɔma

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
794 of man consists of *digɔma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *gɔma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
881 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-vuhwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *gɔma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *gɔma* which is said to 'bite'

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783 charms or *digoma*. *Makhuma* which arises from critical transitions causes mainly stomach trouble and general debility in men and cattle; but it also causes weakening of the mystical powers concentrated in sacred objects. These ritual forces do not strike down the guilty person: it is, for example, not the husband who will be revenged if the adulterer approaches the hut of his wife; or when a woman has procured an abortion, it is not she but her innocent lover who will be affected with *dere*, the most dreaded disease among the Lovedu. The harmful effects of all these forms of impurity are not sanctions against the acts or events causing the impurity, but sanctions for taking the necessary precautions to remove the impurity and prevent it from spreading to others, or from causing some calamity not necessarily affecting the guilty person. And, as so often happens in Lovedu society, it is generally *ex post facto*, and as an explanation of some illness or evil that these conceptions are invoked and steps are taken to put things right.

•784 The concatenations of actions and conditions that must be avoided lest they bring about misfortune and evil to men are wider than what is included in the conceptions of 'heat', *muridi*, and *makhuma*. Many things or natural objects brought into relation with men have evil consequences and must be avoided: they are taboo (*hu ila*). Burning a certain kind of wood in the village causes quarrels; working in the fields the day after the first rain is taboo, not sanctioned by a penalty but the breach of which is a bane (*lesola*) that may portend evil. The breach of these taboos is disapproved but leads to no organized reaction or public indignation even where it affects the welfare of all, as in the case of a wrong burial. A man who sleeps with his wife while she is still suckling a child may thereby cause the death of his child; but it is his own foolish and inconsiderate conduct that causes the mother's breast to *khuma* (become polluted and weakened), and it is not the concern of outsiders. He is a fool rather than criminal.

753 Many things in nature are recognized as directly affecting man adversely; various foods and drinks cause stomach troubles; poisonous weeds may kill cattle which, like men, occasionally die of old age; many minor illnesses are attributed to natural causes, e.g. one may contract malaria by walking in the dew in the early morning. Epidemics may be brought about naturally by the air or wind (*phefo*). 'Ward off from us these winds' is a constant plea [821] in prayers to the ancestors. Hot, dry winds which drive away rain-bearing clouds or dissolve them in thunderstorms or gales are thought to be specially detrimental to the rain, and it is the duty of the ancestors to keep away such winds. Even anxiety or worry wears a man down (*hu seła mutho a hom-* [828] *chwa*, lit., scrapes a man thin). A woman who is prone to break her pots is not bewitched; she has *khifyaisa*, a natural propensity for breaking, which can be cured by medicine.

777 The Lovedu also have the conception of natural accident (*gozi*) and of luck (*leshuto*), though bad luck is sometimes attributed to breach of obligations to kin, to malicious gossip, or to the misconduct in one's absence of one's wife.

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moving her to pity and by 'cooling' the heat of the earth and the anger 181
of the ancestors. Frenzy and excess are outlawed, moderation and balance are honoured. They have little conception of the Buddhistic Nirvana or annihilation of human existence, of the fanaticism and fatalism of the soldiers of Allah, or even of Western concentration and intensive striving. From the point of view of our values, the Lovedu are Laodicean, 'lukewarm, neither hot nor cold', happy-go-lucky. They are always saying that they will 'try', never that they must succeed. But there is nothing intensive about their striving. A man faced with a difficulty is always advised to 'persevere', but that does not imply our grim determination, being more like the leisurely manner in which they set about all their tasks.

This theme permeates every aspect of the culture. In the boys' circumcision the object is to break the child of his wildness and lack of balance, and the purpose is achieved, not by excessive tortures and privations, but by the mature guidance of the old men. Neither strength nor stoicism are much made of, and the virtues inculcated are balance and self-sufficiency. The Lovedu tolerate ostentation only on occasions appropriate to exhilaration, quite unlike even such nearly related tribes as the Madala and Phalaborwa, who have institutionalized boasting displays by those famed as hunters or warriors. In the field of the [785] magico-religious, fastings and visions do not figure, except among the possessed and the smellers-out, the latter always foreigners, the former a recent introduction. Possession in its Lovedu context has been shorn of its paranoic elements, its exaggerated trances, and its inception in a mental cataclysm. Cataleptic seizures do not serve as inductions to the super- [828] natural as among the Nguni, for fits are due to witchcraft, and, unlike the smeller-out, who is a Shangana-Tonga and works by insight and exaggerated procedures, the Lovedu doctor divines by his craft and acquires power by learning and experience. Prayer is not an emotional 181
outpouring of the heart, but a communication as between man and man. 152
Dissension in her country upsets, and anger in her heart inhibits, the power of the queen. Spells are not characterized by intensity or malevolence; they are often merely directions to the medicine to bring about justice or to restore the balance. Even at a death or burial, there must be no display of distress, no undue weeping; both the dying and the survivors resign themselves with a calmness that is the admiration of Europeans who know the Lovedu well. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to injure her next child; Mputa, now thirty years of age, was born a cripple, it is said, because his mother, Makwada, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. We have never seen weeping at a funeral, and the property of the deceased is not so contaminated that it has to be destroyed, though in the midst of the Lovedu the Shangana-Tonga phrase death as a terror situation, even pulling down the hut of the deceased and removing from his village. Suicide is an escape, intelligible enough when a man is insane or (in the old days) has been condemned to death as a witch; but otherwise it is attributed to witchcraft, not to frustration.

In the method by which the themes of both sex and authority are 181
handled there is the same aversion from excess or ostentation. The Lovedu 831

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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On [885] moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khoro* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels [786] and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however,
241 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in
221 much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides the seasons into three: *khilemo*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *letavula*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *maria*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

241 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February,
221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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food as often as not being brought to them there. Sometimes the women take with them cobs of mealies preserved by being cooked and dried in the summer months, which they have softened by boiling again before use. In stony places and along steep hillsides, where ploughing is impossible, hoeing is to-day still done by hand. Here one can generally see mealie meal spread out to dry near at hand, out of reach of the fowls and goats that would play havoc with it at home, where there is no one to watch it. For it is chiefly the women that hoe while the men plough. Bushes or branches that have grown out from tree stumps in the fields are cut in readiness for planting, and a typical feature of this time of the year is the small fires in the fields every day towards sunset, when dry mealie stalks that have been collected in heaps are burned. Relishes have been reduced to a minimum, blackjacks (*Bidens pilosa*), *thubo* (*Amaranthus Thumbergi*) and *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*) being the mainstay, and cooking is done only once a day. There are no nuts or mealies to roast or eat casually, and in years of scarcity this is the time when the pinch of hunger is felt. At night people retire early to bed, tired from the hard work of planting and, later, weeding during the day. Dancing is rare; there is no time for social activities, all energy being directed towards getting the crops planted. Beer parties there are, chiefly work parties for weeding, but they are not as frequent now as in winter. As yet few cases of malaria will have come to light; it is rather the season of dysentery and of cuts and bruises received in hoeing. As the season advances, the first termites make their appearance to relieve the monotony of relish of blackjack leaves, the grass grows longer and weeding becomes imperative.

As a relief to the dullness of the planting season comes the *morula* season, which marks the first two months of 'summer' (February and March) and which from the point of view of seasonal activities can be looked upon as a distinctive period. Everything is green; the grass stands high and weeding is the order of the day, for rain is plentiful. Masses of golden *morula* fruits are falling to the ground. Green mealies from the first-planted fields are beginning to be eaten, spinach of male pumpkin flowers and, later, leaves, make porridge cakes more interesting; and there are sugar-cane and dishes of unripe monkey nuts. People have looked forward eagerly to this time. They are tired of their work and, though much weeding and mounding of *njugo* beans has still to be done, the exultation grows as the cider begins to appear. To those whose granaries are empty, the *morula* season brings a blessed relief from the pangs of hunger, and they drink it as if it were the elixir of life. Much of the day is spent in the fields where the cider is prepared, and from under the trees there is a mighty hubbub of voices. At nightfall, when they return as from a bacchanalian festival, there are opportunities for romantic intrigues, the result rather of exhilaration than of the reputed aphrodisiac effects of the cider. Soon the air is rent by songs and drumming of the possessed, who at this season receive medicine to eat with the *morula* and other green foods of summer. And as the *morula* season draws to a close, the green foods of summer become more plentiful and the beginning of reaping activities ushers in the rich abundance of late summer.

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possessed, they often say they have come to 'play' with the others and 794
they may even cause slight ill-health on this account. Hence quite often 755
when a possessed person does not feel well, he will ask for the drums, 535
saying he must dance. *Lelɔpɔ* dancing consists of fast movements of the foot to the accompaniment of drums or tambourines and rattles. At a seance of *malɔpɔ a ʂwikwe*, those who speak *Thɔvɔlɔ*, the large hemispherical *gɔma* drum is used in addition to the conical drums. All are, however, beaten with the hands, the elbows being placed on the drumskin in a peculiar manner. *Malɔpɔ*, who speak Sotho or Lovedu, use only the conical drums in the ordinary manner.

If the dance has a great fascination—after a seance one finds even small children practising the steps—the dress worn by the possessed adds to the attraction. Cloths of different colours are worn round the waist [292] and tied at the back; round the legs are usually leggings of the outer shell of the *difuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) fruit filled with pebbles to rattle as one dances; on the head is a cap of fur or brightly coloured wool or a head-gear of black feathers, while very often a spear, battle-axe, or stick is brandished in the hand. These are the *ʂwifhamo* of the spirit, worn only during possession. The nature of the dress of each possessed person has been indicated by the spirit itself, and people do their best to comply, lest the possessed person dies. Once at a seance the spirit of a woman asked that a beast or, failing that, a goat be 'placed' for him. 'We'll do our best,' the relatives replied, 'but remember we are poor and it is a matter that will take time.' The spirit, angry at this unwillingness, retorted, 'If you don't comply, I'll take away my person [in whom I manifest myself] and go and sleep with her. Tell Makhade (elder brother of the possessed who learnt the profession of doctor from the spirit) I'll take away my profession from him.' 'We'll do our best,' urged the relatives, 'but don't go away in anger.' In spite of this power, possessing spirits have nevertheless to take cognizance of public opinion and the desires of royalty. The spirit of the wife of a royal relative asked for a man's loin-cloth, which women possessed by male spirits occasionally wear, but he refused to allow it on the grounds that for a woman to wear man's attire is unbecoming. An old woman therefore addressed the spirit, saying, 'People here don't like it,' and the spirit was satisfied.

A short description of an institution which contains all the elements 794
of an ordinary seance must suffice to illustrate some of the main features 755
of the cult. When the doctor, called to conduct the initiation, has arrived 535
with his or her attendants, drums are fetched from the district head, and 786
other disciples of the doctor invited to be present. Nothing can, however, be done before the spirit of the doctor descends upon her. To allow this, they retire to a hut and lie down as if to sleep, while an old woman puts down some pinches of snuff on the ground and calls upon the spirits to come. In a few minutes the doctor groans and quivers and the spirit signifies its arrival by a song of greeting. It calls for its *lelɔpɔ* clothes and the doctor is dressed. Soon the spirits of her attendants also arrive and treatment, which consists in making the novitiate dance, is begun.

When Betty was being initiated, we arrived early one Saturday evening, attracted by the noise, to find a picturesque scene. It was winter and

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794 five little fires had been lit in the vicinity of the courtyard of Betty's hut.
755 In the centre were three women dancing to the music of drums and
535 rattles. We sat down by the nearest fire and found ourselves with a group
786 of old women. For people had arranged themselves, naturally as is their manner, in age-groups round the various fires; young married women at one, small boys at another, girls above the age of puberty at a third. The dust rose high; what had sounded pleasant enough at a distance became, as one sat in its midst, an almost unbearable din; while in the flickering and uncertain light of the fires the dancing took on a frenzied effect that lent to the scene a wildness and weirdness seldom met with except in travellers' tales of darkest Africa. Never again in our frequent attendances at *malopo* dancing did we recapture that first sense of weirdness so largely due to its novelty and our own ignorance. That night the dancing stopped at 1.30 a.m. but by dawn it had begun again, continuing with intervals of rest during the whole of Sunday and Sunday night. Betty danced most of the time; if she rested too long, the women urged her on, saying, 'How do you expect the spirit to come out if you don't dance?' All this time she was being treated with medicines: black powder mixed with butter fat was smeared on her legs, white froth of medicine churned with a porridge stirrer was applied on various parts of the body, some being administered also internally, and infusions were given her to drink. No food was eaten either by Betty or by the women whose spirits were upon them; the very sight of porridge makes some *malopo* vomit and the only sustenance allowed while dancing is beer, if there happens to be any.

Late on Sunday afternoon they called her mother's brother to try to induce the spirit to manifest itself, for doctors had indicated that the troubling spirit was on the mother's side. Taking a calabash of water in his hand, the mother's brother knelt near the dancing girl and spat mouthfuls of water out on the ground, saying, 'Come out, spirit, that this person also may be well. She remains ailing, and when we go to doctors they tell us it is a spirit. Come outside that this person can be well [cool].' Sometimes, instead of *hu phasa* with water, mixed grains of all kinds are thrown over the dancer and the words used are, 'We are giving you everything to come.' It may even be that something, which can be overcome only by magical means, is holding back the spirit, as when, on one occasion, the spirit was said to be bewildered at the cross-roads, not knowing which to take. All the roads except that leading into the village were magically 'barred' and the spirit, thus guided, came straight in and manifested itself. Difficult as it is for a spirit to come on the first occasion, once initiation has taken place, it becomes a simple matter. To make a spirit manifest itself, a person has only to dance in the manner of the cult or to lie down while some one calls on it to come. The spirit may also come of its own accord at any time without being induced.

794 Early on the Monday morning Betty, showing signs of exhaustion,
755 began to stagger in her dancing, and people knew the spirit must be near. Her movements became more frenzied, she put up her hands to her head and dragged her feet uncertainly, and then fell to the ground. Several women who had been expecting this, caught and carried her, still quivering and groaning, into the hut. 'Good day, grandparent. Come nicely

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695 because it involves too great publicity and danger of European interven-
683 tion, though they say, perhaps by way of rationalization, that the doctor
754 of the ordeal could manipulate the test. As this procedure is merely of theoretical interest, we need refer only to its salient features.

The victim or his relative privately consulted a bone-throwing doctor, whose verdict he had confirmed by perhaps two or more other doctors before he or an intermediary on his behalf made a public accusation. The ordeal or test took place at the capital and was public. Lineal relatives of accuser and accused or, according to some, two strong men chosen by them, were given an intoxicating drink by the official 'doctor of the ordeal', the spectators watching to ensure that equal quantities were administered. Those who had drunk were put in the sun and he who began moving about or became dizzy, drunken, or incoherent was in the wrong. The witch was usually executed at once, at the orders of the queen, being strangled at the river; but if she was a woman, one of the executioners first had sexual intercourse with her; and the body, tied to a weight, was sunk into the water to be eaten by animals. But the witch was sometimes delivered to the victim to undo his evil work (*hu mu bulla*), and if the illness left the victim the witch was released. Sometimes, also, suspected witches were beaten, tied up (nowadays, as we have seen, handcuffed and submitted to ridicule and abuse), and left without food or tortured with velvet stinging-beans until they confessed; this was sometimes done privately, and it was possible also to kill them without the public ordeal, the killing being reported to the queen; but usually they were merely banished.

683 The property of a witch who was killed was not all confiscated, but
754 *baza*, consisting chiefly of his cattle, was taken by the queen for division between herself and her nobles. No one else could appropriate *baza*; even the village head, if he did so, was regarded as a thief. The witch's gardens reverted to the district head, the crops were taken, not by the queen, because she could not eat the 'dirt of the witch', but by the messengers of the queen, for they were so busy in her service that they could hardly cultivate their fields. Residents in the district surreptitiously during the night took the witch's crops, but it was regarded as disgraceful to do so openly during the day. The wife of a witch was taken by a classificatory brother, and his children were adopted by the queen, who received *munywalo* when she married the girls to her nobles (in more recent times, to commoners, because the girls often deserted). In the days of the kings, all the relatives, or, as some say, only those on the mother's side—the mother's uterine brothers and sisters especially—were killed. The queens had only a uterine brother or sister killed if they failed to leave the country. The witch, unlike a murderer, could not find sanctuary in the forest of Daja; and only a witch's, not a murderer's, property was *baza*—confiscable property.

787 Since the beginning of this century submission of issues to ordeal has
695 been replaced by their submission to the smelling-out diviner (*mugome*).
[177] The institution of the *mugome* has been borrowed from the Shangana-Tonga and its whole complicated legal procedure is still in a state of flux, adjustments being constantly made especially to avoid European intervention.

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intervention. The procedure involves, first, private consultations of a doctor, followed by an accusation directly or through an intermediary, a wager by the parties, publicly made often in the *khɔrɔ*, then a journey in the company of the 'ears' (official witness) of the chief to a distant smeller-out, the actual smelling out, at which the victor may be given a buck's horn to blow on his way home, and, finally the report to chief or district head and the adjudication of the *khɔrɔ*. We are here concerned only with the legal aspects, but we must at the outset remark that the procedure, primarily used in witchcraft cases, is relied upon whenever there are evidential difficulties and, paradoxically, it has rendered theft, adultery, and other wrongs, not less, but more amenable to some form of *khɔrɔ* control. Publicity and centralized control in the phenomenal, periodical *mureu* proceedings at the capital in the old days guaranteed their effectiveness, but men could privately execute self-confessed witches. To-day, amid conflicting tendencies, *mugɔme* proceedings are less public and hardly the prerogative of the queen. Witchcraft is not conceived necessarily to strike at the whole society; it is often dealt with privately; and even, after resort to the *mugɔme*, agreement by the parties in the district courts may end the matter.

The *mugɔme* procedure lends itself to fixing responsibility when a whole district feels threatened, just as in the old days the *mureu* was used whenever the whole country wished to ward off danger. When, at a certain district gathering, it was decided to send delegates to a *mugɔme* concerning the occurrence of many deaths in the district, one young woman objected, saying, 'It is nonsense; we know the sickness is not "sent". If you go to the *mugɔme* and he "beats" (points out) members of your family, the whole district will be quarrelling.' The *mugɔme* pointed out the young woman who had objected, but she demanded that, if any one accused her, he should go with her to another *mugɔme*, and when she appealed to the capital for appointment there of the official witness, no one came forward as a direct accuser and for that reason the case broke down. Subsequent cases in which the young woman was involved reflected how the proceedings had not relieved, but aggravated, the sense of insecurity in the district. Shall we conclude that the remedy is worse than the disease? We cannot do so, because where there are no *mugɔme* proceedings, as on the highveld, the incidence of witchcraft and sorcery is not less. Moreover, *mugɔme* proceedings are believed to, and do often, remove grave threats to the community. In 1938 the tributary *morula* cider was being made at the village of the head of a sub-district. On the second day the cider frothed suspiciously and after a meeting of the sub-district, money was collected and representatives of every family went to the *mugɔme*, who found that the headman had poisoned the cider, and in truth everything pointed to the use of cattle-dip or locust poison. The matter was reported to the capital, where, without formal trial, the headman was ordered to leave the district. In our opinion a dangerous criminal had been successfully dealt with, but, what is more important, the feeling of security of the people had been restored.

We may now shortly examine some aspects of *khɔrɔ* control over *mugɔme* proceedings. The challenge, supported by a wager to submit the truth

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695 of an accusation to the *mugɔme*, is made before, during, or even after
787 *khɔrɔ* proceedings, but if the dispute is dealt with by the *khɔrɔ*, the findings of the *mugɔme* can be accorded recognition only if the official witness, the 'ears', has been previously appointed by the *khɔrɔ*; the results of a private consultation cannot be given in evidence before the *khɔrɔ*. The 'ears' is sometimes appointed by the district head of the person challenged, but the theory is sometimes advanced that only the capital has jurisdiction to do so. His integrity is an important factor, for he must relate to the *khɔrɔ* the details of the wager, the competence of the *mugɔme*, the method by which the decision was reached and its nature, and whether or not the parties consented to the decision. The 'ears' must be a disinterested person, to avoid accusations of corruption and favouritism, as well as to guarantee that there is no manipulation of the fees entrusted to him by the parties for defraying the expenses of the expedition. Integrity and impartiality are best guaranteed where the capital appoints the 'ears'.

Often enough the findings of the *mugɔme* are accorded no recognition at the capital when the parties have gone forth from a district *khɔrɔ*. This does not mean that the parties cannot agree to the verdict of the *mugɔme* at the district *khɔrɔ* where the 'ears' has been appointed; nor is there any great desire to centralize control, which is sometimes encouraged, sometimes feared, and sometimes more or less an inevitable consequence of the need to obtain passes at the capital for the journey to a distant *mugɔme*. The practice of appointing 'ears' in the districts is not unconnected with the danger of implicating the capital with the European authorities. It sometimes happens, when the parties come for a pass and a report is made at the capital, that the queen's councillors disclaim any interest or concern in the matter. Wherever the 'ears' may be appointed, he is given the *phitho* (thing to be hidden), any small article such as a snuff box or coin which is concealed and must be named and found by the *mugɔme* as a test of his competence before the divination begins.

Khɔrɔ control is evident also in the manner in which it may refuse its assistance or dissuade the parties from going to the *mugɔme*, even though it can come to no decision in the dispute. The attitude of the *khɔrɔ* may be manifested in many ways, and its aim in refusing assistance is much the same as that of the queen when she intervenes behind the scenes in the interests of reconciliation by forbidding the publicity of *mugɔme* proceedings. We shall refer to a few only of the cases we have witnessed. A recruiter used to pay all labourers recruited £2, which had to be paid into the tribal fund before the tribal 'secretary' issued a pass to the labourer. For reasons we need not detail, the 'secretary' gave the labourer no receipt and the recruiter sued the 'secretary'. This is precisely the kind of case that the *khɔrɔ* finds very difficult to handle and, as the 'secretary' was a Christian, not amenable to *mugɔme* proceedings, the recruiter challenged the labourer to go to a *mugɔme*. But the *khɔrɔ* disallowed the challenge on the ground that the transaction had occurred in daylight, and instead ordered recruiter and 'secretary' jointly to pay the £2.

The *khɔrɔ*, by refusing to appoint 'ears', can prevent submission of a

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dispute to the *mugɔme* or it may send back the parties to their district head for him to appoint the 'ears', the purpose often being to tire them out or to exhaust their resources, so that they will more easily come to an agreement. But the opposite often happens: the *khɔrɔ*, tired of the obstinacy of the parties, may tell them to submit their differences to a *mugɔme*. Mudali complained that Vumme, mother of Muloi, was spreading rumours that he had caused Muloi's illness. Muloi was known to be a witch who had killed two of her brothers-in-law, sons of Makhulu, and Makhulu had with the aid of a great specialist 'sent back' a terrible illness which was rotting great holes in Muloi's body. But Vumme could not proceed against this legitimate revenge and, as it was rumoured that Mudali was a lover of Muloi, Vumme attempted to inculpate Mudali. These facts were generally known, but were not disclosed in the *khɔrɔ*. Mudali said that his accusers knew that he had no medicines and to clear his name he challenged Vumme to go to a *mugɔme* with him. Vumme retorted that she resented the insult from an adulterer, and the *khɔrɔ*, fearing that the conflict would spread, advised the disputants to go back to their district head and there arrange to go to the *mugɔme*. 'Ears' was appointed and early one morning we all stood ready at Mudali's village, with food for a long journey, perhaps 100 miles; messages and counter-messages passed to and fro between the villages of Mudali and Vumme, but nothing happened; and the following Sunday the case was again in the *khɔrɔ* of the capital. Vumme's people said that, as they had made no direct accusation, they refused to go to the *mugɔme*, but the *khɔrɔ* retorted, 'If Muloi dies, you must not blame Mudali. Now pay him the "cutter of the tongue" (which silences the mouth), for if Muloi dies the Europeans will come.' Vumme refused, and Mudali, satisfied that his name had been cleared, allowed the matter to be dropped.

The *khɔrɔ* or the queen may dissuade the parties from resorting to the *mugɔme*. Siga accused Maidi—they were co-wives—of having removed a tooth from Siga's child, who died, and of inserting it into the mouth of Maidi's baby. Maidi's relatives advised her to challenge Siga, but the queen, calling Maidi to her, said, 'I cannot support you. The witchcraft may be that even of your mother. Let the matter be.' And her advice was accepted. Similarly the *khɔrɔ* discourages unfounded accusations among members of the family, curbs the inclination to squabble, and in various ways attempts to prevent the challenge which so readily rises to the lips of angry relatives. A young married woman, accusing her mother-in-law of harassing her with familiars, fled to her parents, who, when the mother-in-law came to call her back, imputed to her the death of the children of a relative of theirs. The mother-in-law brought an action, but, as is usual when there is danger of *munywalo* and family entanglements, the *khɔrɔ* quashed the case as nonsense (*zwitshele*) and sent the parties home to compose their differences by *hu khuwelwa*. Tsezi, instigated by his mother-in-law, who had a family quarrel with Dali, accused the latter of sending the lightning which had struck down a tree near his village, but the district head stopped the challenge from being submitted to a *mugɔme* by dismissing the case as unfounded gossip. Sagani, whose

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695 adultery with his father's young wife was exposed by her, accused her
787 of causing his son's death but the *khɔrɔ* told him to beg pardon with a goat, which would also serve as the 'cutter of the tongue'. When uterine sisters challenged one another before the *khɔrɔ* the men ridiculed them, saying, 'Who has ever heard of uterine sisters bewitching one another'—not a very conclusive argument, but sufficient for the purpose in hand. When Mabula, the cattle-linked sister, was called to squirt water (*hu phasa*) for the sick child of her brother, she construed the summons as an accusation of witchcraft, for to call another (not a close relative) to perform this rite is one method of imputing witchcraft; but Mabula's husband intervened in the *khɔrɔ*, explained how his wife and her brother by their quarrels were breaking up his home, and suggested that they beg pardon of one another. The *khɔrɔ* agreed and averted the challenge.

Even if the parties had been to the *mugɔme* with the official witness the *khɔrɔ* is not absolutely bound. In the old days, it is said, the *khɔrɔ* allowed argument as if the divination of the *mugɔme* was not infallible and if the parties were not satisfied the *khɔrɔ* could on the initiative of one of them send them to a second *mugɔme*. To-day, despite the theory that the *mugɔme* is infallible, the old practice persists. We have seen many arguments on the merits and many reversals of the findings of the *mugɔme*. These findings may be attacked on the grounds of irregularities in the procedure, such as separation of the parties when they were on the journey, corruption of the 'ears', incompetence of the *mugɔme* who failed to find the *phitho* or to indicate correctly the group or totem names of all the parties, dissatisfaction of the one party with the findings at the séance, confusion of the bones by medicines 'thrown' at home, and many others. When there is a conflict between the evidence or a presumption (such as, in adultery cases, the presumption that a woman's evidence is almost as reliable as the bones) and the findings of the *mugɔme*, there is no telling which way the ultimate verdict will go. The cases in which these conflicts have occurred are too complicated for adequate handling here, largely because the primary object of the *khɔrɔ* is appeasement of the parties and reconciliation of what appear to be incongruous institutions.

There are other aspects of the procedure that have great legal interest—for example, the principles governing vicarious representation of challenger and challenged before the *mugɔme* and the right of the person vicariously smelt out to appeal for a second expedition of which he is a party, the rule as to the conduct of the parties on the journey, the requirement of the *khɔrɔ* that it can take cognizance, not of gossip or general rumour, but only a specific accusation by a specific challenger, and many others. We shall touch upon two further points only.

695 Firstly the *mugɔme* is always a Shangana-Tonga and lives far away.
791 Litigants from other tribes come to Vulovedu, but the Lovedu generally say that they are going to Phafuli, on the borders of Portuguese East Africa. The theory is that the more distant the *mugɔme* the more reliable his verdict will be. But distance also safeguards the diviner from the vengeance that neighbours might take, shifts the incidence of distasteful responsibilities from the *khɔrɔ* and eliminates strife between the two

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XIV. THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

(a) DIAGNOSING THE CAUSE OF ILLNESS

(b) THE KHADI POURS BEER TO APPEASE THE ANCESTORS

[facing p 209]

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powerful jurisdictions, the *khɔrɔ* and the *mugɔme*. The *mugɔme*, great though his powers be, holds a precarious position in the modern world. His fees are not fixed, but the usual amount is £1 2*s*. 6*d*., though it may be 5*s*. or more for each person of the party. Much of his technique is directed towards preventing the consultants from giving him away to the European authorities. 'If you say I am a liar,' declared one *mugɔme* to the parties, 'take back your money and go elsewhere. I even challenge you to take me to the Europeans; they will agree with me, as I have a licence to divine.' In another case a *mugɔme* refused to find any one guilty. 'You force me,' he said, 'to smell out the witch, but you have left him at home. The other diviners who smelt out this man [the challenged person] are all wrong. And you [the challenger], if you wish to settle the dispute, must place a head of cattle as a sacred beast to wake up your grandfather.' But this finding did not persuade the parties to withdraw their case from the *khɔrɔ*, and the *khɔrɔ*, ignoring the finding, settled the matter in its own way.

Secondly, the wager is not made by way of an oath, but it is sometimes reduced to writing: 'They bet four head of cattle' (*va bɛjije khomu je nne*); that is all. The tiny slip of paper is kept by the 'ears'. The use of the term *hu bɛja* shows, as the people say, that the wager is a new conception. But we cannot be certain that the wager has been borrowed from Europeans. It fits the whole complex of judicial process: its essence is consent of the parties to be bound by their wager and by the findings of the *mugɔme*. If one of the parties disagrees with these findings, he is entitled to demand back the money paid to the *mugɔme* and ask the party to go further to another *mugɔme*. The *khɔrɔ* may, however, vary the bet. The victor comes to the *khɔrɔ* and blows his horn; and the women ululate and dance (*hu pɛbɛla*, which by extension also means to be acquitted or declared innocent by ordeal or *mugɔme*). Meanwhile the vanquished party goes home and, if he is contrite, he says that he could not help doing wrong. Next day he might appear in the *khɔrɔ*, ask for time to pay or *khumclwa* or send an old man to plead for a reduction of the bet. The victor pretends to refuse, but in the end, if the *khɔrɔ* presses him, he will agree. Or the *khɔrɔ* may, on its own initiative, reduce the bet. Everything depends on the circumstances. Where the mother of a man was alleged to have killed the wife of his elder brother (the challenger), the *mugɔme's* verdict was against the mother, but as he had said that she was not a born witch, but had only purchased the medicine from another, the *khɔrɔ* awarded the challenger two head of cattle instead of the six actually wagered. The bet is often not paid in full, while sometimes nothing at all is exacted as the 'cutter of the tongue' of the slanderer. But we have seen cases in which the *khɔrɔ* has, at the suggestion of one party, raised a wager from four to six head of cattle.

This is not the place to discuss the interrelations of the tribal and the European systems. For one thing, the subject requires a volume to itself. But it is necessary to insist that in criminal matters the system of Native courts is by European law essentially an integral part of the European structure. In 1934 Mujaji was given criminal jurisdiction in respect of offences punishable under Native law, but fines are limited to two head

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classification. Practice is characterized by vagueness and a very wide and 753
loose, instead of a specific, use of many of these terms. The term *khitshipidi* denotes primarily a swelling or tumour containing white matter. In practice we have found it applied to scrofula or glandular swellings below the ear, which were cut open and squeezed, to slime coughed up and said to be internal *khitshipidi*, and to general aching of all the teeth or tenderness of the gums with no sign of matter. Similarly the term *ŋɔbɛ*, bleeding of the nose, is often applied when there is no bleeding, but general debility, in which case the trouble is thought to be caused by blood in the body that should, but has not, come out. Such false correlations are due not merely to wrong conceptions of cause and effect—any evidence suggesting the presence of blood suffices to incriminate that arch enemy of health—but also to careless observation and loose reasoning. This laxity in medical conceptions is in marked contrast to the logic and coherence of other arrangements of the society. Inaccurate observation [787 ●
and undeveloped symptomatology must be attributed to the extensive 755]
reliance, firstly, for diagnosis of all but the most everyday illness upon the divining dice, and, secondly, for curing upon what in the last resort is the psychological rather than the physical.

Lovedu therapeutics includes a number of treatments that have un- 757
doubted curative value, but many more are based on purely magical assumptions. On the whole, those which we should consider to be of some medical value are chiefly home remedies of the humble non-divining herbalist. The higher one goes in the medical scale, the more divorced from scientific principles become the treatments. Simple ailments are dealt with very much as among Europeans: sniffing up water is used for colds, the milk of a certain euphorbia is supplied to draw out deep-lying thorns; splints of strips of wood are used for broken limbs or 752
sprains; teeth are extracted by being levered up by means of an instrument like a poker, which is inserted between the roots, a method said to be no more painful than the clumsy use of European forceps. Very detrimental to the speedy recovery of wounds is, however, the practice of scraping or washing off all matter before each application of healing powders. This destroys the new young tissues, delaying for months the healing of sores that normally takes weeks or even days. Use of enemas is 757
unknown and emetics are not nearly as common as among the Zulu. With the Lovedu as with us the commonest treatment is the drinking of medicines. Instead, however, of the bottle of medicine we receive, a Native is given a small bundle of roots or twigs cut into even lengths to take home and boil in water which is drunk or used for making a soft porridge. Sometimes the medicine is bruised and a cold infusion made. There is none of the careful measurement of quantities characteristic of the mediaeval apothecary or of prescriptions found on Egyptian papyri, but the amounts used are not wholly undetermined, for in practice the smallest pot is used and 1 to 2½ pints of water are added; the dose seldom exceeds a few mouthfuls taken once or twice a day for a few days only. If this is not effective, something else will be tried. Wet cupping is a common home remedy, as the numerous scars on head and shoulders of people testify. After scarification, a cupping horn is applied, the narrow

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

[787] The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again.

[789] Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figchcla*) unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 826 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ɖcre* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 766 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ɖcre*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are 754 sometimes called *mashɔthɔjɔ*, because they *rəthɔja* (cause to be cool,

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755 aside pieces of meat for his spirit, and a *mugɔme* always has his special
791 shrine where he reports all money professionally earned. An ordinary doctor sometimes has a shrine where he places horns of goats received or hangs medicine bags when he prays to the spirits, but many do not have these things. To a doctor his divination is like a craft that he has learnt, and he gives offerings only when scarcity of clients is attributed to the displeasure of the gods. When about to divine, he begs the bones to tell him the truth, not the ancestors for guidance.

787 The divinatory dice constitute the chief diagnostic method. The
755 Lovedu set is fairly stereotyped, consisting of about forty pieces, most but not all of which are bones; the bones and *hakati* shells (oval-shaped stones of a fruit) of the Shangana-Ṭonga *mugɔme* are somewhat different. Dominating the usual Lovedu set are four flat pieces of ivory or bone, two male and two female, which fall in sixteen different combinations, the cardinal positions. Each position has its own name and its own praise referring, though vaguely, to its meaning; and it is these four pieces from which the general configuration of influences or prognostications is read. There are other sets of four: pieces from the ventral surface of a tortoise, each with two easily distinguishable sides, and shells, two Oliva standing for males and two Cyraea standing for females. Having thrown the dice, the diviner looks first at the ivory pieces and gives the praise of their disposition, which indicates the general situation, say, dissension, loss, or complaints of the father's sister. But this general situation must be related to the lie of certain other bones, particularly *malope*, the knuckle-bone of the steenbuck (*Raphiceros campestus*), from which, as representing the chief, the diviner next orientates the situation. The procedure thereafter involves linking this situation, on the one hand, with events or specific prognostications of good or evil and, on the other, with people playing a part in these events. *Thakadu* or *mudimo*, the talus of the antbear, represents the ancestors, who, like the antbear, live underground, shows whether they are angry or not, and is diagnostic of the health or life of a person which in the last resort lies in ancestral hands. *Dau*, the phalanx of the lion (or in some sets *ŋgwe*, the phalanx of the tiger) which is also a pointing bone showing direction, *phiri*, the knee-bone of the hyena, of which there may be two, male and female, and *tshweni*, male and female kneebones of the baboon, all stand for the evil power of witches and their familiars. The baboon bones, in addition, indicate, by the side on which they fall, danger or illness on a journey, suitability of the spot for building upon and, in case of barrenness, whether or not a child will be born. Every set contains two morula pips with functions less specific, depending as they do upon the whole configuration of forces or events, and a river pebble, *lemɛja la gwɛna*, the thing swallowed by a crocodile, which is diagnostic of *khileso*, the illness caused by foreign substances which sorcerers cause their victims to swallow with food or drink.

To bring these evil or good influences into relation with specific people, to determine who is ill or who is bewitching the consultants, the diviner turns to certain astralagus bones, capable of falling on four sides and representing people. Two or three sheep bones stand for important

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or respected persons, such as district or village heads, and goat bones, 787 numbering two to six, for mere commoners—a real separation of sheep 755 and goats. If there are two goat bones, they represent male and female; a third represents a child; four bones extends the range to male and female children, and the further two bones differentiate widow and bachelor. Different totems are shown by bones of the animals revered. Lovedu sets have two (male and female) *maḏavu* (rietbuck) bones standing for the Crocodile totemic group; two *phala* (rooibuck) bones for Khalaga and sometimes also Lovedu; two *golove* (wild boar) for Lovedu, two *phudi* (duiker) for Khaha and Koni; two *shɔshɔ* (bushbuck) for the Tshadzi of Mavulana; and in areas in which there are Phalavorwa and Thavina also two *nogo* (porcupine). Elephants and lions are represented by the bones of these animals. These totem-indicating bones vary greatly according to the people with whom the diviner comes into most contact. Many diviners have one or two extra pieces, such as a shell or a stone found in a strange place. Malematsha, for instance, has a piece of chalk from France, where he served in the labour battalion during the Great War.

The detailed rules of divination are far too complicated for treatment in a general ethnographical study, but a few general principles, common knowledge to all in the society, may be mentioned. Firstly, it is the side on which the bones fall rather than their disposition to one another that is important. All the pieces can fall in two ways, either positive, dorsal, or negative, ventral surface up, while in addition the astralagi have two narrower surfaces, one, the concave side, with a deeper cleft than the other, the convex side. In the normal position, with dorsal side up, the power the bone stands for is said to be active, the person it represents well or walking in the direction it is lying; in the reverse position, with ventral side up, it is sleeping, powerless or dead and hence, when the people represented are witches, a good sign, for they are then on their backs and harmless. An astralagus lying on its convex side with the cleft up shows laughing, happiness, talking, or even quarrelling (much talking), and with convex side up, anger, complaints, sadness. Secondly, the significance of these positions and particularly of the combinations of the sets of four bones varies according to the purpose of the divination: a particular position means one thing when it is illness, another when it is a building site that is in question. Thirdly, despite intricate rules, divination is in the last resort not an exact science, but an interpretation in which the diviner's ingenuity, his knowledge of human nature and his estimate of the interplay of motives in the society play an important part. In this connexion, the praises of each bone and of various positions have an unsuspected function. These praises are not trade secrets and are fairly generally known; to be word-perfect is unnecessary and parts may be recited or omitted, while half may be uttered at one moment and the remainder much later. This occupies the mind of the client and gives the diviner time to think and orientate himself. Moreover, interpretation abounds with metaphorical expressions, as does the parlance of European fortune-tellers with club-men and diamond-girls. Many Lovedu diviners, imitating the *mugome*, use a peculiar chant, half Shangana-Tonga, half

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787 755 Sotho, a jargon difficult to understand and reinterpreted by the doctor or by some one of the party more conversant than the client with the procedure.

The procedure in divination is a subtle process combining suggestion, free association of ideas, and techniques of leading the client and inspiring confidence in the diviner. On opening the bags, the doctor pours out the dice and watches how they fall, but he does not always vouchsafe anything at this stage. Before casting his dice, he chews a piece of root (*khirugulu*), which he blows out on to the bones: both he and the bones are thereby given insight and power. Then, taking them in both hands and uttering a praise by way of encouragement, he casts them on to the floor or on the mat provided. At this stage he reads the cardinal positions, perhaps elaborating on the general trend indicated, and suggests what the client has come to consult him about, often in so doing eliciting some information. Thereafter the client himself throws the bones, speaking to them as dictated by the doctor; the practice of bringing a piece of rag breathed upon by the patient is not known, but the consultant may be directed to mention the patient's name. The client will have to cast many times till the trouble has been thrashed out. The next step is for the doctor, after suggesting a remedy, to cast the bones and interpret their reply to the suggestion. Whatever the cause of the illness, the first suggestion is always placation of the ancestors and thereafter medicines and treatments. At each throw only some of the dice are studied, the position of the others being irrelevant to the immediate purpose. Sometimes it takes long (often as we have seen, over two hours or a whole afternoon) for the bones to give a clear indication and, if they fall in unreadable combinations, various causes may be assigned: the bones may not have been properly 'washed'; or a condition precedent to effective divination may have been omitted, such as in one case we witnessed, when the consultant's people had not yet held the removal of 'dirt' (*khitshila*) ceremony after the death of a child; or the bones may unaccountably 'refuse'.

To illustrate the procedure, we give an actual case of divination simplified by the omission of the praises. Ramatiti, the doctor, had just finished divining for Dumedi when Dwagu, Dumedi's friend who lived some ten miles away, came upon the scene and, handing over his 1*s*. to the doctor, asked that the dice be thrown for him. Ramatiti poured out the bones, looked at them, but remained silent. He then chewed a piece of *khirugulu*, took the bones in both hands, spat on them and, mumbling a praise, cast them. 'They have fallen *muferegere*' (a position meaning dissension), he said, uttering the relevant praise. 'You have been greatly troubled,' he continued, enlarging upon the greatness of the trouble. 'The tortoise bones lie *mutagola*' (indicating long illness), he added. 'You suffer from "blood" and intestinal trouble. Do you have dreams?' 'Yes,' replied Dwagu, 'chiefly about dead people.' '*Tshwoni*' (the baboon bones), went on the doctor, 'are full [lie on their convex side]; your sickness is on the chest.' Thereupon Dwagu was given the bones to throw and told to repeat after the doctor a praise of the bones: 'Tell us you spy with eyes that see, tell us why we are afflicted; whether it be a god or whether it be

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a witch, tell us.' When the bones had fallen. Ramatiti asked, 'Do you know any *gwena* [man of the Crocodile totem]? Are your in-laws Crocodile?' 'No,' replied Dwagu, 'I know only neighbours, not relatives, who are Crocodile.' After Dwagu had denied that he had quarrelled with these people, the doctor warned him not to drink beer with them, and when he objected, 'But we are always drinking together', the doctor said. 'It is they who have given you *khileso*.' Dwagu was doubtful, but replied, 'I remember that once, when I came out of the *gomana* "school", a son of those neighbours gave me monkey nuts and afterwards my stomach was upset.'

Dwagu threw the bones again and the doctor asked him if he were troubled by matter in the ears. Dwagu admitted that both his ears were affected and added, 'That is how the trouble began, and I have tried many remedies in vain.' The doctor now had a substantial clue. 'The ears are causing blood on the chest', he said. 'Has a *lelɔpɔ* doctor tried to cure you?' 'No,' Dwagu replied. 'Only a woman who was one day called for my mother.' The bones were once more thrown to determine whether the woman would succeed if she were called again. The *malope* bone lay on its back and with *dau* and *phiri* upside down, showing the power of the witches to be broken, and *golovɛ* (wild boar) in its normal position, the doctor declared that Dwagu would recover. But, though it was silently passed over, the diviner was mistaken in thinking that his client was of the *golovɛ* totem. Again Dwagu threw the dice and the question asked, viz. whether he should offer to (*suma*) his dead father, was answered in the negative; but though *phiri* (hyena) and *tshweni* (baboon) lay powerless, the positive position of the lion (*dau*), associated with witches, indicated that the stomach-ache would remain. 'Have you bilharzia?' inquired the doctor. 'No.' 'Well, then, do you enjoy your beer?' 'No,' was the reply. 'But one calabash fills my stomach; I can't drink much.' Another throw, this time by the doctor, was favourable to the medicine mentioned as a cure. 'But,' asked the doctor, as he scrutinized the bones, 'what child at home is ill?' When Dwagu said it was his, the doctor congratulated himself on his perspicacity and could not resist following up his success.

Dwagu thus had to cast the dice about his child. The doctor diagnosed *zwiso* (sores), a vague term covering external rashes or sores of all kinds, as well as internal trouble, and a common complaint of children. 'Yes,' replied Dwagu. 'The sores are in its mouth,' adding a full account of the complaint. The *khilumɛ* goat bone (indicating a young male person) was lying positive, so the doctor said, 'It is a boy,' but again he was wrong. Unperturbed, the doctor now threw the dice, having suggested the cure, 'Dung of witches (metaphorical for the insectivorous bat) and mice and moss hanging from trees. Burn one portion holding the child in the smoke and smear its body with the other portion. Tell us, you spy with eyes that see. I say let the fowl (child) be well.' But the bone standing for a small girl fell on its back: the medicine would not succeed. Again the doctor threw, mentioning different ingredients, but similar treatment, and this time the bones were propitious.

The doctor is an important person in the society, not because his

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787 755 practice brings him wealth, but because disease is a matter of ever-present interest. He is paid chiefly in beer, which provides entertainment for friends and neighbours, payer and payee, and enhances his prestige. The family doctor usually receives nothing at all, but is called to beer that is drunk in the family. Diviners receive the 1*s*. or fowl for divination and perhaps, if they are mercenary or have taken great pains about the medicine, 5*s*. for opening the medicine bags; but payment for treatment is made only for successful cures. A patient should on recovery not shave his head before bringing beer to the doctor, when the 'hair of his illness' is shaved, perhaps with medicine by the doctor and taken to a hollow tree, where it is left with the words 'Sickness remain there'; but this rule is, as often as not, observed in the breach. The correct charge for curing barrenness or epilepsy is £1 or £1 10*s*., yet we have seen many cures of barrenness for which only beer was given. The means of the patient and his relationship to the doctor are material factors. *Lelɔpɔ* doctors are usually mercenary, requiring a goat for most of their treatments and fining patients who shave their heads without permission. *Mugɔme* are the wealthiest doctors, receiving anything from £1 to £7 at one sitting. Many set up temporary villages along the roads to catch clients, and one living in Portuguese East Africa has a lorry for transporting clients from the Transvaal lowveld to his home. The *mugɔme* exacts full payment before he divines; other doctors have to wait until the cure is effected. A doctor never goes to court about his fees, but he sometimes threatens to cover up the holes where he dug the medicines to call back illness upon the patient.

When medicines are not effective, it is etiquette to acquaint the doctor with the fact before going to a second doctor, but this etiquette is not always observed. Health is the quest of every one at all times, and disease is the most persistent and dangerous enemy of the individual; for the causes of illness are incalculable and even the most harmless disease may let in the witch to strike at his victim. The office of the doctor is both important and honourable, for he is the guardian of the people's welfare. There is no oath that binds him to loyalty and integrity, but these things are expected of him; he even preserves the secrets of his clients and, though the *mugɔme* advertises himself, such action by a doctor is regarded as derogatory.

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769 which royal ancestors only can withhold; differences in the harvest
241 between one area and another are often attributed to fights between the
782 witches of the two areas, and even variations in yield between one man's field and his neighbour's may be due to witchcraft. Yet one finds in prayers many a request for a good harvest, even though there are no special ceremonies devoted to this end. A man pouring a libation for a sick child said among other things, 'Give us corn; when we plough let us also reap. Why are you stinting us?' And it is significant that the only regular religious observance is the harvest offering of beer made of each year's new corn in villages where there are shrines or dedicated animals. When any one dies, there is thought to be danger that the fertility of the [764] crops will depart with him or her. Hence, when a gourd of seeds of every kind is placed in the grave together with a firebrand and calabash of water for she journey, some of the seeds are scattered over the body with the words, 'Do not depart with all the corn and seeds,' and very often the grain belonging to the deceased is treated with medicine in order that it may remain fertile.

769 Above all, the ancestors complain, a fact which lies at the basis of
782 Lovedu religion, for by far the greater proportion of religious rites are those performed in response to ancestral complaints. One might at first think it strange that the gods, in life just ordinary, well-disposed people, should in death be so liable to bring trouble upon their kin. Sometimes it is thought to be a sign of love: when Masilu's grandmother had made him ill because she wanted a goat dedicated to her, his mother said, 'No wonder his *gogo* seized him. She was always so fond of him.' But chiefly it is the nature of ancestors to complain; as the Lovedu phrase it, 'When people sleep (i.e. are dead), they ought to complain' (*Hɛ vathu va khi lala fase va swantɛk hu velcala*). When there is illness, they are, as it is phrased, 'seen in the divining bones'; it is they who sometimes 'hold' the woman experiencing difficult childbirth, and sometimes, but far less than among the Nguni, their complaints cause dreams. Our close friend • [787] Walter, coming to seek work in Johannesburg, dreamt disturbing dreams of his dead father, who appeared to say that he was needed at home. He thereupon returned home and, when he arrived, his mother took him to a doctor, whose bones declared that the dead father was annoyed at not having been told of the journey to town and had to be appeased (*hu phasa*). Walter was well educated, but he had failed in his last examination and felt doubly frustrated. He had great ambitions of reforming the political system of the tribe, from which his education had divorced him, and in town he was dissatisfied that nothing was open to him but the unskilled work of his uneducated compatriots.

769 An ancestor may complain about the way he has been buried, and if he
782 has died far from home, may demand to be 'brought back home' in a
778 ceremony in which, besides the dedication of a beast or goat, a goat is killed and eaten, its bones being buried as though it were a person. But this 'bringing home', involving the making of a shrine, applies only to those dying at a distance and does not resemble the 'bringing home' of the Zulu, among whom it is part of death ceremonial. At times the gods complain of neglect. But in the majority of cases no definite reason for

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754 683 787 Accusation of a specific person may lead to *khɔrɔ* proceedings,[1] which involve, as described elsewhere, the appointment of the 'ears', who receives a goat or 10*s*. from each party as well as provisions, a wager of a head of cattle, or £1 10*s*. or more, and payment, the vanquished eventually to reimburse the victor, of £1 10*s*. or more, as the fee of the *mugɔme*. Occasionally in practice, if accused does not demand to have his innocence proved, the accuser does not go to court and the matter is left. All victims of witchcraft do not act in the same manner. One man proceeds to a specific accusation the very first time he is harmed, another only if the same witch has been responsible for many evils; if the witch is a great rival or personal enemy, the victim more readily resorts to action, but a commoner, unless he is prepared to leave the district, will be careful to avoid accusing his district head or a relative of the queen. A victim never makes an accusation without previous private consultation with a number of doctors and often even a *mugɔme* as well, and the accusation is conveyed to the witch, either directly by the victim or indirectly by his intermediary, and usually in metaphorical language. In case of illness, the witch may be invited to 'come and *phasa* for our patient' or, in case of death, to 'come and shave us', duties which only special relatives can perform; or, more directly, he may be asked 'to come with us to consult the bones'. The accused will then demand to go to a *mugɔme* to clear his name; if he does nothing, but merely remains inactive, his accuser may proceed further and take the case to the *khɔrɔ*.

When proceeding to a smeller-out, the parties have no definite destination. They set out in a north-easterly direction, where *megɔme* abound, usually with the intention of going somewhere very far away. After a day or two, however, they grow tired, or the official witness complains of the heat, and they find some one nearer. The witness has on his person an object called *phitho* that has been given to him by the court or at the royal village. This the smeller-out has to name and find, and it is said that, unless, in addition, he is able to give the totem of every one in the party and clearly to distinguish between accuser, accused, and official witness, they will pass on to some one else. How far this is carried out in practice we shall see later. It is sometimes said by Europeans that smellers-out have spies who bring them the information necessary for their divining. This would, however, be impossible: not only do people come from all directions or tribes, sometimes as far distant as Mapulaneng beyond the Olifants River, but it would require an elaborate system of espionage that could hardly be kept secret from the people in the conditions that obtain in Bantu society. Moreover, the methods employed by smellers-out make such a system unnecessary. There is no doubt that *megɔme* are clever, and we have ourselves been amazed at the manner in which, under test conditions, a *mugɔme* was able to name and find an object hidden on our person. But it must be borne in mind that they use a trial-and-error technique based upon the responses of the audience. Of course, the presence of a European is always a disturbing factor, but in our experience, after the first few responses, the *mugɔme* begins to speak more and more loudly and quickly and a situation of free association of ideas and great suggestiveness arises. The consultants

1 [Accusation of witchcraft, see Cat. 116, pp. 203–4. —Analyst]

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become less guarded and the *mugɔme*, skilled in his art, is able to draw 754
conclusions from their reactions. A good deal of vagueness is permissible: 683
the term *mukhalaga*, for example, can refer to a number of different 787
totems: *mukhalaga* proper, *mukhalaga munyai*, *mukhalaga ḋou* (elephant), and this applies also to other aspects of their divination. An actual example, albeit a case of theft, not witchcraft, will elucidate the methods employed.

Mudana accused Bodile, his half-brother's son, of stealing £9. The 787
case had been tried first at home, and then at the Native Commissioner's, where it had been dismissed owing to insufficient evidence. The parties decided to go to a smeller-out. On the second day of their journey, when they were resting under a tree to enable the official witness to take off his jacket, a small boy standing some way off said to them, 'There is a *mugɔme* over there.' He was a decoy watching the road to direct people to a diviner who had lately arrived and set up a temporary village of rough huts. Deciding that it was too hot to go further, the party followed the boy and sat down outside the village fence. A man approached them and, after ascertaining how much money they had to offer, showed them into an enclosure of old sacks. At the entrance stood the diviner himself, holding a stick under which the four of them were made to pass in single file. Diviners are said quite frequently to test their clients in some such manner; sometimes they are made to jump over a furrow and it is said the guilty man usually falls in.

When they had seated themselves on the ground, the diviner asked first of all for his money. The official witness handed him £1 5s., but he insisted on 10s. more, because, he said, it was a difficult case—one that had been much tried in other courts. Stick in hand, but without the use of any divining bones, the diviner began asking the party to respond (*hu vuma*). '*Ya vuma*,' they replied, and he proceeded with his chanting in a mixture of Sotho and Shangana-Tonga in sing-song phrases, at the end of which the clients had to assent. 'You have come from home on a matter', he began. Pointing to the official witness, he said, 'You have accused this boy (pointing to Bodile) of witchcraft. No. I'm making a mistake on purpose. You have not come for this reason.' Looking into a large shell, he continued, 'You have come on a different errand. You have come about money. The sum concerned is £30. No. It is £15. No. It is £10. The owner of the money sells hemp.' Continuing in this manner in short phrases, to which the party responded '*Ya vuma*,' and, suggesting first this, then that, he eventually said, 'I don't like to cause brothers by the same father to fight. Your quarrel is a vain one. The money was stolen by a woman of the Crocodile totem living near your village. She has not yet used the money.' Pointing to Bodile, he said, '*You*, why do you want to kill *him* [Mudana], and you [Mudana] be careful. They may kill you with medicines they have just bought.' Turning to the official witness, he demanded, 'Give me my *phitho* (hidden object). What kind of thing is this which is hidden from me? It is a snuff-box. No. It is a half-crown. No. It is a penny. No. It is European iron. If you think I am telling lies, take out of your left-hand pocket the thing which you have been given.' The official witness took out of

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787 his pocket the battery of a torch. He doubted the competence of a diviner who had been so vague about the nature of the object—'European iron' can be any metal object—but the main thing was that Bodile and Mudana were satisfied and so the party went home, relieved that it was an outsider who was found to be the culprit.

Objectively considered, this seance may appear naïve, but the parties, and even an outsider who was present, did not think so. There was no initial and formal identification of accuser, accused, and 'ears' which one expects from theoretical accounts; but forms and procedures are never set, and it is not unusual for these identifications to emerge later as the divination proceeds. It is by theoretical standards necessary that the *mugome*, as a test of his competence, should name the totem or other groups of the consultants, but in this case the parties did not even notice the omission, as they were satisfied on the main issue. The *mugome* erred somewhat as regards both the sum involved and the relationship of Mudana and Bodile; but the parties were impressed that he was only £1 out and, although they were not brothers, they were related through brothers. The wide connotation of terms and indefiniteness of conceptions lend themselves, as meanings and rigid categories in a European language cannot do, to manipulation by the *mugome* and ready acceptance by the parties of suggestions. In the *khoro*, the vanquished party often complains of the vague or incorrect indications as to totems and of other unsatisfactory features, but unless the 'ears' agrees, the *khoro* usually dismisses these objections, since, if he had really been dissatisfied, he would have demanded back the money from the *mugome* and proceeded to another. But it is necessary to add that the *mugome* often backs up his art with a very high-handed manner or behaviour. Some even beat witches that they have smelt out. It is usual for the diviner to shave one side of the head of the witch and to take from him his jacket or any other object of clothing he would like to have. To the accuser is given a buck's horn to blow on his way home as proof of his success and, when he enters the royal village to report, he is met with joyful trillings of women.

754 The attitude of people towards convicted witches depends largely upon the nature of the crime, but also upon the number of relatives of the injured party living in the neighbourhood. If he has harmed a number of people in the area, or if the injured party has many relatives to side with him, the witch may be forced by public opinion to leave the area. Malaji, who had caused the difficult birth and the death of the child of his lover, became very unpopular when the witchcraft had finally been attributed to him; from being one of the cheerful young bloods in the district, he became reserved and restrained, and shortly afterwards he left to work in town. But he was not ostracized by any one except the relatives of the injured woman and, when he returns, if we may judge from other cases, the whole matter will have blown over. On the whole, the attitude of the general public to a convicted witch is one of unconcern as long as his efforts have not been directed against them personally. People are accustomed to living in an atmosphere in which any one of their friends or relatives may turn out to be a witch. The atmosphere is

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which 789
the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, 372
when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of
mufugo and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gummifera*) to every village [844]
in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard
and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are
cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used [842]
that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been
smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new
fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a
brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In
return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or
groundnuts, which they eat in the *khoro*. Each married man in turn must
give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s.* or a
fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other
gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khethe*), anything may
be given. Each boy must give 1*s.* or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping
the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on
the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine,
took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water,
which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay
five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps 821
have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the 769
close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the 782
queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khada; sometimes it is Mugodo's
sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's
brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery,
instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place
only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lova* the
queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods
to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lova*, 787
but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 643
'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the 789
queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The
reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for
the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case,
no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as
to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome
spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it
was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to
do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital
approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she
impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but
they have "weakened" (*hu fighcia*) it. They want me to be troubled.'
She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people them-
selves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft,
had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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787 pleading, she relented and said, 'Find me a black sheep without blemish
643 [colour].' The first messenger they sent returned without success, but
789 two others were dispatched to scour the country and on the seventeenth one was found. Kheshidwa, the rain-doctor, was now called. Four days passed, but he did not come. Then the queen, angry at the delay, suggested that she should proceed with the ceremony alone. But this the councillors would not hear of; 'You might deviate from the procedure the bones indicate to be essential,' they said. On the fifth day, however, Kheshidwa arrived, explaining his delay as due to the number of medicines he had to find, and at dawn on February 23rd the ceremony took place.

643 A calabash containing *mafuge* was placed in a basket for the chief wife
789 of the queen's brother to carry, and a procession of most of the inmates of the royal village set out with the sheep. They stopped first at a clump of trees near the village, where lies Moyawudupi, a female relative by marriage to the queen on the mother's brother's side. When the queen ordered her chief councillor, as direct representative of the mother's brother's side, to begin, he uncorked the calabash and poured some of its contents over the grave, saying, 'Stop for us these winds and tribulations, that it may rain nicely. They say it is you people whose murmurings are impeding the rain.' His younger sister next took the calabash, praying in almost identical words, followed by the queen herself, who said, 'Aye, we say, stop for us all these *pukudi* [winds from wrong burials] that rain may fall and people find corn.' The people now respectfully greeted (*hu lisha*), repeating the praise of Muhale, the king of old, and, during the trillings that followed, the rain-doctor said, 'The frogs do not cry, sire. I do not hear them'; he may have meant that it was so dry that even the frogs were silent, but we do not know for certain.

The procession now proceeded to Maulwi, the sacred grove where are buried members of the royal family and the two last queens. At the grave of Mathukha, mother's brother to the queen and father of the chief councillor, they all sat down while the same procedure was gone through as at the other grave. When it was the queen's turn to pray, she took a small horn wrapped up in rags and placed it on the grave. Then, pouring from the calabash, she prayed, 'Do not continue to hold my arms; leave me to do my things, that rain may fall and people have corn. Tell one another, tell every single one, also the old woman [meaning Leakhali, her mother] and Mujaji, "huckster in the hut", who "casts away some and shares others with the vultures" [Mujaji I]. Do not continue leaving us to be burnt by the sun. As for our health, we are reasonably well; we are merely troubled by the poverty you have left us.' She poured out all the *mafuge*, turning the calabash upside down beside the horn, while the assembled company did obeisance and ululated. The sheep was slaughtered and skinned and small pieces, cut from various parts of the body, were placed in an earthen bowl while the doctor, sitting some distance away, began squeezing the stomach contents to separate the liquid from the more solid part. When he had finished, the chief councillor, his sister, and the queen placed the meat on the grave, telling the gods, 'We approach (*hu sawa*) you with this sheep.' The solid stomach contents

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife. 783 753

Makhuma (from *hu khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figchela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*hu thusa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold. 751 783 [304 846] [768]

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'. 783 787 789

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on 783

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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An omen or bane (*lesola*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesola*, and so can a *leshega*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *fola* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 787 825

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*vusola*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahava*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahava* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahava* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahava*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 777 602 [753] [769]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (Vulsi)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *vulsi* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Vulsi* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Vulsi* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *vulsi* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *vulsi* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*vulsi rya vusiu*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*vulsi rya matsiare*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 754 [577]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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Lobedu themselves. The society is remarkably egalitarian and there is no concentration of wealth in the hands of the ruling group. Nor would this be easy in a tribe in which the limited resources in property (in cattle) are used primarily for, and are constantly being converted into, marriage alliances.

Other distinctive features of the Lobedu are their marked agricultural bias; a fertility cult with sacred drums; masked dancing; ritual arrangements in ancestor worship (in the form of impersonation of the spirits, the predominance of beer offerings and the *phasa* rite of spurting water out of the mouth as an accompaniment to prayer) which link them more closely to the tribes to the north than to their southern Nguni and Sotho neighbours where the blood sacrifice and cattle cult are more clearly marked.

Agnatic Groupings

Despite the fact that they are ruled by a queen and that women can and do hold important political and religious positions the Lobedu are a patrilineal people in the sense that a man belongs to his father's lineage, property is inherited in the male line and marriage is patrilocal. The tribe is made up of a large number of different totemic groups, Lion, Elephant, Crocodile, Wild Pig, none of which, not even the royal Lobedu totem, is confined to the Lobedu tribe. All these totems are found in neighbouring tribes and many also in other parts of the Transvaal and elsewhere. A few groups have no totem (*motupo*) but designate themselves by their place of origin, e.g., *Mokhalaga*. Groups which have the same totem do not consider themselves related if they come from different places of origin. Elephant of Khalaga are thus unrelated to Elephant of Tsubye or Elephant of Thobolo. People sometimes swear by (*ana*) their totem and are supposed to but do not always abstain from eating it. The totemic name is useful only as a distinguishing mark; e.g., in divination the bones may indicate a person of the Elephant or Lion totem as responsible for illness or theft. Beyond this the *motupo* has little meaning and today many of the young people do not even use the term. The totemic group is not exogamous.

The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term *moloko* or

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The lineage has no distinguishing name, the term molokoo or
613 *leloko* which is in common use referring to the group of agnates
[602] as well as to the relatives on the mother's side of the family.
The lineage segment of four to five generations tracing its
[789] descent from a common male ancestor (grandfather of the adult males) shares a common major shrine and occasionally meets at the harvest thanksgiving or when a *makhobo* (a gathering of the descendants of a particular common ancestor) is indicated by the diviner as the wish of a troublesome spirit.
[592] Such a group of agnates of four to five generations in depth tends to be concentrated in the same locality and in many cases may be found in the same homestead (*motse*). As neighbours
[476] and relatives they share in many common activities such as helping in each other's work-parties, taking part in girls' puberty ceremonies, consulting each other in the marriage of their sons and daughters. Only in the minimal lineage of father and sons are there jural ties. The lineage is not a land-owning unit, has no political functions, is not exogamous, marriage within the lineage being common especially in the Lobedu royal group.

[562] An interesting feature of the Lobedu lineage is the important part played by its women who continue even after marriage to be active in lineage affairs as leaders in religious ritual and as
[582] guardians over their brothers' households. The merging of the
[769] ancestors on the father's and mother's side of the family which results from preferential marriage with the mother's uterine brother's daughter and the inclusion in ancestor worship of relatives on both sides, which will be described later, also affect
613 the character of the lineage. A religious gathering (*makhobo*) of
769 the descendants of Sekhobo which I attended showed the lineage segment of five generations in operation and illustrated
[602] some of these points. Descendants through both sons and daughters in the line of Sekhobo's chief wife took part in the ceremony and, in addition to calling upon the deceased father and other male ascendants of the head of the lineage, the officiator mentioned by name also the deceased father's uterine sisters and the father's mother. The inclusion of the father's mother was all the more remarkable because this was a gathering of the descendants of Sekhobo and it had been the specific complaint of the troubling ancestor that every year harvest beer was being offered to the spirits on the father's mother's

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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In the actual working religion of the Lovedu the commonest and most conspicuous rite is *hu phasa*, consisting of a prayer and the pouring on to earth or *thugula* of a mixture of ground, sprouted grain and water, a mixture colloquially referred to as *muṭazwa lesclo* (the rinser of the winnowing basket). More rarely *hu phasa* is merely spitting out water in the courtyard to the accompaniment of such prayer. There is no formulated distinction in principle between the two forms; the Lovedu say that the dice decide which is to be used. We found water squirted in illness caused by complaints of the living; in some cases of difficult birth; where in the initiation of a possessed woman the spirit was begged to manifest itself; and in one exceptional instance water was squirted on the face of a corpse addressed in prayer before it was buried (usually the corpse is merely addressed when the grains are put into the grave). The efficacy of *hu phasa*, which is also used magically to render witchcraft ineffectual, appears to lie in its 'cooling' effect. *Hu phasa* is performed in connexion with a large number of cases of illness and bad luck and is the recognized approach in asking for blessings on a journey or an undertaking. Hardly a week passes without some one in the neighbourhood having to *phasa*, and generally the prayer in these cases takes the form of a 'scolding' (*hu rohana*), in which the spirits are asked why they are causing illness and told to be satisfied. One does not *phasa* without also using charms in the mixture to make the spirits forget, and the officiator may be male or female, whomsoever the dice have indicated. Rites of thanksgiving, except for the customary harvest beer, are almost unknown. We came upon such a rite only once when the bachelor brother of Madinji returned home after an absence in town of thirty years and she performed *hu phasa* in the presence of the family, saying, 'Spirits of Mambeuli, this is one of your fowls. We thought he was lost; now he is back. Keep him as you have kept the rest of us. If he goes away, let him soon remember and long for his home.'

The only regular offering is the annual harvest beer given to dedicated animals and shrines, though even this may be neglected: the village may be moved without the shrine, or the dedicated animal die without being replaced. We ourselves witnessed the setting up of a shrine and dedicated sheep after twenty years' neglect in the chief house of Sedena. Much more formal than ordinary rites of *hu phasa* is the harvest offering, which may take place any time between July and November, for there is here no rule that the queen should take precedence. The officiator is a woman where possible, the *khadi*, who is specially called to come, and real beer, called *muphaba* and made of eleusine, is prepared for the ceremony. If eleusine is not available, red kaffir corn (*makhaha*) may be used, but no other grain is acceptable to the spirits. In its preparation, which is in the hands of old women or girls below the age of puberty, care must be taken that the eleusine is stamped, not ground on the grindstone, and that none of it is tasted before the gods have been given some. Ordinary beer is tasted to see if it is ready, but *muphaba* is smelt or tested by stirring with a twisler. Though the married women of the village play no part in the religious rites on such occasions, it is the duty of the chief wife in whose courtyard the ceremony will take place to smear with dung the place

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for
[788] an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*mudimo wesu*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me ox liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's
753 daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite un-
788 expectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*hu phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of the girl, *phasa* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognized as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phasa*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Hu phasa* in these circumstances recognizes psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mabudu* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

girls and asked that the chief might pardon them this trespass. Then the chief sounded the horn to assemble his troups. When the troups had assembled on one place, they were told that it was finished. Now the chief seized his war-horn, blew it and jumped about. All the troups intonated praise-songs to praise the chief; they said: "Mogôdô, the neck with fat-wrinkles, Mogôdô, he rules with the rain-horn." It is 'Mogôdô-Mme-a—Phedola," he says: 'I kill a person'—he kills; he says; 'I make live'—he makes live." 173 643

28. Then the chief took his spear, danced, pushed it into the ground and pointed to the East. He said to his warriors: "From the East there are coming black ants. You will fight with them, and you will defeat them." Then he pushed down again, pointed to the West and said: "From the West there will come red ants, these will defeat you over and over again."[29] 173

29. Chief Mogôdô fought also with Khašane, the son of his father. But Khašane fled into the country called Tshale.[30] Then the people called him to come and stay in another country called Moduveni,[31] where a certain man namely Mamadêba, a son of Khašane grew up, who found the Word of God at Port Elizabeth, who was found fighting against the darkness in the days of Rev. Knothe and Reuter.[32] He was killed by the second female chief Masalanavô for the sake of the Gospel. [797]

30. Mogôdô had two sons. When they quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father, the chieftainship was given his daughter who became the first female chief Možaži. The brothers were driven out of the country by the magic power of the little calabash[33] and the fire-stick[34] which had been strengthened with medicines of driving people out of the country. 173 643 [789]

31. So Možaži became chief, she was a good ruler over the country Lovedu like her father. She also killed the wrong-doers namely the socerers and thieves and liars. She produced rainfall like her father, she received homages of chiefs who came from far with treasures of different kinds and elephant-tusks—coming from Zululand, Sekhukhuni, Ramabulana[35] and Ñguñgunyane.[36]

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[29] A prophecy attributed also to the chief Sekhukhuni.
[30] In the West.
[31] In the West.
[32] Missionaries among the *Golovê*.
[33] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[34] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[35] In Vendaland.
[36] In Thongaland.

1: Kruger M-5 (ca. 1930)1936 FX14 Lovedu FX14

the royal kraal. The children of the chief's kraal are attending school at her command. 175 797

37. Chief Khesêthwane does not allow that a person enters her kraal with shoes on his feet. When somebody approaches the main entrance, he must take off the shoes and leave them outside the main-entrance that he may be allowed to enter the meeting-place. 643 576

The beginning of the government of female chiefs in Loveduland

1. The last male chief is Mogôdô. He had two sons : Malegudu and Kheêbe. These young men quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father when he was still alive. Now they had a sister who was called Možaži. So the chieftainship was given her that she might be the ruler of the tribe. The brothers were driven away. 173 643

2. When a person is made chief in Loveduland, he must be given the fire-stick and the water-calabash. Now they gave the sister the fire-stick and the calabash that she might bring it to Malegudu, the elder brother. But it is said that they had been strengthened by magic charms which make a person mad who looks at them with his eyes. He will behave like a mad person, he will leave his home, go away and move to another country and dwell there. 643 789

3. They say when Malegudu had looked at the fire-stick and the calabash, he left the land of his father, went to Vendaland and died there. Kheêbe the younger son who had quarrelled with him about the chieftainship was treated in the same way as the elder one. He left the country went to Thôvôlô[45] and died there. 173 643

4. So the chieftainship was given the daughter of Mogôdô namely Možaži I. She had a daughter called Masala-Navô. She followed her mother in the chieftainship.

5. Masala-Navô had no child until her old age. But she had a younger sister. She had two children. The first child was a boy, the second one a girl. The girl-child called Khesêthwane was chosen to be chief. She is Možaži who governs still to-day.

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[45] In Portuguese-East-Africa.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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137 morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is
[272] made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; budi ga dzwala ga*
[533] *dzwala ga fɔlɔja, ga vuɛla vuphabaleni*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise
431 song of a district in Ɓulovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach
[364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiṭhulelemi*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiṭhulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

621 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any
●789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lenɛ̣dwa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the
[417 protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were
824] set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *ṭiṭigwani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [824]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which
is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*hu dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khɔrɔ*, an open [361]
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dona*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khɔrɔ*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called *madumi* and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khɔrɔ* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khɔrɔ* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khɔrɔ*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khɔrɔ*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khɔrɔ* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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legitimate, for men rely upon their labours and place their faith in the 241 178
rain, the making of which is the prerogative of the queen.

Failure of one's crops is attributed, not to witchcraft, but in a bad year 241
to the heat of the sun and in normal seasons to indolence or bad soil. In the last resort, however, when every one suffers equally, or when there is a major drought, the calamity is regarded as a punishment by the gods, [731]
who 'hold the arms of the queen', or by the queen herself, who is displeased in her heart. Diseases and pests are not magical visitations. Though called 'the witch of the mealies' because it saps their strength, witchweed (*Wormskioldia longipedunculata*) is neither sent by witches nor combated by supernatural means. Destructive insects and parasites, such as stalkborers, weevils, and caterpillars, are regarded, not as being 'sent', but as perfectly natural results of untimely planting or unseasonal rain. Birds, monkeys, rats, and mice are, generally speaking, combated by the practical means at the disposal of man, such as trapping or scaring. Numerous other precautions are taken: one does not plant millet unless one's neighbours do likewise, because when there are many fields, all, not merely one, will be at the mercy of predatory birds; people favour bird-proof corns, though they are harder to thresh; late-maturing crops, whatever their productivity, are discarded in favour of those ripening early, because they cannot be reaped before the cattle start their unrestricted grazing; and a much-favoured peanut, which is also easy to reap, is liable to sprout unless special precautions are taken. In short, the problems of agriculture are tackled in a practical manner.

This does not mean that a practical demonstration of the superiority 241
of new methods will always have the desired effect. Agricultural demon- 177
strators have made very little impression. It is often thought that this is due to the improvidence, lack of ambition, and innate conservatism of the 'savage'. A farmer will tell you that, after years of experience on his farm, his Native labourers go home to practise their primitive, wasteful methods. The trouble is not savage incapacity, but the incongruity of our ways, our technology, and our ideals with theirs. The demonstrator is like a teacher speaking a foreign language and working with material and concepts which do not exist in the society. He often is wholly ignorant of the background of belief. His education makes him unduly scornful of savage superstitions, instead of using them to advantage. In agriculture, among the Lovedu, there is one practice we might call superstition. It is *hu upa*, a method of safeguarding crops with medicine against the [789]
depredations of birds and monkeys. It is quite harmless, absorbs little of the time or energy of the few children who scatter the medicine, and does not preclude the use of other, more empirical methods. There is no need to waste eloquence upon eradicating a practice which strengthens the interest of the children in agriculture, causes no slackening in their scaring activities from the platforms erected in the fields, and, in the last resort, is an effective psychological device; for it equalizes the struggle of man against nature and maintains at the requisite intensity the confidence which enables him to strive hopefully against his difficulties.

Practical knowledge is undoubtedly the weapon with which demonstrators should combat progressive degeneration in agriculture; but it is

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with an emotion which, though wholly unlike our humanitarian attitude, finds expression in exaggerated praises. These can be understood only in relation to their immense importance in the social organization. 231

Lovedu cattle are a blend, it is said, of four different strains: the large, humped Lovedu with backward-curving horns, the small, sturdy long-horned Rhodesian, the small Swazi with incurving horns, and the recent rather nondescript European breeds. In the present environment the mixture has led to inferior scrub cattle, resistent to tick-borne diseases and hardened by the stony hills. There are more cattle to-day than formerly and the distribution is far more equal, but no one believes that dipping has contributed to this result; on the contrary, dipping is regarded as a device to keep down their numbers, to subject the Native to irritating interference, behind which there are sinister motives. Recent attempts by the Administration to improve the breed by introducing thoroughbred Afrikander bulls failed because of these suspicions; the bulls were neglected and no camp was provided for them, and eventually they had to be removed. Cattle of individual owners are listed on so-called cattle lists, which primarily serve as a check upon the efficiency of the dipping; but the lists do not reflect real ownership, for they contain the cattle in a man's kraal, most of which may be merely in his care (*hu fisa*). These lists have considerably altered the incidents of the *hu fisa* contract and other aspects of Native life: they are often illegitimately used as evidence of ownership; orders of Native courts involving payments of cattle are sometimes nullified by the refusal of the owner of the list to authorize the transfer of cattle from his list to that of another; dipping and grazing fees imposed in some parts induce men, on the one hand, to distribute their cattle among different owners so as to keep down the number on any single list and, on the other, to make a charge, unauthorized by custom, for caring for the cattle of others. In short, European intervention has produced as serious changes in pastoral as in agricultural activities. Yet fundamentally the changes have left untouched the real significance and role of cattle in the society. 231 177 232

Cattle are not subject to as many taboos as elsewhere in Southern Africa. Women do not usually herd cattle, but the reason given is that not long ago the dangers from raids and wild animals necessitated herding by armed men; it was regarded as a purely practical measure. Girls or women may herd when the boys are in the circumcision school, and sometimes to-day young girls who have no brothers are seen looking after the cattle. What women may do or may not do varies almost from one kraal to another. Sometimes women of any age may go into the kraals; sometimes the doctor has protected the kraal in such a way that certain classes of women (not necessarily young women) are excluded. There is a fairly uniform fear that the blood of women or a woman who has had an abortion might cause the cattle harm. But the measures to combat these dangers vary very considerably. Kraals are doctored rather than cattle; and they are protected against various dangers, one of them being the danger of women. But elaborate magical practices, elsewhere associated with increasing the fertility of the cattle or safeguarding them 231 784 789

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231 against misfortune and disease, are not necessary when a new kraal is
784 built or when the medicated pegs are hammered around the fence as a
789 protection against witches. Some confine their doctoring to the kraals; others, in addition, give the cattle medicine. Bulls are never magically rendered more virile, nor are cows made more attractive by such means. There are to-day hardly any special cattle doctors, and very few cattle diseases are known or subjected to treatment. This is not the result of the breakdown of the cattle cult; it is evidence of the weakness of the cult among the Lovedu. If one were to detail all the magical practices that are to be found, the volume of which would be doubly formidable owing to their diversity, an overwhelming impression might be given; but in true perspective, regarding them against the total background they are almost too insignificant to be noticed.

231 Far more important from every point of view is the adjustment that
232 Natives are *making to* modern conditions. On this point we can offer
177 merely a few very general suggestions. Foremost is the problem of better co-operation between the Natives and the Administration. The objections to dipping are a symptom of misunderstanding one another's point of view. The Natives regard the restrictions as a punitive and arbitrary imposition. It is useless merely to urge that, by destroying the ticks that cause cattle diseases, dipping promotes both the increase and the welfare of the cattle. No one believes what is regarded as demonstrably false. Any one can see that cattle often die when they come back from the dip; that the rate of calving has decreased, that there are now no milch cows, that stock have degenerated, and so on. These evils are attributed to dipping, not to the hard driving to the dip, poor grazing, and inadequate care. What is more, it is believed that Europeans do not dip and that tribes that are sufficiently cunning escape the dipping regulations. Not a few advance the theory that dipping is a punishment for attachment to and preservation of old customs—surely an ironical comment upon the execution of a policy that aims at segregation and development on the lines of racial genius. The psychological aspects of these problems are no less important than their other aspects; and they are far more difficult and require delicate handling. It is easy to envisage the immediate effects, for instance, of limitation of stock, such as the starvation that will result from insufficient cultivation and the overburdening of the women with agricultural work; but when it is realized that the cattle are barely sufficient to maintain the *munywalo* exchanges upon which the social organization rests, one cannot venture to predict what the ultimate effect of limitation will be.

231 Goats are the animals *par excellence* of ritual and religious importance.
431 They also feature prominently in exchanges which promote social inter-relations, such as marriage exchanges and the goodwill gifts between relatives-in-law. Second only to beer in re-establishing relations that have become strained, they are used very largely in the procedure of reconciliation, of righting wrongs by begging pardon, and in the payment of judgement debts. When a distinguished guest visits you, you honour him by killing a goat for him; when you bring beer to your *vaduhulu*, the people to whom the daughters of your lineage are married, or even to a

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for mealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion. 231 431 [782] [281] [262]

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels. 231 [791] [262] [282] 224

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses: 824

Muvidividi (*Ehebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young. [322]

Muvidisa-vyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal. [273 278]

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *muvilo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the [278 789]

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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 230 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopœia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most
● 789 practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical
824 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his
757 faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason
[753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are
[755] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have
192 arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognize the similarity of plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants might receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadwa* of the plateau (*kha naha*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadwa* of stony places (*kha makhwareni*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *mudwo*, *mudwatsi*, *mudwatisbi*, and *mudwolisiga*, all containing the root *dw-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugovi*, *mukwidi*, and *muhahela thudu* are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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166 464 become to interpret economic forces as operating, not *in vacuo*, but against the whole background of social life.

182 157 It is likewise not economic forces alone, but the diffusion of a new outlook that has caused the major changes in the old co-operative system. Individual achievement was of little account; no one was penalized because he attained only a very indifferent standard of efficiency or industry; people were devoted to a non-material ideal. A man's whole upbringing and training conditioned him to the ideal of reciprocity and helpfulness. Yet in the modern world, where personal achievement is important and rivalries must necessarily arise, the life-adjustment value of this ideal is doubtful. To some extent, the individual adapts himself by accepting European standards when he is in town and relaxing from the strain when he has returned home. He comes back mentally tired, and it is recognized that he is entitled to take a long holiday, even though there is pressing work to be done. His failures in town are attributed, not to causes within himself, but to the operation of external forces. His dismissal is ascribed to the jealousy and witchcraft of a competitor for the same position, and the success of his rival to magic. Rivalry is an unfamiliar situation in economic activities at home, and the competitive, individualistic struggle in the towns is never phrased as being between members of the tribe; the magic that is used to oust him from competitive positions or to cause an employer to favour another is always magic used by members of another tribe, such as the Zulu or Xhosa. The Lovedu [789] traditionally regard luck magic with some suspicion, at least as applied in economic situations. But it has become increasingly necessary in order to re-establish their sense of security; a whole new technique of charms, burning medicines to attract custom, chewing roots to give confidence (what the European might call 'effrontery'), and the like has developed. Many invoke, as before a dangerous enterprise in the old days, the blessing of the gods. Even within the tribal economy itself the spread of ideas of competition has been accompanied by the extension of magic and sorcery to new spheres of activity.

476 182 That this answer to contact with the new economy may not always suffice, we see among many neighbouring tribes—for instance, the people of Sekhopo, 'brothers' of the Lovedu. Among them beer, the quintessence of situations of reciprocity and co-operation, is converted into an article of sale. Beer is provided, even at *majema*, as wages, and hence only to the workers; visitors may join the beer-party, but must pay for each calabash they have. This commercialization is deplored by the Lovedu; it is regarded in the same light as charging strangers for board and lodging, a practice that prevails among highveld tribes; and it is almost as bad as what the Lovedu imagine to be the European custom of making relatives who come on a holiday pay their hosts. 'Our hotels are our relatives', said a Lovedu man to us; but while he was prepared to justify the commercial pattern in which salt, meat, tobacco, European vegetables, even money, oust beer in the *lejema*, the sale of beer seemed to him intolerable. This view fairly reflects the general opinion, as well as the attempt to harmonize the two patterns, among the Lovedu. Rewards are sometimes given to individual *lejema* workers, who are

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and children. Sometimes, in the absence of his brother in town, a man may be consulted by his brother's wife, but he has no real right over her. For a man to beat his brother's wife or order her about, as is said to be the case among Pondo, is quite unheard of. There is nothing special in the relationship between sisters, except that they may marry the same husband, for, quite apart from considerations of the sororate, it is thought at all times good to marry sisters, who will be less liable to make quarrelsome fellow-wives than unrelated girls. Obligations towards classificatory sisters and brothers, children of the mother's sister or father's brother, are not the same as those to brothers by the same father, and the tie is not nearly so close. 595

Lovedu society is characterized by a very special relationship between brother and sister, a relationship that is given shape to and maintained by the Lovedu pattern of bride-price involving marriage with the mother's brother's daughter and supplemented by the role of women in the religious system. With this are also bound up the close links between two groups of people, the *vamakhulu* and *vaguhulu*—a man's own people and those of his mother or wife. The linking of uterine brothers and sisters in pairs, in order that the brother may obtain a wife with the cattle received for the sister, creates this special relationship between them and obliges the man to send his daughter to marry at his sister's place. No man will accept a suitor for his daughter until he has ascertained whether his linked sister wants the girl or not, for though in general it is the sister's son who marries the girl, it is the sister who receives a bride to stamp for her and lessen the labours of her old age. The sister has, in fact, a legal right to the girl. If the girl were to run away or be married to some one else, the court would support the father's sister's claim to the girl or the return of the cattle her brother used. Legally, it is even possible for the sister to dissolve the marriage of her brother by demanding back these cattle, but in practice this is rarely found. It is a common custom for a bridal party to call in at the village of the sister, by means of whose cattle the bride has been obtained, 'to show her the girl who is to bear a bride for her son'. A goat will then be slaughtered by her husband for the bridal party to show their pleasure in the marriage. A value that is constantly being expressed in Lovedu society is that it is fitting and desirable for a girl to 'cook for' her father's sister. 593 604 582

The house of the brother is thought to have been created by the sister whose cattle made the marriage possible. That is why, when he builds a new village, it is the sister who has to draw the magic circle of protection which renders it safe from witches. When the sister visits her old home, it is in the house of this wife that she will 'put her things' and make herself at home and, when she is called to beer, she will be given a special pot in the house of this wife. The sister even wields a certain amount of authority in the house of her brother, as was well illustrated at a gathering we attended where the man of the house was quarrelling with his wife about an uninvited guest. In the midst of the uproar a voice was heard: 'This is my village which I have built. I will have no unseemly behaviour here.' It was the sister rebuking her brother, who subsided immediately and went on with the ceremonial as if nothing had happened. So strong 593 [789]

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the *nyali* courtyard by their sisters. They are taught a few 'laws' or formulae associated with the *vukwera*, but their main activities are learning to make the elaborately woven costumes and later to dance in the *nyali* courtyard. Towards the end of the initiation they spend most of their time going about to dance, accepting invitations from other district heads and paying their respects at the royal village. They do beautiful movements to the drumming of their own *nyali* girls. Only two dance at a time and, while they dance, attendants (*medabi*) stand near by supervising. The masked boys may whistle out the tune to which they wish to dance or may beg snuff by means of whistling (for this is their only means of conversation during their initiation). When they dance well, women and girls come to give them gifts of leg- or arm-rings. The *vukwera* is a kind of finishing school, an initiation into the secret of what the Bird is and how the costumes are made. It is almost as though this is an esoteric art, the preservation of which has become the main function of the *vukwera*. A person who enters the *vukwera* enclosure may be required to display his skill at weaving and in 1939 a man who was unable to weave (and thus showed himself to be uninitiated) was heavily fined. The fact that there is no *vukwera* held at the royal kraal, whose boys used in the old days to go for this initiation to Khaḓa or to the *Tsawwi*, a section of the Khaḓa, suggests that the institution is a more recent adoption than the *nyali*.

It is not easy for a European to appreciate the meaning and value of such institutions as *nyali* and *vukwera*. Most of their features cannot be explained by the Lovedu themselves. They are the result of a long, historical development which, in the absence of all evidence, may never be unravelled. The *nyali* has many aspects. One of the most important is that of a crossing or initiation similar to circumcision. The initiates are often called *vawadi* (crossers) and initiation may be referred to as 'to cross over' (*ku n.tla*). It is conceived as a period of hardship, a crossing for which medical treatment and ancestral blessings are essential. Respect for those older than oneself is emphasized: the initiates must be humble; but older people, especially the old men who remain in the Bird's enclosure, live royally on the beer and delicacies brought daily by initiates. There is emphasis, too, on the importance of the rank of district heads and chief, and the learning of praises of all the areas, followed towards the end of the initiation by inter-district visits, is an important feature.

Intermingled with and overshadowing the *nyali* as an initiation is the *nyali* as a fertility and rain cult, related to the *gumane* drum cult and serving the same purpose. The *nyali* lasts a year, a full agricultural cycle, and some of its stages are associated with the seasons: the typical *nyali* dress of the girls cannot be plaited till the grass has grown long; the Bird arrives only when there is plenty of food. The singing of *nyali* songs is believed to bring rain. Even before the rains of the summer of 1938–9 had fallen, it was said in Ubukwedu that the year would be one of plenty on account of the *nyali*. These expectations were more than realized, for not only was the summer rainy, but even the winter, which is normally dry, was exceptionally wet. Stress is laid in the *nyali* on grass and vegetation: the girls wear plaited bandoliers of grass which are said by

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some to render them fertile; the *digoma* are almost all made of grasses, reeds, or leaves; the remarkable *vuhwera* costumes are made of various special kinds of grass; and on one of the most important excursions made by the *vyali* girls, called *vuiglwi* (at the locusts), they are made to collect the bark of various kinds of trees. The *vyali* as a fertility rite is most clearly seen in the sexual intercourse at the order of the Bird which used to be indulged in towards the end of the initiation on the approach of spring. The true meaning of the Bird is difficult to discover, though it is significant that it is associated with moonlight, comes from a pool, and declares on its departure that it will leave mists behind it. In one praise song of the Bird it appears to be referred to as *vadaja*, the ancestral spirits: 'I have heard you, Bird of ours and Rahufa of Muhale. The father of giving has gone, O *vadaja*. There remain only things for which one must pay' (*Gi hu phulaphudi nomi yesu le vuRahufa a Muhale rahufa khi ile, vadaja, hu sadi kha muthego ftla*). This Bird, *goma* of the old men, is related to the *gomana* cult, using the same method of whistling through an instrument.

The Lovedu appear to have borrowed *vyali* and *vuhwera* and the *gomana* drum cult from neighbours. Some elements, like *vuiglajani*, have become firmly embedded in a number of institutions; others, like *vuhwera*, are looked upon more as entertaining appurtenances without any very serious meaning beyond that of giving pleasure. But the sacred drum cult clashes to some extent with the rain cult of the queen and there is little doubt that to this fact one must partly attribute the failure to beat *gomana* drums in recent years.

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The rule about physical fitness is now merely an ideal and, similarly, 643
ritual suicide is not conceived to have any relation to the welfare of the 762
country. People do not say that the country will suffer if the physical 731
powers of the queen fail. But ritual suicide does elevate the queen to a divinity; only by her act, not because of susceptibility to the weaknesses of man, can she die. Age neither increases nor decreases her powers. She is the 'soil'; her death 'heals' or 'dries up' the soil in the double sense of defiling it (as twins do) and scorching it (as the sun does); and as they phrase it, the 'country dies with its owner'. Consequently, after the queen's death, famines come, cattle and people succumb, and many flee the country. When Mujaji II committed suicide in 1894, there followed the *matakona*, the three years of unprecedented drought and pests, during which, according to contemporary European observers, practically all the cattle and a third of the population died. After the death of Mugodo, likewise, there was a great famine. The only other famine vividly recorded by tradition was during the reign of a chief who, being a usurper, was unable to make rain. Though the death of a chief presages death of the country, there is no great hurry to appoint a new queen. To the unfolding of a plan that guarantees abundance, immediate needs, even the need for the life-giving rain, must be subordinated.

For an account of succession to the throne we have to rely upon the 643
memories of men who were adults forty-five years ago. The practical 762
and the ideal are confused in their minds. The generalized account we give is thus not specifically related to the death of Mujaji II unless otherwise indicated. Shortly before her death, the queen calls together her great men, sits silently looking at them for a while, and then retires to her hut. She will not see again the young boys who have gone to the *vudige*. Long before this, Mujaji II and her inner 'council' had named the daughter of Leakhali, who was her 'sister' and great wife, as successor; she had driven both mother and daughter with their brothers from the country, but was secretly receiving and instructing the daughter. None but a small circle of close relatives knew of these arrangements; and a little later she took poison (*khitaba*) [278] in which the fatal ingredients are said to be the brain and spinal cord of the crocodile. There is a rule that the killer of a crocodile is for ever debarred from entering the capital, a prohibition patterned [784] upon the taboos against bringing into a village the wood of trees with which shrines and protective charms (*dithugula*) are made, for these trees 'reveal', and so render useless, what they create. The poison is not conceived to kill instantaneously; the queen dies in the presence of those who know the secrets, but the death is not made public. Those who pass the royal hut still greet her; even cases are still submitted as if for her final decision. Deception of the people is the aim emphasized in descriptions and in phraseology. In the old days many cattle were killed 'to deceive the people', but neither this killing, which provided at least for the funeral feast and the skin for the dead body, nor the other arrangements, had this function only. The spirit of the deceased continues, as it were, to preside over the country and no one could take over the reins 643 of government. 766

The body decomposes, it is ritually rubbed (*ku fwola*) to remove skin 789

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and dirt for the vital ingredient of the rain medicine, and after a while close relatives secretly dig a grave at Maulwi, the place where to-day the sacred drums are also kept. The grave is deep, for the queen must stand upright, 'taking care' of her country, and facing to the north, whence her ancestors came. The body is wrapped in a greenish-black cloth, a portion still of what was brought from the north, and over it is wound the skin of an ox. The hearse proceeds from the village secretly at night, and, as the great must rest, the bearers stop every few yards. Sacred beads, a calabash of water, a firebrand, the grains upon which people live and (in the old days) the body of a man, the 'mat' of the chief, are interred with the queen. The calabash and firebrand, used also to expel a usurper, provide the essentials for the 'journey' to be undertaken. A slab of stone covers the mouth of the grave and facilitates the re-opening whenever rain medicine (*mafugo*) is to be poured into it. The grave is not all at once filled up with soil; it is guarded against enemies, who might destroy the country with the medicine the body provides; and it is said that a wooden structure, on which the watchers sleep, is built over the grave. The soil at last reaches the neck, but the head must be left uncovered for perhaps six months, until it has completely decomposed.

A year later the district heads are assembled at the capital, the death is announced and the drum beaten, and people shave their heads. It is said that foreigners entered the country at the peril of life and belongings. When the hair has grown and the mourning period ends, all fires in the country are put out. This same fire-rite figures, as far as a district is concerned, at the installation of its head, and as far as the whole country is concerned, when all-pervasive impediments to rain are removed. It essentially consists—we have described it briefly in Chapter XV—of putting out fires with medicine (*mafugo*) by boys who receive the medicine at the capital, and of a chain of payments, by the women to the married men for the firebrand obtained from the *khwo* to re-light their fires, by the men to the boys for their services in the rite, and by the boys to the official keeper of the *mafugo* at the capital. Two distinctive patterns are explicit in this rite: fire in its aspect of a valuable commodity and as almost the prerogative of the chief, to whom his subjects must pay a royal 'fire tax'; and fire in its aspect of giving out deleterious 'heat', which must be counteracted by 'cooling' with *mafugo* (*ku fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with 'cooling' medicine).

Fire also belongs to a third pattern which links it up with crises or great changes, ritualizes its value, and uses it to extinguish an evil or to purify a state of defilement. In their present cultural connotation among the Lovedu, these three patterns are implicit in the nature of fire, but they do not always merge in ritual situations, and, as far as the evidence of the cultures of the Northern Transvaal go, they belong to different cultural configurations. This evidence seems to indicate that the 'royal tax', through which authority is asserted and acknowledged, came from the Karanga, that the association with purification and 'transitions' was borrowed from the old Sotho, and that the conception of 'heat' as the antithesis of health of body and well-being of the country, was contributed by a wider and less easily determinable culture substratum. The

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite.

Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khoba*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*ewdiga*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*mashe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *vyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu noa*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mufugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mufugo* is used before the accession of a new queen.

Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, i.e. firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mufugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mufugo* at the capital.

Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *goma* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*diphaba*) in which the products of the sea are the most powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mufugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler.

Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly reasserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be auspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite.

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queen's mother—that is, either the queen's predecessor on the throne or, if she has borne no children, the queen's physiological mother. The unofficial husbands of the queens are brothers chosen from the line of Malegudu (elder brother of Mujaji I), but relationship is not reckoned through them as fathers. Closeness of relationship is important, but personality and opportunity count as much. The most influential councillor is often said to be the queen's mother's brother—in other words, the brother of the deceased queen or, if she has no issue, the brother of the wife of the queen who bore the queen. In fact, however, other relatives rise to equally influential positions. To take a concrete instance, the councillors of Mujaji III have been relatives either through Leakhali, chief wife and 'sister' of Mujaji II and physiological mother of Mujaji III, or through Mujaji II, her mother, Mujaji I, and the latter's brothers, such as Malegudu. Muneri, the chief councillor to-day, is Leakhali's uterine brother's son, and before him there were Mulogwane, uterine brother of the queen, and also Leakhali's uterine brother. Earlier still, but in the present queen's time, the greatest councillors were others tracing descent from Malegudu. There is no precise rule either as to the number or identity of the councillors. The *duna* of the queen should not be a relative; he is merely a messenger, and, unlike the *induna* elsewhere, is of no account, having no special legal or other status or function.

The *khivijɔ* is neither the more or less determinate body of private advisers (*kxotla*), nor even the tribal gathering (*pitshɔ*), of the Sotho. It is mainly constituted by district heads, or their representatives, and the men of the capital, but any one attends; and it is never conceived of as a general assembly of all the initiated men of the tribe. It has little power and less initiative; it is summoned mostly to discuss European matters, and there is now a tendency to place some decisions of the men of the capital before it for confirmation; but it is hardly a means of gauging popular feeling or of expressing the royal will. The co-operation of the tribe is secured and its desires made known, not through the *khivijɔ*, but through other social arrangements, which we shall describe at greater length.

These arrangements run parallel with a distinctive system of wives of the queen, called *vafarom*, a term also applied to the wives of all nobles and women other than the queen may have *vafanom*. The majority of the queen's wives are given to her by her district heads. In a sense, these wives are tribute (*va ha lowa*), but the queen always gives some *munywalo*. She also receives wives from foreign chiefs who supplicate for rain or for peace, and from headmen who settle in her country and send their daughters or sisters; in these cases no *munywalo* is given. Finally, she is sent wives by the nobles, by those to whom she has given wives or cattle with which to secure wives, and by those who promise their little 'mud-stampers' as repayment for the assistance they ask. Sometimes also the queen takes a liking to a girl and asks her in marriage and sometimes commoners send their daughters. It will be impracticable to deal with all these cases; and, from the point of view of the political organization, we are mainly concerned with the wives sent by district heads. They send their daughters for purposes of *ha lowa*, a word used in a wide

[marriage cattle, See cat. 583 for detail.—Analyst]

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643 connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
588 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
634 District heads *lova* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
789 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
648 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Vulovedu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*hu lova*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Tonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
588 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of
[831] marriage and *munywalo*; the *munywalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
588 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
837 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining [787] bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figchela*) [789] unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than 826 *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ḑere* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to 766 rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ḑere*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are 754 sometimes called *mashəthɔjɔ*, because they *rəthɔja* (cause to be cool,

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immediate and usually not consciously phrased, yet in the total complex 771
of the culture all things are interconnected, albeit in ways that are not easy to see clearly. The gods help good and bad men alike, they send illness whether one is careful or neglectful of the observances due to them, and the after-life is the same for all. But we should be careful not to deduce too much from this. The position of a sister and her privileges are sanctioned by the gods, as is also the respect due to old people. In general the gods are not upholders of custom, yet on one occasion in 1937 two *zwidjani* cried all day in the bush at Maulwi because some women had broken the taboo against cutting wood there. The chief concern of the gods appears to be to look after their own interests. They complain when they dislike the manner of their burial, but they are undisturbed when twins are not buried in wet soil, even though this has a disastrous effect on the whole country. If they were disturbed about custom in general, instead of things directly affecting them, they would complain of many disturbing changes in these days of culture contact; instead, one only finds that possessing spirits dislike European things and that at offerings European utensils are generally not used.

Another outstanding characteristic is the almost entire absence of any speculative element. The Lovedu are not concerned with such things as the life hereafter and the mode of life of the gods; theirs is essentially a practical religion in which rites are of far greater importance than attitude of mind, action than belief. Its rites are directed to practical ends, such as recovery from illness and the procuring of rain. In vain does one inquire into the meaning or reason of a rite, for the reply always is, 'The bones tell us to do these things,' and the practical end is phrased as determined by the bones. There are considerable differences from one family to another in the conduct of religious rites and the nature of shrines and, since religion is primarily a family concern, few people know what their neighbours do. Not uncommonly one finds a practice said to be impossible by some people accepted as normal by their neighbours.

Lovedu religion is not distinct from magic. The very terminology of 771
the two is identical: *thugula* is a shrine, dedicated animal, or a sacred 789
object once in the possession of the ancestors, but it is also any charm of bone or herbs concocted by a doctor. *Diphaba* are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget, as well as to ward off witches from the village. *Hu rerelela* means both to pray and to utter a spell. *Hu phasa* is used both to approach the gods and with medicines when sending back disease to a witch; one may also *phasa* on the charms in the village gate on the arrival of beer in order that more may come to the village. In a sacrifice for rain, the magical rites are of as great importance as the purely religious; and *hu phasa* in case of illness is thought to have a compelling force. It cannot fail; if it does, there must be some other cause, for an ancestor can never refuse to be placated by the *phasa* rite.

The merging of religion with magic and medicine is everywhere 771
evident, but nowhere is it more prominent than in the cult of possession. 794
This cult is not indigenous; it came with the Thovolo and, since its first 177
reception some thirty years ago, has gained considerable popularity.

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Doctors frequently 'try' one another by sending lightning. A lightning witch may either fly himself or may smear medicine on a dove or a red-winged locust which, when it thunders, is able to 'go with the lightning' and strike where its owner wishes. Use of the lightning bird itself for this purpose is impossible. A man who himself strikes as lightning must be scarified with medicine containing some portion of the lightning bird, and when learning to strike may be taken to a high desolate place where he is taught accuracy by being required to strike one of a number of aloes in a row. An informant once saw a man with black-and-white stripes all over his body and two branches tied to his hips; he concluded that this must be a lightning witch (*cf.* the striped hyena with its mane of upright hair on neck or along back, or the striped polecat, which bristles up its tail in anger). One who controls lightning is able to prevent it from striking him by cutting or piercing the flash with a medicated axe or spear, telling it to go elsewhere. Lightning frequently strikes villages and people in Uulovedu and in many instances some accusation is brought before the court. Huts may be magically protected against lightning. If a witch strikes a protected village, it is believed that he will 'fall', change into a person, and can then be caught. There are no taboos against milking or working during lightning, but the day after it has struck the whole district has a holiday. 754 821

Day-witches use several other techniques. A very common form of day-witchcraft is *hu lesa* (to cause to eat), the introduction of medicine into beer or food, which on being swallowed turns into an indigestible piece of meat or other object that makes one ill. Most people one meets have at some time or other suffered from *khileso*. To pour real poison into food (*hu shɛla khitaba*) is a modern though still very uncommon method of killing. *Hu fahɛlɛja* (*hu fa*, to die, *hu ɛlɛja*, to cause to go for) is to cause a person to leave home e.g. for European employment, and die far away. This is done chiefly by day-witches, but also sometimes by night-witches; it is, however, neither common nor well-known. Modern conditions, with increased tribal contacts in European towns, have led to a tremendous increase in day witchcraft. New methods and medicines for *hu lega*, unknown in the tribe before, are being introduced. Some even go so far as to say that the sending of lightning is a relatively recent thing from Nareni. 754

There are many practices bordering on witchcraft, indistinguishable from day-witchcraft in technique and method of procedure, but considered legitimate and therefore not witchcraft in the true sense. Some of these are so close to, that they are sometimes looked upon as witchcraft. The deciding factor in such cases is always the result: if it causes death it is witchcraft; if it does not, or if it is done with an object that is recognized as legitimate, it is not witchcraft. *Hu dabɛka* is essentially legitimate. Its technique consists in changing the nature of things, making medicated pieces of the skin of an animal turn into the animal itself, changing a person's sex, and one of the best-known doctors in Loveduland is skilled in *madabi*. It is a technique confined to men, employed to make a woman marry you or to frighten her into coming back to you when she has run away. No one has ever heard of a woman sending 754 789

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754 *madabi*.[1] A woman ran away from her husband to live with another.
789 Whenever she was cooking or doing her household duties at her new home, monkeys and other animals appeared at the village till, frightened out of her wits, she ran back to her first husband. *Madabi* are often sent
[845] in connexion with childbirth. Sometimes the sending of *madabi* is looked upon as witchcraft. Malaji changed the sex of Muhali's daughter so as to make the birth difficult each time she was about to bear a child, because the child was his, but the girl no longer loved him. We were not allowed into the hut, but the midwives, whom we knew well, testified to a real change, though probably because certain types of difficult birth are conventionally so explained. Eventually the birth took place, but shortly afterwards the baby was dead. This was considered to be witchcraft, the case was brought to court, and a large fine imposed. Only the doctor who used *madabi* can undo or reverse its power by *hu dabekulla*, but other doctors may, if there has been any injury, heal it with medicines.

789 A practice similar to *madabi*, but differing from it in object is *maḑilebɔ*. At the time of the Swazi raids, Raŋwagu, instead of hiding in the forests, put his faith in *maḑilebɔ* (marvel, wonder). When the enemy came, his village turned into water and they could not find his cattle, though they heard their lowing. Masia, who was wanted by the police during the whole period of our investigation, was able, when chased by them, to disappear even in the open; he would hang like a bat on a plough to look just like a spanner. When eventually he was arrested, he averred, and many people agreed, that it was because he was tired.

Khidɔba is a technique used against thieves and it is both public and legitimate. Some kinds of *khidɔba* are known as a home remedy; some are obtained from doctors. By means of medicine used on *ledzigeri* grass
[824] (*Hyparrhenia Tamba*), one can cause a severe and painful itching in the finger of the thief which may compel him to confess. Likewise, by *hu dɔba*, a stolen goat may be made to cry out in the thief's belly, as happened in a recent case, probably of compulsion neurosis, in which bleating was taken as conclusive proof of his guilt. Another method of *hu dɔba* causes the eyes of the thief to protrude till they fall out on to his stomach; if his mother then cries on seeing him, he may die. *Khidɔba* strikes the thief even when he hides or sells the stolen goods. Besides these measures, taken to bring a thief to book after the theft, one may by anticipation pro-
[824] tect one's property by means of a piece of *leṭaṭe* rush (*Mariscus sp.*) split at one end to resemble the mouth of a snake and smeared with coloured medicines. When placed at the hut entrance or on the border of your field, it turns into a snake and bars the entry or exit of a thief. A doctor we knew used to have serious talks with his son about the fortune he would make if he knew this medicine, especially in Johannesburg, where theft is common and victims pay high prices. The only recognized cure

[1] The word comes from *dalo* plus *inbi*; *dalo* (well being), is a noun from *hu lala* (to lie down, to be peaceful), and *inbi* means bad. *Dabi* should be calamity, but it is used only in the sense of excessive rain (causing evil). The plural, *madabi*, means misfortune or pain or disease legitimately 'sent'. The verb is *hu dabcka*, legitimately to send misfortune, and its converse, *hu dabekulla*, means to neutralize or remove the effects of *madabi*.

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of the power and effect of *hu dɔba* is by asking for pardon, when the doctor who gave or used the *khidɔba* will be asked to *dɔbulla*, i.e. reverse the effects of his medicine. He will usually charge a large fee (even an ox), which he shares with his client. 789

Use of medicine on a grave which causes the death, not only of the witch who killed the deceased, but also of other members of his family is not considered to be witchcraft. This is called *hu tsikɛla* or *hu diɛla leviḍa* (to work on the grave) and is done in various ways: the corpse may be smeared before burial, or the seed of a certain plant from Rhodesia sown on the grave, and when it grows the witch will die, or medicine and the stomach contents of a goat may be poured down a hole to reach the body in its grave. This is the usual sense in which *hu tsikɛla* is used, but sometimes it is conceived of as a kind of *hu dɔba*, against a thief with the purpose of wreaking vengeance, not only on him, but also on all those who have eaten of the thing stolen, whether they are innocent strangers or guilty accomplices. It kills, unlike *hu dɔba*, which merely injures. As in *khidbɔa*, this form of *hu tsikɛla* is more or less public, for the villagers and neighbours must be previously informed, so that they will have an opportunity to confess. The other and more usual form of *hu tsikɛla* is directed against witches who are murderers and for that reason it is not public, for it is conceived that the witch might take counter measures or bribe a bad doctor to 'call back' the medicine. It may be sent to a definite person discovered by consultation with the bones, but the name of the person will not be mentioned in the spell lest the witch take counter measures. The spell is not in set terms, but it usually runs as follows: 'You Mufuba (the deceased in the grave whose death is to be avenged), we are to-day working on your grave. We call all those who killed you to follow you to the grave. We do not say only one of them. We mean all who are of them [the whole family]. Do you also call them, so that all of them should follow you.' 789 754

A death is sometimes ascribed by the bones to *hu tsikɛla*; and in one case the suicide of a girl, who was said to have bewitched her husband's people, was found to have been caused by such medicine. Paradoxical as it may seem, it is possible for a witch, who gets a doctor to *tsikɛla* for him, to be struck down by the medicine intended for another. It is curious that, though he knows that the medicine seeks out the true witch, he will risk such a procedure, but the explanation is that, though a doctor might be deceived—his bones confused by the witch's medicine (*khiŋalaŋaga*)—the medicine cannot be, and that the fatal effect of *hu tsikɛla* is diagnosed *ex post facto*. Thus in one case where a woman died, her sister went to a *tsikɛla* specialist; but subsequently the sister herself and some of her relatives died. When a great *muɡɔme* was consulted, he said that the sister had sent *mutsikɛla* to people whom she hated and that, not finding the murderer there, it returned and struck down the sender. *Mutsikɛla* will continue its deadly effects unless 'stopped' by the doctor who sent it, though there is a medicine (*lewlo*) which may be eaten by all those who think they are in danger of vengeance-magic to neutralize its effects. It is recognized that the witch may retaliate in the case of vengeance-magic, though this is considered unusual and almost always ineffectual. 754

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754 There are many other specialized techniques, but for our purposes it
832 will suffice to refer briefly to love-magic. Love-medicine was not known
789 to the Lovedu, and its use is generally said by the older people to be witchcraft. Nevertheless, this magic, introduced from the towns, where, especially among Zulu and Xhosa, it is common, is used by many young men in Ɓulovedu to-day. One method, scarification of the forehead or use of medicine in your snuff, makes all the girls love you; blowing a medicated pipe of the *mukhure* shrub (*Ricinus sp.*) morning and evening, while calling the name of a certain girl, will make her come to you soon; and there are various other medicines. Love-magic to cause hysteria in girls is known as a Zulu practice, but is not used in Ɓulovedu. It would be looked upon as witchcraft.

754 These borderline methods, sometimes called witchcraft, sometimes
761 not, and often referred to as 'good' *vulɔi*, bring us to a consideration of what constitutes *vulɔi*. All witchcraft is socially disapproved, anti-social, but this criterion is not always sufficient to distinguish between witchcraft proper and practices bordering on witchcraft. Swearing at people, or scolding them violently, when the cause hardly justifies it, is liable to call down upon them forces which lead to death or misfortune to them or their family. It is called *lesola* and is reprehensible; but it is not *vulɔi*; nor is *mahava*, illness caused by the ill-feeling of a father's sister or other relative. The conduct of a woman who, having had an abortion, causes her husband's death through neglecting to give him the medicine necessary to ward off such disaster is strongly disapproved of, but it is not witchcraft, even though it causes death.

Since many borderline practices are judged by their result and become witchcraft when they cause death, it might be argued that this criterion must be distinctive. It is, however, not enough; causing death to a husband by abortion is, as we have seen, not considered to be witchcraft, nor is the murderous *khigevɛgwa* a witch, even though he secretly kills people at night and sells parts of their body to doctors. Furthermore, many accusations of witchcraft have arisen where there has been no death, but only sickness or loss by lightning. The only difference between the killing by a *khigevɛgwa* and that by a witch lies in the method employed. The killer uses ordinary weapons; the witch kills by means of medicine or some peculiar powers not known to ordinary people. The distinguishing feature of all cases of witchcraft is the use or supposed use of medicine or witch-power. Intent is another feature by which one judges an action. Where a woman causes the death of a husband through abortion, her conduct is anti-social and the act is done in secret, but it differs from witchcraft proper in the absence of intent to kill. Fear of the consequences of adultery is the main force deterring her from correct behaviour; and it is argued that, if she really wishes to kill she need not employ so roundabout a method.

754 The conclusion we may draw is that, for an action to be witchcraft, it must satisfy, not one, but all the following three requirements: it must be disapproved of, anti-social; there must be an intent to kill or to harm; and it must be thought that either medicine or the mysterious forces of night-witchcraft have been used. Secrecy is not peculiar to witchcraft; it is

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CHAPTER XV

THE RAIN CULT

The rain-queen in her sphere of safeguarding the seasons—technique of transforming the clouds—evils that cause 'heat' and act as impediments to rain—'cooling' rites counteracting the 'heat' of the earth.

As the centre of the agricultural cycle, rain is the focus of many human interests; as the elixir of life, it is one of the ultimate bases of man's sense of security; and as a manifestation of celestial grace, it is the supreme justification of the divine right of the queen to rule. The queen is primarily not a ruler, but a rain-maker, and men rely for their security, not on regimentation, armies, and organization, but on the queen's power to make rain for the tribe and to withhold rain from its enemies. All ultimate reliances are based upon the magico-religious world, and rain-making and its cult are an important part of that world. The rain cult is not composed of a few magical passes made by the queen; it is a whole complex of institutions with ramifications through many aspects of tribal life. The cult is not confined to measures taken to secure rain in times of drought; its observances must be kept at all times and a good year involves as much care on the part of the queen as a bad one. 794 789 643

The chief actor in the rain cult is the queen. During life, she is not merely the Transformer of the Clouds, but she is regarded as the changer of the seasons and guarantor of their cyclic regularity; when she dies, the seasons are out of joint and drought is inevitable. Her very emotions affect the rain: if she is dissatisfied, angry, or sad, she cannot work well, and in 1934–5, when the first rains did not come till December, the drought was attributed to her being upset at her daughter's liaison with a commoner. Her rain-making is not confined to dramatic ceremonies in time of severe drought; it is conceived of as continuous care throughout the summer. Furthermore, the Lovedu do not attribute every fall of rain to some special activity or volition on the part of their queen, but rather believe that the queen exercises some general control or care which ensures a good season. 643 789 821

Such being the powers of the queen, she is the person to be approached when there is no rain, not only at the beginning of the season, but any time during the summer in a country in which three weeks' drought might ruin the maize crop. There are various ways of doing this. Great councillors or important relatives may approach the queen in person, saying, 'The people are crying,' and asking her to help them. When there was no rain, Mugwena, related to the queen through his mother, used to walk near the queen's hut complaining, in a voice calculated to reach the royal ears, that it was a bad thing for the chief to kill his people by withholding rain. When the first summer storm of 1937 opened with much lightning and thunder, the two chief councillors mentioned informally to the queen at beer that they hoped she would ward off wind and thunder and give them a good year. Heads of districts approach the queen (*hu loya*) with a gift, usually nowadays of £1 or £1 10s., and very often 643 789 535 821

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643 bring with them in addition dancing performers (*gɔsha*) to please her and
789 to evoke her pity at the sorrowful sight of people dancing in summer when
535 they ought to be ploughing. The movements of this dancing do not
821 differ from those of ordinary dancing, but the music consists of *lesugu* songs sung also at the annual harvest ceremony, on the death of important royal people, and at the girls' initiation 'school'.

643 The most renowned of all dancing for rain is the *legɔbathɛle*, a special
789 kind of *gɔsha*, the mourning dance of a section of Thɔvɔlɔ people living
535 under one of the district heads, Mavulana. It is more dignified, its move-
533 ments slower and more stately, and its drumming more subdued than in an
821 ordinary *gɔsha*. So lightly are the drums struck that the clear, silvery, varied tones of the reed pipes ring out like the peal of bells. Only two drums are used, and none but those who have lost at least one parent may perform, and it is begun in the dim light of the dawn before sunrise, when, after a short spell, it stops and is resumed later in the day. When some one person has greatly angered the queen, and drought is believed to be due to her displeasure on this account, the married women from all the villages in the royal neighbourhood assemble every morning after cooking to dance, singing, 'We are being killed on account of a bogyman in skins' (*re vulaiwa gi Madikadyana di vɛlɛvɛḑana*). Grandmothers nurse the babies and encourage the younger women with their trillings and dancing movements. The dust rises high and by sunset they are black with dirt and sweat; but next day and the next they come again, sometimes for as long as a week, till rain falls or continued drought makes it clear that some other cause is operating as well. The great hardship this dancing entails (for nursing mothers who perform have no time to feed their babies) is thought to melt the heart of the queen. Too much rain, as well as too little, is laid at the door of the queen. On one occasion, when it had rained almost incessantly for six weeks, the chief councillor said in the presence of the queen, 'Fat does not fill the pot' (*makhura a a ḑale bija*), meaning that there can be too much of a good thing—a hint to the queen to regulate things better.

643 There is no belief that is stronger in the tribe even to-day than that
789 in the power of the queen to transform the clouds. This does not, how-
821 ever, mean that they do not recognize the regularity of the seasons. People know that the month of February is generally the rainiest in the year; that the month *Morenane* (October), when the Southern Cross sets just before bedtime, is the time when the first rains are approaching, and no one would *lova* rain in winter any more than Europeans would organize a day of prayer for rain in that season. Yet if rain does not come at its proper time or the season is generally bad, it may be said, 'The queen has not changed the hoeing season [i.e. the year] nicely' (*a va fedula ledzema ha vutse*); for if the cycle of seasons is considered inevitable, whether the new year is brought in propitiously or otherwise is in the hands of the queen.

643 Though renowned as the greatest rain-maker in South Africa, Mujaji
791 never works alone. She always has a rain-doctor, of whom there are many in the tribe, to work with her. She chooses any renowned doctor, but may change him for another if people complain that the rain is bad—

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that is, insufficient or accompanied by too many thunderstorms. For 643 these deficiencies, the queen herself is never blamed. The chief function 791 of the doctor is to co-operate with the queen in some of the things she cannot do: he divines the causes of drought and discovers which forces are hindering the queen's power from taking effect; and, using his own medicines, he aids her in removing these causes and setting right what is wrong. The relation between rain-doctors and the queen is interesting. They are specialists in their art, which they have inherited from their fathers, and are even consulted independently by outside tribes. Khishidwa, the queen's own rain-doctor, is often called by Nwamitwa, the Shangana-Tonga chief, in time of drought, and Tshivulane, a Venda chief, comes, not to *lova* Mujaji, but to call Levea, a rain-doctor on a farm within her jurisdiction. Any payments they receive are their own. Yet these doctors themselves unreservedly state that in the last resort they are dependent on the queen: if she stays their hands, their powers will avail them nothing. It is said, 'If the chief holds the rain from falling, the doctor cannot cause rain' (*hc khosi a ga tswara bula hore e khi ne, Daga e ga se nese*). A rain-doctor sent by the queen to make rain for a Venda chief who came to *lova* once in our presence urged the chief councillor, 'Tell the queen not to hold my hands.' In addition to the chief's right-hand man in rain activities, there are certain lesser rain-doctors whom she employs as her messengers when outside tribes *lova* rain, for she would never dream of giving a suppliant medicine to take back with him. These messengers, though sent by the queen, are, strange as it seems to us, not given any medicine or charm to use in their rain-making. It is considered enough that they come from her, and their payment is the entertainment they receive at the foreign court.

What the queen does to transform the clouds and the exact nature of 643 the objects and medicines associated with her work are enshrouded in the 789 greatest secrecy. It is doubtful whether any one other than the queen herself is in possession of this secret, for it is bound up with the title and power to succeed to the throne. The secrets are always imparted to the successor just prior to the death of the chief, and on occasion in Lovedu traditional history the would-be usurper, to whom the secrets had not been entrusted, has been deposed in favour of the 'chosen' heir. The queen's rain medicines are kept in rough earthen pots (*mehago*) in a part of the village to which few have access. Some of their power is said to derive from a human skull in the rain-pot, and there are horns which are kept in a hut. When these rain-horns (*dinaga ja bula*) are placed on the ground, rain falls; when they are hung up, it clears up and is dry. The medicine in the rain-horns is said, when burnt, to produce smoke which rises up in the air to draw and to produce the clouds. The technique is not unlike *leshwava*, luck medicine, which when burnt draws customers to traders and touts. Associated with the rain cult are the *gomana* drums the beating of which in former times was believed to bring rain, but the true *gomana* ceremonies have not been held for about thirty years. The rain cult to-day is largely confined to observances connected with the queen and her medicines or charms (*dithugula*).

The chief ingredient of the rain-pots is the skin of the deceased chief

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643 and of important councillors who are her closest relatives: when a chief
789 dies the body is left for some days in the hut, so that, when it is rubbed in a certain way (*hu fɔrɔlwa*), the skin easily comes away. Other ingredients are fat of the scaly ant-eater (*khwara*), a royal animal which, when found, has always to be brought alive to the royal village, and parts of the kudu (*thɔlɔ*). The queen's rain-doctor told us that essential ingredients were sea-water, because it foams and froths (*hu pukula*), feathers of the lightning bird, white and black sea shells, and various roots and
[824] barks, chief among which is the stem of the *khadi* (*Adenia gummifera*), a tough forest creeper that contains much water. *Khadi* stems are also used for sprinkling 'cooling' medicines and for tying the bodies of dead people. Whether the queen uses these ingredients, we cannot say. From time to time a black sheep is killed to give strength to the queen's rain medicines; it has to be washed with water which is afterwards poured into the rain pots, but it is said that such a sheep is merely a present-day substitute for a human being, usually a child, whose brains were used. Important district
[634] heads related to the chief also have their rain-pots. Every year in about August, at the command of the queen, such a district head collects certain roots and barks, knowledge of which he has received from his father, places them in his rain-pot, mixed with water that has been drawn by girls below the age of puberty, and stirs them up so that rain may be good that year. Rain-pots are great secrets and only after years of friendship were we privileged to see one: it was well hidden in the cleft of a rock and partly buried at the foot of a tree on the upper slopes of a hill where the owner's father had dwelt. The rain-pots of the queen we have not seen, and what regular measures she takes are not known for certain; but, since it is said, when there are good rains, that the queen has firmly laid the foundations (*hu thea*) of the year, it is not unlikely that she also stirs her medicines.

789 Great care has to be taken lest the rain-pots 'weaken' (*hu figchela*).
261 They have to be given (*hu luminwa*, to cause to be bitten) the first green foods (*mutshatsha*) every year, kaffir water melon (*legwadzi*) mixed with other green foods being used for the purpose, and at the royal village no one cooks and eats the new summer relishes before this has been done. On this day possessed people or people who have epilepsy also eat medicine with the firstfruits, but ordinary people do not *homa*, and there are none of the public festivities of a semi-military character associated with the eating of the firstfruits among Swazi and Zulu. It is very important too that the first termites (*dinnfwa*), which appear usually in December, just after the first good rains, should be given to the rain-pots. Termites are closely associated with rain: they always fly out of their nests just after the rain; in a dry year there are very few; and it is believed that sprinkling the antheap with rain medicine (*mufugo*) makes the ants come in great numbers. Termites for the rain-pots may not be gathered by married women or girls over the age of puberty, and in 1937, when some young girls carried the first termites to the queen, she gave the termites to the dogs, refusing to use ants that had been thus defiled. The giving of the first termites to the rain-pots is called *bulane*. An interesting case arose out of this practice in January, 1938, when certain people in Uuthudi

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by 789 the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told 261 that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen 643 can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if 789 they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of 766 rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figchela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 821 'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, 754 spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering 766 (*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why [824] witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *gere* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *hu pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts 821 of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, 527 after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khuwela*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

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821 has been reached), and we were told that in the old days men of import-
527 ance used to come and condole with (*hu cmcla*) the chief on such a day, as though to sympathize with her in the frustration of her efforts. There are other holidays associated with rain. On the day after the first rain of the season has fallen no hoeing or fieldwork is to be done. Such a holiday is called *le-nkhi-nteme* (do not cut me), as if the earth, believed still to be hot, dislikes being broken up by the hoeing. Such a holiday is also observed after the rain charms have 'bitten' the new termites and first-fruits of the year and when, any time during the summer, rain falls after two of three weeks drought, it is called *muene* (guest or stranger) and the next day observed as a holiday, for one honours a guest.

766 Wrong burials which stop the rain are righted by the use of *mufugo*
821 medicine and the water obtained by squeezing the undigested stomach
● 789 contents (*muswane*) of a sheep down a hole made in the grave with a stick
842 and reaching the body. This is thought to disperse the 'wind' and cool the grave. The flesh of the sheep is eaten without salt. The conception is thus of a grave agitated by ghostly heat and wind, which may be 'laid' by 'cooling', or, as we might say, calming, in the treble sense often of pacifying [the ghost], modifying [the heat], and causing [the wind] to subside. *Mufugo*, the medicine so important in the removal of impediments to rain, has to be obtained from the queen and a specially appointed person is responsible for doling it out in bottles when needed. The office is not conceived to be hereditary, but it has been held by a Mudiga family for some time, being handed down by father to son. When the last official in charge of *mufugo* died, his son was an unmarried man too young for the responsibility of office. Some five years later (1938), when the queen decided that he should assume charge, he protested his youth, though he then had two children, fearing that after contact with the medicine he might forget to wash his hands before eating and thus be rendered impotent. In this he had the full support of his mother, who prevailed upon the queen to allow an older relative to undertake the work provisionally; but the present position is that, should this old man be away, the heir to the office will have to act. Whether *mufugo* is identical with the rain medicine of the rain-pots is not quite clear; but, whatever its ingredients may be, it is considered extremely dangerous, liable to rob men and women of their fertility, and great care is thus necessary when working with it.

789 Sometimes it is said that 'the country is not right' (*naha a e loge*) and
372 then there is a special ceremony in which all the fires in the country are put out with *mufugo*. No generally recognized set of circumstances lead up to such a line of action, nor is there any idea that the fires are defiled in any way. It is simply looked upon as a method of getting rain when there is drought, resorted to when the divining bones of the doctor declare it to be necessary. People sometimes say, 'Fires are put out to usher in a new year,' but this does not mean that putting out the fires is an annual ceremony, as it is, for instance, among the Pedi. The word 'year' must not be taken literally, just as it does not refer to an abstract period of time in the phrase, 'The year has been infected by *hu khuma*', when what is meant is that the rain charms have 'weakened' (*hu khoma*). In this ceremony

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of *mufugo* and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gumnifera*) to every village in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or groundnuts, which they eat in the *khoro*. Each married man in turn must give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s.* or a fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khethe*), anything may be given. Each boy must give 1*s.* or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine, took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water, which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khaḓa; sometimes it is Mugoḓo's sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery, instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *loea* the queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *loea*, but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case, no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but they have "weakened" (*hu fighcila*) it. They want me to be troubled.' She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people themselves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft, had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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787 pleading, she relented and said, 'Find me a black sheep without blemish
643 [colour].' The first messenger they sent returned without success, but
789 two others were dispatched to scour the country and on the seventeenth one was found. Kheshidwa, the rain-doctor, was now called. Four days passed, but he did not come. Then the queen, angry at the delay, suggested that she should proceed with the ceremony alone. But this the councillors would not hear of; 'You might deviate from the procedure the bones indicate to be essential,' they said. On the fifth day, however, Kheshidwa arrived, explaining his delay as due to the number of medicines he had to find, and at dawn on February 23rd the ceremony took place.

643 A calabash containing *mafugo* was placed in a basket for the chief wife
789 of the queen's brother to carry, and a procession of most of the inmates of the royal village set out with the sheep. They stopped first at a clump of trees near the village, where lies Moyacudugi, a female relative by marriage to the queen on the mother's brother's side. When the queen ordered her chief councillor, as direct representative of the mother's brother's side, to begin, he uncorked the calabash and poured some of its contents over the grave, saying, 'Stop for us these winds and tribulations, that it may rain nicely. They say it is you people whose murmurings are impeding the rain.' His younger sister next took the calabash, praying in almost identical words, followed by the queen herself, who said, 'Aye, we say, stop for us all these *pukudi* [winds from wrong burials] that rain may fall and people find corn.' The people now respectfully greeted (*ku buba*), repeating the praise of Muhale, the king of old, and, during the trillings that followed, the rain-doctor said, 'The frogs do not cry, sire. I do not hear them'; he may have meant that it was so dry that even the frogs were silent, but we do not know for certain.

The procession now proceeded to Maulwi, the sacred grove where are buried members of the royal family and the two last queens. At the grave of Mathukha, mother's brother to the queen and father of the chief councillor, they all sat down while the same procedure was gone through as at the other grave. When it was the queen's turn to pray, she took a small horn wrapped up in rags and placed it on the grave. Then, pouring from the calabash, she prayed, 'Do not continue to hold my arms; leave me to do my things, that rain may fall and people have corn. Tell one another, tell every single one, also the old woman [meaning Leakhali, her mother] and Mujaji, "huckster in the hut", who "casts away some and shares others with the vultures" [Mujaji I]. Do not continue leaving us to be burnt by the sun. As for our health, we are reasonably well; we are merely troubled by the poverty you have left us.' She poured out all the *mafugo*, turning the calabash upside down beside the horn, while the assembled company did obeisance and ululated. The sheep was slaughtered and skinned and small pieces, cut from various parts of the body, were placed in an earthen bowl while the doctor, sitting some distance away, began squeezing the stomach contents to separate the liquid from the more solid part. When he had finished, the chief councillor, his sister, and the queen placed the meat on the grave, telling the gods, 'We approach (*ku nama*) you with this sheep.' The solid stomach contents

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were placed on the grave, the assembled people greeted and trilled as before, the queen took away her little horn from the grave, and they all departed, carrying the sheep to an open spot some distance from the grave. Here they kindled a large fire and began cooking the meat in two large pots, one containing the internal organs (*mala*) and head, which, on this occasion, are not to be eaten by women of child-bearing age. Normally *mala* of a slaughtered animal are the portion *par excellence* of the women. While the meat was cooking, the doctor took a potsherd containing the 'water' of the stomach contents, his medicine bags and a stick of *khadi* creeper, and proceeded alone to the grave. It is surmised that he must have made a hole in the grave to pour down the water and medicine.

Meanwhile the clouds which had been in the sky at dawn had thickened and, while the pots were still cooking, rain fell and extinguished the fires, which had to be rekindled. The meat was eaten on the spot by all present and just before they all departed the bones were collected, wrapped in the skin, and placed on the grave. Prior to this, however, the doctor had spoken seriously to the councillors to approach the chief about the *pakati* in the valley below, where a woman who had died in childbirth had been buried 'in the open' without *mafugo*. Ten days later the doctor was called to set the matter right.

This sacrifice is exceedingly rare, but it illustrates well the significant and usual intermingling of religious with what we should call purely magical rites. Thus, as the prayer is offered, it is rain medicine, which works by magic, not beer, the food of the gods, that is poured. The royal grave is treated, not to propitiate the gods, but to constrain them, to keep them cool, so that they will be unable to stop the rain. The sheep is an offering to the gods, a tangible indication that men still 'care for' their ancestors, but the use of the stomach contents on the grave falls into the magical pattern. Another point worth mentioning is that the queen was only one of several officiators: even her divinity does not give her precedence over the nearest living descendants in approaching the complaining spirits.

It has been shown that a great variety of steps can be taken to procure rain, their nature depending upon what is believed to be causing the drought. If the queen herself is thought responsible, and this is usually believed to be the case in the first instance, then her subjects will *lowa* her with gifts or dances to excite her pity and to please her. If there have been wrong burials and rain taboos have been broken, these must be righted, while if the trouble comes from the ancestors, they must be placated. Sometimes one finds a combination of causes, but always it is the divining bones which decide what steps are to be taken. There are rain rites throughout the season, for not only may there be good rain in one area and not in another, but an inopportune period of drought in the best of seasons may have drastic effects on the crops. As an indication of the type of action taken in connexion with the rain cult in any one season, the following has been taken from our diary for the season 1937–8, by no means a very bad year, but one in which the rainfall was below the average:

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November 12th	A rain-doctor sent to make rain at Mtimkulu's village, a petty Shangana-Tonga chief to the north, who had sent messengers to *lobo* a few days before.
November 14th	A thunderstorm, with very little rain, but a very strong wind, broke in the afternoon.
November 15th	Holiday observed to "turn back" the rain which has been scattered by the wind.
November 23rd	Rain fell with much lightning, which struck at Khiobeni, one of the districts.
November 25th	There was a thunderstorm in which lightning struck at Khidonmamatheka, a sub-area of the capital. The place was treated with medicine and in the evening soft rain fell, but not enough for ploughing.
December 2nd	Real set-in rain fell till the 3rd.
December 4th	Hoeing began.
December 8th	First termites brought, but given to dogs, as carried by girls above the age of puberty.
December 12th	First termites given to rain charms.
December 13th	Holiday.

1938

January	Period of drought.
January 23rd	Mukupi, an important woman district head, came to speak to the queen, as there had been no rain for three weeks. The sun beat down fiercely and the crops were beginning to shrivel up. Several other district heads came to *lobo* with money.
February 11th	People were consulting doctors about the drought. Bones declared a sacrifice necessary. Councillors approached queen and messenger sent for a black sheep.
February 17th	Kheshidwa, the rain-doctor, called.
February 19th	District head at Muduseni (several farms, but an old area of tribe) came with £1 10s. to *lobo*.
March 1st–4th	*Legobatichi* dance for rain by the Thovolo.
February 22nd	Sacrifice at Maulwi. Some rain fell, but not very much.
March 2nd	Kheshidwa called to put right a grave. This was done on the 4th.
March 7th	Levaga, a district head from the north, came to *lobo* with £2.
April 2nd	Rain fell.

241 Some beliefs associated with the cultivation of *njago* beans are relevant to our present subject. Among the Lovedu this crop is not planted until the mealies, among which it grows, are 1 ft. high, but this is regarded as a practical measure to prevent injury to the mealies rather than as dictated by the belief, firmly rooted and still put into practice by tribes to the south and south-east of Uulovedu, that *njago* beans planted too early impede the rain. Only some Lovedu have this belief and no one, as far as we know, acts upon it; nor do the Lovedu pull up the young plants when there is no rain, which the Phalaborwa do, as one Lovedu suggested, because the beans look like hailstones. The Lovedu also say, but again

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as if it were a foreign conception, that no *sijage* beans should be planted during the year following the death of a chief. The association of rain and *sijage* beans seem to belong to a culture complex coming from the south.

The insistence nowadays is upon studying culture change as if it were a phenomenon important only in its relation to European contacts, but there has always been and there still is culture change of a different and, as far as the Lovedu are concerned, more vital nature. Even in the rain cult there have been changes. In the reign of Mujaji II, when the father of Khashidwa succeeded Ramafalo as rain-maker, he instituted *ku runa*, a new ceremony of medicating all hoes with *mafuge* before the hoeing of the queen's field of eleusine, a practice which has fallen into disuse with the recent abandonment of the queen's hillside field for one in the valley which can be ploughed. The breaking of taboos is not necessarily a reflection of the breakdown and decay of custom. Indeed, the technique of the rain cult was based on the assumption that taboos were broken. Breaches account for drought and the counter-vailing efficacy of the queen's measures explains her reputation and the confidence people have in her. Wrong burials are known to prevent rain, but, since people try to avoid the unpleasant publicity involved in getting *mafuge* for the burial of, say, an abortion or in burying it in a wet place, these wrong burials are always taking place.

Neither European contact nor Christianity has succeeded in breaking down the implicit belief of every member of the tribe in the power of the queen to make rain. True, no Christians take part in ceremonies for rain and some do not believe that such things as wrong burials affect rainfall; but they harmonize the new with the old faith by the rationalisation that the queen makes rain with the help of God, for they have all seen and can cite corroborative evidence for the powers of the queen. That the queen herself is honest and genuinely believes not only in her own powers, but also in the outside influences that prevent her from achieving success, can be seen in the reply she gave to the messengers who came on February 19th, 1938, with £1 10s. from a one-time district head in her kingdom to beg for rain. 'Go,' she said, 'and tell the master of Muduzeni that we are trying, but things will just not come right' (arrangements were being made for a sacrifice to the ancestors for rain). The money, however, was kept.

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other way of life can oust it from its general pre-eminent position. The 241
man or woman who is in need of a pot or other article in the busy agricultural season vainly places an order with a craftsman, and 'He who takes a journey in spring must transact all his affairs' (i.e. not only where he goes, but also on the way), for he will not be able to pass by again during that season.

Agriculture provides the immediate security of the people, but in turn 241
it relies upon the life-giving rain, the power to make which has been 643
projected upon the queen. The queen is thus the foundation stone of the 182
security of the cultural structure. Her rain-making powers safeguard not only agriculture against the caprices of nature, but the whole country against the attacks of its enemies. The queen is more than that: the method of supplicating for rain has merged with the mechanisms of the social structure and has constructed the bonds with the districts, thus, despite political decentralization, securing the unity of the tribe. And, finally, the elevation of a woman to this exalted position has strengthened the status of women and their important role in the society and has emphasized the virtue of feminine qualities. But the queen is not conceived to be intimately linked with everything in the culture: her position in the *khoro* of the men is weakly institutionalized, she has no immediate contact with the European administration to the interferences of which her powers are doubly vulnerable, and the welfare of the cattle elsewhere, as among the Maḓala and Xanaxwa, ritually brought into relation with the chief, is outside her province.

As rain-maker, the queen controls half the great cosmic forces. Magic 643
may be invoked, the gods propitiated, in the interests and for the ends of 789
individuals, but ultimately these interests and ends and the destiny of the society depend upon the mediation and will of the queen. Man's sense of security in the face of personal misfortunes can be re-established by magic or religion, but the orderliness of cosmic laws is guaranteed only by the relationship of the queen with the supernatural. These laws are inscrutable, but the procedures for arousing pity in the heart of a human queen or for appeasing her anger are intelligible; and thus man can have confidence in undertaking his tasks. Moreover, he need not and must not resort to magic in his major economic activities, for he can and must rely upon the queen. Since the final justification of the pivotal position of the queen is her divinity, garden magic is conceived to be disruptive, like witchcraft: it competes with the power of the queen. One consequence of this conception is that success or failure in subsistence activities is regarded as immediately dependent upon industry, the application of practical knowledge and suitable techniques, and that he who uses garden magic is a thief or a witch.

In most neighbouring tribes there is some public treatment of the 241
seeds before they are sown, or the hoes and ploughs are smeared with 789
medicine obtained from the chief: among highveld Sotho such as the Xanaxwa and Molotsha, there is even a special hut for storing the sacred seed, a few grains of which are handed to each householder at sowing time, and in this hut, which is associated with the *gwa* drums and with fertility in man, girls reaching puberty are isolated and newly married

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241 couples sleep for the first few nights. Among the Lovedu these practices
789 have no counterpart. Given rain, what is necessary to make the crops prosper is work and good soil, not medicine, and as a result one receives the impression of a practical attitude, not only to agriculture, but, by extension, also to most economic activities. But success both in hunting and in pastoral activities to some extent depends upon the use of magic, although by comparison with the Nguni and Tswana the cattle cult is very much attenuated.

461 Thrift and industry are regarded as virtues. It is the hard-working bride who is sought after, while the most eligible bridegrooms are the *dibuglu*, those who by industry have filled their grain pits. But what is valued is not just work; it is work to attain self-sufficiency, that will make one independent, rather than work which places one in a subservient position. Even, as they phrase it, 'In work for the chief, it is only the fool who kills himself'. Hard work must not be thought of in terms of our conceptions, for the outlook of the Lovedu is far less dominated by intensive striving and deep concentration and more by care-free, easy-going standards than ours. Work has dignity, for the maxim, 'It is not the gift-pumpkin [but the produce of one's own garden] that is juicy', is meant, not to deprecate the gift, but to foster pride in the products of one's labour; it is a tenet appropriately urged when the clothes which a youth displays have been acquired, not by his own efforts, but as a present from his parents. Work is accorded recognition: the child who begins herding is said also to begin to deserve the food he gets. Work excuses failures and losses, for as they say, 'The one who loses cattle is the one who herds them', or, more generally, 'The one who breaks is the one who works'. On the other hand, there is scorn of indolence in the proverb, 'The sluggard has no locusts even if they sleep in his courtyard', and a warning in 'He who sits with staring eye-balls [idly] will die, but he who scratches for food [cultivates assiduously] will live'. Considering the craving for beer, it is almost heroic for a man, when refused this elixir of life, to console himself with the thought that 'He who stints me is he who helps me' [because I shall better be able to attend to my work]. But the work that is honoured and considered most congenial is work in situations in which, as in the work party, the reciprocities are fundamental.

643 The weakness of the queen as a woman is also her strength and the
648 source of the prestige of the tribe. Her foreign policy is appeasement, not war; for, as they phrase it, 'The queen does not fight'. Reciprocity is the basis of her relations with her district heads, reconciliation the method of settling difficulties. Appeasement, one of the great values in the society, harmonises with, supports, and is in turn supported by the reliance of the whole social structure upon compromise. This value and the traits corresponding to it interpenetrate every aspect of culture and of life. The hard régime of the initiation 'school' has been softened: there is no need to direct its procedures towards hardening the youth or instilling manly courage, and military discipline and regimentation are of little or no importance. Diplomacy works hand in hand with the
157 methods of the *khoro* and of reconciliation (*ku khumchwa*), but it also

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and the regularity of the seasons are bound up with the life of the chief, but the identification of the earth with the chief in the phrase 642
' mabu a fesa ' (the earth is hot, burning) which is used by all Lowveld 643
tribes as a euphemism to denote the illness or death of the chief, seems to imply some connexion between the life of the chief and the fertility of the earth. Some such association seems implicit also in the feeling among the Lobedu that the chief should have no physical defect (it is thought to be impossible for the queen to be ill, and the present queen has never had a day's illness) and should lead a secluded life, being seen by and giving audience to royal relatives and the nobility only. So close is the association between the ruler and the land he rules among the Lobedu that the chief may not leave the country or cross its boundaries, a taboo which made it impossible for Modjadji to register her vote at the nearest Native Commissioner's office in the recent elections for the Native Council.

The great power of the chief in the three most important tribes of 643
the Lowveld lies in rain-making. Here we find as in so many other 789
aspects of their culture an intensification of a feature present in modified form in many other tribes, leading to a difference as great or greater than the complete absence of the trait. Many chiefs in South Africa are great rain-makers, and tribes of the Highveld and Sekukuniland share with those of the Lowveld the custom in time of drought of sending young men to ' beat mofoko ' pegs around the country or to put out all the fires in the country and rekindle new ones in each village. But the Lowveld chiefs, especially Modjadji, are the greatest rain-makers of all, recognized in the old days as such by tribes as far south as the Swazi and Zulu, and rain ritual here has characteristic features not found elsewhere. Important among these is the custom of dancing for rain. When the rains do not come at the right time, it is usual for each headman in turn to come to the royal kraal with his followers to *lula* rain by dancing for the chief, and when this does not help the women come as a last resort to do a special dance which is so exacting and causes so much crying on the part of small babies, who have to go hungry while their mothers dance, that it is believed the chief must be moved by it. This custom, still practised by the 643
Lobedu, has died out elsewhere in the Lowveld, having been last 789
performed among the Khaha in 1911. The belief that twins, mis- 766

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643 carriages, abortions, and people dying of any severe coughing illness
789 prevent rain from falling unless specially buried in wet soil is found
766 with variations all over the Lowveld, among Sotho and Shangana-Tonga alike.

643 Women rulers have their 'wives' just as though they were men, and a peculiar feature of Lobedu culture is the large number of wives
588 or *bathanoni* of the queen. Every Lobedu induna sends a daughter to
644 be a *mothanoni* of the queen, as do also any of the nobility who wish
[59] to be on a good footing with her; and these, together with girls sent by foreign tribes as gifts for rain, form a large harem. *Bathanoni* of the chief occupy an honoured position at the Head Kraal, have, on the whole, less work than ordinary women and are a source of honour to their family who through them become privileged to call the queen their *tsetse*—bridegroom or son-in-law. They may be given in marriage to relatives of the queen or to commoners, in which case the peculiar situation arises of their children preferring
[551] to call themselves sons and daughters of the queen, using the surname Modjadji, to taking the lineage name of their father. Often, however, the *bathanoni* remain with the queen, the ideal being to remain virgin for some years, after which they are given their own hut in the village and permission to have children. A *mothanoni* of noble birth
[565] ranks higher than a commoner and can even bear the heir to the throne when the queen herself is barren. Other Lowveld chiefs do
[184] not receive daughters from their headmen, though the Khaha and Letswalo used to accept girls from foreign chiefs for rain as did the Lobedu. These women became a link and source of friendship between the two tribes and, especially among Lobedu, played a real part in the gradual growth and influence of the tribe. Even the great Ngungunyane once sent women to Modjadji for rain, and there are, to-day still, at her head kraal sisters and daughters of important chiefs in the Northern Transvaal, though money and cattle have now been substituted for women in such ceremonies.

643 The legal heir to the throne is, in the Lowveld, the eldest son of the chief wife, who should always be the daughter of the chief's mother's brother. The cattle for this marriage are not, as among the
[71] Pedi and one or two Highveld tribes, contributed by all the headmen, nor are the fires in the country extinguished on the occasion of the marriage.

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from the witch: it is generally argued that he who knows how to counteract wizards must himself be one, and Lowveld doctors are known to 'try' one another by sending lightning or familiars to their rivals to test their powers. Doctors have been openly accused of witchcraft. This confusion is, however, in no way detrimental to the practice of great doctors since not only is a doctor unlikely to work against a client when it is in the interest of his practice to please, but as there must always be a motive in evil-doing, witchcraft without intention being impossible, doctors harm only their enemies.

DAY AND NIGHT WIZARDS. The term *moloi*, wizard, is in the Lowveld equivalent to 'criminal' and implies evil intention, desire to kill others. In contrast to the Shangana–Tonga, there is thought to be no such thing as unintentional witchcraft. The wizard knows he is a wizard and harms others because he bears towards them feelings of envy or malice. The methods employed in witchcraft do not differ from those of good magic; the distinction between the two lies in the evil motives, injurious to social life, which lie behind witchcraft. Hence use of magic on one's possessions to hurt the fingers of whoever tries to steal them or sending animals to frighten a deserting wife into returning home is not witchcraft, though the technique is identical with that of the witch, because designed not to kill or injure seriously but to uphold the social order.

All tribes in the Lobedu culture area have a technical distinction between two classes of wizards—the night wizard (*moloi oa bosiu*) and the day wizard (*moloi oa matseare*). The night wizard, usually but not exclusively a woman, inherits his evil powers from his mother who teaches him the art in early infancy. His methods are direct: by going himself or sending familiars, various animals such as the stoat and widdebaar (human beings whom he has killed and enslaved), he works his harm. He works mostly at night, and there exists a sort of society of wizards who dance together at night and recognize one another by day. The day wizard, on the other hand, does not necessarily come of a stock of wizards. Any one who uses medicine to poison or kill is a day wizard. Sending lightning, using people's footprints or pointing at them to harm them, poisoning food and beer, these are the methods of the day wizard in whose work the 'spell',

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But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasizes in very general terms the importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials. 773

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formulations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going its ordained way is implicitly rejected in their conceptions. The assumption is that cosmic forces are controllable and, in fact, controlled at every turn by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *vuyaga* (the evil aspect of which is *vulsi*), i.e. by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digoma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail. 821 772 643 [71] [769]

Vuyaga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these attributes or powers (*maapa*) reside are mainly *melimo* (medicines) or *mere* (plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct 789 755

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789 from the supernatural. While anyone who knows a cure for an ailment is manipulating the forces of nature and using *vuyaga*, there are doctors
755 who, by virtue of long training, know many medicines, have learnt how to divine and have been imbued with additional perspicacity and powers as a result of a special initiation. Medicine functions by virtue of the properties, actual or ascribed, of matter; the principles underlying the operation of medicines assume mechanical cause and effect and even the divining bones are read according to rule.

756 There are, however, two types of doctor who fall into a different category: the *lelɔpo* doctor, directly possessed and guided by an ancestor spirit, who largely confines his activities to curing possessed people, and the *mugome* or 'smeller-out' who is generally a foreigner. People using the forces of nature for evil purposes are *valbi* (witches and sorcerers) and are dealt with in another context. *Vuyaga*, it will be seen, is the use of impersonal power inherent in matter, which is extracted by the expert (*yaga*) and applied in the interests of the health and well-being of men; it is also the exercise of personal qualities or skills, either inherited or acquired through spirit possession or guidance.

Ancestors

769 Ancestors can influence for good and evil the fortunes only of their own descendants, who in the case of the chief's ancestors are taken to include
777 the whole tribe. Their control over the forces of nature is not explicitly formulated; and what is expressly stated is not always confirmed in Lovedu religious practices. The ancestors are clearly conceived to exercise an overall control. A man will always assert that no harm or illness can befall him if his ancestors are watchful enough, for they have power to ward off all evil
[754] and misfortune. It is said that even witches cannot, without the will of the ancestors, enter a village or deliver the last fatal blow that kills a man. But in practice the will of the ancestors either is not interposed, for no ascertainable reason, or is ineffective to ward off attacks. If some great sorrow overtakes a man, it is said that 'his ancestors have had an accident' implying that he has been temporarily deprived of their protection and is at the mercy of his
[755] enemies. Even medicines are said to be ineffective without the co-operation of one's ancestors, the conception being not merely that their goodwill is essential but also that *vuyaga* belongs to the ancestors. In fact, however, the ineffectiveness of medicines is never in any concrete case attributed to the lack of such co-operation.

769 Ancestors are appealed to and thanked for good crops, fertility, plenty, and all manner of good fortune and success. The desire to be remembered
777 and given tendance is attributed to them, and they may themselves cause
753 harm and sickness to descendants who neglect them; but somewhat inconsistently a man may with impunity neglect them for many years and give them tendance only when misfortune overtakes him. Ancestors may be approached and propitiated or thanked by means of offerings and prayer

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643 physical imperfections, not susceptible to the ills that befall ordinary men; that she cannot die a natural death but departs only by her own volition; that succession to the throne is uncertain since the choice of a ruler must in the last resort be made by the spirits of the tribe; that though she may not have a husband, lest political control become concentrated in him, yet she must bear the heir by a secret consort (a royal classificatory brother) specially chosen to maintain untarnished the purity of the royal blood; that she ensures the regularity of nature and the changing of the seasons; and, more 643 particularly, that her death dislocates the rhythm of nature, bringing 731 drought and famine, the abrogation of law and order. People today still speak with horror and fear of the years (1894–6) following the death of the previous queen, Majuji II. They were years, as we know from documentary sources, when drought, locusts, rinderpest and, in their wake, unprecedented famine and desolation, wiped out practically all the cattle and perhaps a third of the human population.

643 The preservation of the queen's sanctity requires that her life be subject to observances which shield her from the public eye and restrain her movements. She is 'the huckster in the hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) who sells her rain-medicines from the seclusion of her abode, and may not move about freely or leave the district of the capital. She was the only chief in the Union who, a few years ago, could not go to the Native Commissioners' Office to exercise the vote of her people in the election of a representative to the Native Representative Council. She cannot attend large assemblies of men, and is generally inaccessible except to her close relatives and great councillors. But otherwise her activities are not restricted, nor is her life a continuous ritual and, unlike other Divine Kings, there are no elaborate safeguards surrounding her every movement.

Tradition decrees that chiefs may have no physical defect, but not that [762] they must die while still young and strong. Ritual suicide of the queen is by Lovedu conceptions not a means of guaranteeing a timely death lest failure of physical powers should upset the regularity of nature, but rather a symbol of her divinity, for it proves that she is not heir to the weaknesses of ordinary man. It is mystically connected with the fourth circumcision school in her reign: she must see the boys going in but not coming back. The Lovedu queen is believed to be immune from disease, but age does not diminish—it even increases—her mystical powers over nature. The only disqualification to rule is inability to make rain in the early period of her reign. Once she [789 821] has demonstrated, by her ability to make rain, that the rain-charms have been entrusted to her and that she has been divinely chosen, irregularities in the seasons are attributed not to weakness of her powers but to some extraneous factor, such as contraventions of rules associated with keeping the country cool, disobedience to the chief, and the anger of the ancestor spirits.

643 766 789 Arrangements connected with succession of a new queen also emphasize her mystical relations with the cosmic order. The death of her predecessor

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was not announced for a year, while, as the body decomposed, such vital ingredients of the rain-medicine as the skin and body-dirt were carefully collected; after the announcement a period of anarchy often supervened as rival claimants marshalled their armed forces for the struggle for the throne. At the end of this year of mourning all the fires of the country were put out with purificatory rain-medicine (*mufugɔ*) from the official keeper at the capital. 643 766 789

This fire rite symbolizes purification of the country as well as a transition from one order to another. At any time when the country is not right (*naha a e loge*), as when there is severe drought, the fires are put out 'to usher in a new year' (i.e. a new order or period of operative forces). But the fire rite also symbolizes the means through which the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen are asserted. Finally, the beating out of the fires with cooling medicine is part of a complex of practices connected with heat and cold, symbolizing respectively dysphoria and euphoria. The 'earth is hot' (*mavu a fesa*) on the death of the queen and a new cosmic order has to be inaugurated by cooling it in preparation for the new rain-maker. 783 372 772

After the fire rite there follows the divine identification of the successor by the rite of opening the door. The rival claimants, one of whom, chosen by the inner royal council and the deceased queen, has been secretly prepared for his office, pass the hut in which the queen has died. They announce their identity to the spirit of the deceased, lightly touching the door of the hut, which yields to the chosen successor. 643 644 578

In and around the inner secret council where the choice is actually made centre serious tensions, not only between the present ruler and the heir-elect for whose sake and succession she must poison herself, apparently not always willingly, but also between those who depend for their position and prestige upon the patronage of one or the other. The 'chosen' heir always goes to live far away, ostensibly to conceal his or her identity but in reality also owing to a serious conflict with the reigning sovereign.[1]

For the regulation of cosmic forces the queen relies not only on her divinity but also upon the royal rain-medicines and, in the last resort, on the agreement of the royal ancestor spirits. To prevent the weakening of the rain-medicine it must be revitalized by being given the first termites and first-fruits each year, and occasionally parts of a black sheep or, in the old days, a human being. 643 782 789

Rain-charms are liable to weaken (*figthela*) or become defiled (*khuma*) by certain deviations from the normal course of nature unless special precautions are taken. Twins, babies cutting their upper teeth before their lower, women dying in pregnancy, abortions and miscarriages, men dying from *fere*, a deadly coughing disease believed to be contracted by having sex intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning—all these are deviations which contaminate the earth, causing it to be 'hot', and therefore have to be buried in wet soil or 783 789 [753]

[1] Males are not debarred from succession; indeed the early rulers were all men. But a definite preference for women rulers seems now to be firmly established.

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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the dutyof the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season pro-
821 pitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and sir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gmana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time,
821 people say the qieen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken
789 to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district
731 heads may formally pay homage (*hu lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle, or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of peope dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lesugu*) are associated wih offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms nay have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[784] have prevented nin. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a treenear a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds fustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale dispeses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with
821 her as if she had lst a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digoma

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
794 of man consists of *digoma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *goma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
881 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-vuhwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *goma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *goma* which is said to 'bite'

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Lenwa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *dere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches.

'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mashɔthɔjɔ* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death.

Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is

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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife. 783 753

Makhuma (from *hu khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figehela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*hu thuswa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold. 751 783 [304 846] [768]

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'. 783 787 788

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on 783

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754 standing of ordinary men; sorcery is the manipulation of lawful means for unlawful ends.

The night-witch belongs to an unholy fraternity whose members meet at night to dance to their drums and deliberate upon their deeds of darkness. She uses no medium of destruction and no medicine or spells, but has inborn powers to do what is physically impossible to ordinary men. She goes herself on her nefarious errands or uses familiars. Witches are almost invariably women, partly no doubt because it is difficult to conceive of women having the facilities to purchase medicines for purposes of sorcery, partly also because they are endowed with more mysterious powers than men. The sorcerer, usually a man, whose machinations involve the use of medicines and spells, is a day-witch because his power is derived from ordinary natural techniques 'of the day'. The essence of sorcery is the criminal use of the potency of medicines which can be, and usually are, used in the service of legitimate ends.

754 Many medicines are specifically good or bad and their use cannot traverse their intrinsic nature; but some of the most important are good and hence 673 moral, or bad and hence immoral according as they are used for socially approved or socially disapproved ends. *Madabi*, for example, has the power to transmute the nature of things. It is right for a husband to manipulate *madabi* in a way that will cause wild animals to appear while his runaway spouse works for her lover, for in this way he may frighten her into returning to him. But a jilted lover who takes revenge upon a girl is guilty of sorcery if he uses *madabi* to change her sex when her child is about to be born and thereby endangers her life. Such an act is unlawful vengeance, which is sharply distinguished from lawful restitution; it reflects a desire to injure another for personal motives which are not in harmony with approved social values.

754 Witchcraft and sorcery can always be counteracted. A favourite method of dealing with a witch is the use of reprisal magic whereby the evil is sent •785 back to him, but there are many charms and medicines, all relying on the power of *ruyaga*, by means of which witchcraft can be combated or rendered harmless. Villages are protected against witches and sorcerers by charms circling the village or placed at strategic points, while the witch within the village is treated by *hu fera*, i.e. a drug is introduced into his food which has the power of making him forget his frustration and seek compensation in day-dreaming and doddering. After witchcraft or sorcery has been established by divination as the cause of an evil, and the culprit has been identified (the diviner mentions no name but gives certain attributes, such as sex, clan, locality), it is open to the victim to make an accusation and risk the legal proceedings that will inevitably follow. But resort to law is not entirely satisfactory since appeasement, not the hardening of animosities that accusations occasion, is the function of law. Moreover, the initiation of legal sanctions against a witch may spur him to greater activity.

777 Witch beliefs reflect the Lovedu notion that almost all the misfortunes

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that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts. 777

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*vuŋaga*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare. 754 789

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *mahava*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the bones, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased. 829 777 753 [821]

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups is the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *gɔsha*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted. 181

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

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PROPERTY, CROSS-COUSIN MARRIAGE, AND THE FAMILY CYCLE AMONG THE LOBEDU[1]

Eileen Jensen Krige

THE Lobedu are a South Bantu people characterized by the institution of 'divine kingship'. They live in a mountainous area of the North-eastern Transvaal lowveld. Originally from *Bokhalaga* (S. Rhodesia), they migrated south when the empire of Monomotapa broke up and established themselves as rulers over the sparse Sotho population they found in occupation. The rain-making powers of their queen, enhanced by the mystery and secrecy of her ritual seclusion, attracted many accretions from diverse tribal groups from surrounding areas who sought security and peace particularly during the period of unrest following the wars of Shaka, the Zulu, and the raids of Matabele and Swazi. For enemies feared to attack the Lobedu queen lest they be visited by drought and locusts. The descendants of the Lobedu proper therefore form only a small portion of the total population which, however, except for relatively recent Tsonga immigrants from Portuguese East Africa, is remarkably homogeneous in culture. The Lobedu had no military traditions and built up their kingdom by peaceful means.

The form of government is that of a central authority with the queen as the head of state and spatially defined political

[1]The field-work on which this essay is based was carried out jointly with my husband, the late J. D. Krige, under the auspices of the International African Institute in 1936–8, and was supplemented and brought up to date by short field trips in 1961 and 1962.

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suggesting that as the first wife was not strong they should send her uterine sister as a little 'follower' to help her. Finding that her son was agreeable she reported the matter to his eldest half-brother, head of the homestead, who discussed the matter with his brothers.

The ultimate guarantor of the interests and economic independence of the 'house' is the cattle-linked sister with whose bride-price the wife was obtained. As we have seen, she occupies a very special position in the 'house' built by her cattle. Even before her brother's bridal party arrives at his homestead with the new bride she is taken to his married sister's homestead where a goat is slaughtered for her in recognition of their special relationship. When the sister visits her old home she will 'put down her things' and make herself at home in the hut of this wife of her brother. She is the first to be called to beer there; she must be invited to all activities such as work-parties held by the 'house'; all sickness is reported to her; she is called in to discuss the marriage of all sons and daughters of that 'house'. She or her eldest uterine sister is the one who magically protects a new homestead by drawing a medicated branch in a magical circle around it. If her father and mother are dead she sees to it that her brother treats his wife properly. He cannot chase her away or divorce her unless his sister believes his action to be justifiable; and she may, and very often does, take her brother's wife to live with her in her husband's village if he ill-treats her. She has an interest in this 'house' for here her son will find a wife. When her brother dies it is she and her sisters who will distribute the inheritance. The sanction for her control is a religious one: if she is 'dissatisfied in her heart' this may 'stir up the ancestors' and cause a child of her brother to be ill—a very powerful weapon.

Development of a House

Let us consider the growth and development of a house for it is only by a very gradual process that a house reaches full stature. The marriage of every woman marks the birth of a new unit which may become in time an independent homestead though it does not always do so. This is possible at the earliest only when the eldest son has married a wife and

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friend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking-stick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling her to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently than any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh is eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for mealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and cradles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the thongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by adults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls. All in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill exchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the men of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no importance whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties connected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the valleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not their eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the Shangana-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and thrown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tonga, used in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers some thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs, also a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is not eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the reason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of the tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a reference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-headed arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various kinds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegetation. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a thousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the manner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture. Perhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order from an alphabetical list of over 300 plants—a small proportion of the flora—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-known uses:

Muridiridi (*Ekebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and hence much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it is also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist weevils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muridiri-nyuhwe (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is slow to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. The roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and to heal.

Murulo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The primary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to terminus and then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole of *murulo* is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the latter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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695 787 adultery with his father's young wife was exposed by her, accused her of causing his son's death; but the *khwi* told him to beg pardon with a goat, which would also serve as the 'cutter of the tongue'. When uterine sisters challenged one another before the *khwi* the men ridiculed them, saying, 'Who has ever heard of uterine sisters bewitching one another'—not a very conclusive argument, but sufficient for the purpose in hand. When Mabula, the cattle-linked sister, was called to squirt water (*ba phuma*) for the sick child of her brother, she construed the summons as an accusation of witchcraft, for to call another (not a close relative) to perform this rite is one method of imputing witchcraft; but Mabula's husband intervened in the *khwi*, explained how his wife and her brother by their quarrels were breaking up his home, and suggested that they beg pardon of one another. The *khwi* agreed and averted the challenge.

Even if the parties had been to the *mugwai* with the official witness the *khwi* is not absolutely bound. In the old days, it is said, the *khwi* allowed argument as if the divination of the *mugwai* was not infallible and if the parties were not satisfied the *khwi* could on the initiative of one of them send them to a second *mugwai*. To-day, despite the theory that the *mugwai* is infallible, the old practice persists. We have seen many arguments on the merits and many reversals of the findings of the *mugwai*. These findings may be attacked on the grounds of irregularities in the procedure, such as separation of the parties when they were on the journey, corruption of the 'ears', incompetence of the *mugwai* who failed to find the *phitho* or to indicate correctly the group or totem names of all the parties, dissatisfaction of the one party with the findings at the séance, confusion of the bones by medicines 'thrown' at home, and many others. When there is a conflict between the evidence or a presumption (such as, in adultery cases, the presumption that a woman's evidence is almost as reliable as the bones) and the findings of the *mugwai*, there is no telling which way the ultimate verdict will go. The cases in which these conflicts have occurred are too complicated for adequate handling here, largely because the primary object of the *khwi* is appeasement of the parties and reconciliation of what appear to be incongruous institutions.

There are other aspects of the procedure that have great legal interest—for example, the principles governing vicarious representation of challenger and challenged before the *mugwai* and the right of the person vicariously await out to appeal for a second expedition of which he is a party, the rule as to the conduct of the parties on the journey, the requirement of the *khwi* that it can take cognizance, not of gossip or general rumour, but only a specific accusation by a specific challenger, and many others. We shall touch upon two further points only.

695 791 Firstly the *mugwai* is always a Shangaan-Tonga and lives far away. Litigants from other tribes come to Duiwenhoks, but the Lovedu generally say that they are going to Phalali, on the borders of Portuguese East Africa. The theory is that the more distant the *mugwai* the more reliable his verdict will be. But distance also safeguards the diviner from the vengeance that neighbours might take, shifts the incidence of distasteful responsibilities from the *khwi* and eliminates strife between the two

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powerful jurisdictions, the *khosi* and the *mugwane*. The *mugwane*, great though his powers be, holds a precarious position in the modern world. His fees are not fixed, but the usual amount is £1 2*s.* 6*d.*, though it may be 5*s.* or more for each person of the party. Much of his technique is directed towards preventing the consultants from giving him away to the European authorities. 'If you say I am a liar,' declared one *mugwane* to the parties, 'take back your money and go elsewhere. I even challenge you to take me to the Europeans; they will agree with me, as I have a licence to divine.' In another case a *mugwane* refused to find any one guilty. 'You force me,' he said, 'to smell out the witch, but you have left him at home. The other diviners who smelt out this man [the challenged person] are all wrong. And you [the challenger], *if* you wish to settle the dispute, must place a head of cattle as a sacred beast to wake up your grandfather.' But this finding did not persuade the parties to withdraw their case from the *khosi*, and the *khosi*, ignoring the finding, settled the matter in its own way. 695 791

Secondly, the wager is not made by way of an oath, but it is sometimes reduced to writing: 'They bet four head of cattle' (*va bijije khomu je nne*); that is all. The tiny slip of paper is kept by the 'ears'. The use of the term *ku bijo* shows, as the people say, that the wager is a new conception. But we cannot be certain that the wager has been borrowed from Europeans. It fits the whole complex of judicial process: its essence is consent of the parties to be bound by their wager and by the findings of the *mugwane*. If one of the parties disagrees with these findings, he is entitled to demand back the money paid to the *mugwane* and ask the party to go further to another *mugwane*. The *khosi* may, however, vary the bet. The victor comes to the *khosi* and blows his horn; and the women ululate and dance (*ku pelela*, which by extension also means to be acquitted or declared innocent by ordeal or *mugwane*). Meanwhile the vanquished party goes home and, if he is contrite, he says that he could not help doing wrong. Next day he might appear in the *khosi*, ask for time to pay or *khomelwa* or send an old man to plead for a reduction of the bet. The victor pretends to refuse, but in the end, if the *khosi* presses him, he will agree. Or the *khosi* may, on its own initiative, reduce the bet. Everything depends on the circumstances. Where the mother of a man was alleged to have killed the wife of his elder brother (the challenger), the *mugwane's* verdict was against the mother, but as he had said that she was not a born witch, but had only purchased the medicine from another, the *khosi* awarded the challenger two head of cattle instead of the six actually wagered. The bet is often not paid in full, while sometimes nothing at all is exacted as the 'cutter of the tongue' of the slanderer. But we have seen cases in which the *khosi* has, at the suggestion of one party, raised a wager from four to six head of cattle. 695 787

This is not the place to discuss the interrelations of the tribal and the European systems. For one thing, the subject requires a volume to itself. But it is necessary to insist that in criminal matters the system of Native courts is by European law essentially an integral part of the European structure. In 1934 Mojaji was given criminal jurisdiction in respect of offences punishable under Native law, but fines are limited to two head 692

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755 The distinctive characteristic of the doctor with 'power' is that he is a
791 diviner. That must necessarily be so in a society in which pathology is the science of diseases, the nature and causes of which lie so largely in magico-witchcraft conceptions. Special techniques are called for in place of what we call diagnosis and bedside manner. The diviner's function is, however, more than that: he must be called in about the details of every religious ceremony to discover the wishes of the ancestors; he decides where, in order to avoid the danger of the witch, every village must be built; he makes the witch-proof fence. Besides the bone-thrower, to whom we shall refer as doctor and who is consulted at every turn, there are two other classes of diviner, the *lelopo* doctor and the *magome*, both foreign introductions from the East. The *lelopo* doctor is often a tribesman, the *magome* always a Shangana-Tonga, preferably living outside Uulovedu. The spheres of these classes of diviner are different: the doctor heals disease and is the general medical practitioner in its wide Lovedu sense; the *lelopo* doctor, almost always a woman, initiates the 'possessed', and often is also a general practitioner, divining with bones and healing disease, especially barrenness and ailments of children; and the *magome* is, as we have seen, the forensic physician, and if he is famous he keeps no medicines, though otherwise he combines smelling out of the guilty with a general medical practice. Both *magome* and *lelopo* doctors claim direct inspiration from the ancestors, but the doctor reads his bones by rule.

As it is difficult to persuade outsiders to divulge their knowledge, the profession of doctor, in theory open to all, is in practice more often than not handed down in the family, from father to son or daughter, maternal uncle to nephew, husband to wife, or even wife to husband. Interest and inclination determine who the pupil will be. To acquire a working knowledge of the bones, with which people are generally familiar to some extent, may take only a few months, but it is useless knowledge unless one has medicines and experience, which may take years to acquire. Ambitious doctors spend their lives gaining these perquisites, buying from one, begging from another, colleague; many travel from tribe to tribe or go periodically to Johannesburg, where good money is to be made. There are many specialists: Ramaculana, like his father before him, is a noted rain-maker; Mambye is a master of *madabi*, by which he changes people into animals or hangs organs of the victim of his vengeance-magic on pegs in the hut; Mashao makes the hedge of the *nyali* lodge witch-proof; Rathavale strengthens the queen for office; Mulebye doctors the boys' circumcision lodge. A doctor who has not inherited cannot easily acquire such specialized knowledge: the price is high and the secrets not readily given away. The greatest doctors are said to use human remains in their most potent medicines, and to satisfy this need there are *muipaegwa*, murderers who waylay and kill people at night. During our stay, people, even at public gatherings, discussed and warned against the activities and haunts of these murderers. The wife of Thagu, the doctor, one night came home very drunk and next morning discovered part of her genitals excised. She accused her husband in the district *kkwo* and, though he denied the crime, he paid the fine. As

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Thagu is not a great doctor, people surmised that he wanted the flesh, not for himself, but as the price of a medicine he bought from a renowned doctor. 755 741

A good doctor, unless, as is most common, he grows up in the profession, undergoes a long period of *ad hoc* training of 'walking about' with doctors. Maḓarabani, who hoped by becoming a doctor to save his family the expense of constantly calling in medical aid, began by going about with doctors he knew, from time to time persuading them to show him a few medicines; he put his knowledge to successful use in his family and started collecting a set of bones, buying those he could not pick up himself. Gradually he acquired the elements of divining, finishing up his training at the feet of a Shangana-Tonga *magwaw*. Tuition in divining teaches one the various combinations of the dice; really to 'know' the bones one must drink their soup in a ceremony called 'cooking the bones'. It is the only cooking the dice undergo, so that it is taboo to use bones that have been cooked as food; it completes a diviner's training, and it not only creates a bond between dice and diviner, but gives him insight to see what is obscure to others. The ceremony varies from doctor to doctor, but remains in essence of three main features. Firstly, a young cockerel or, according to older custom, a goat is killed, its flesh is cooked with the dice and the broth is drunk by the pupil. The cock quickens perception both of bones and diviner, for it heralds the dawn before man perceives its approach. Secondly, the novice is given medicine (by inoculation or as a drink) containing *inter alia* the heart and nose of the vulture and wild dog, as well as sometimes the heart of the cooked fowl, so that he may sense things from afar. And, thirdly, the bones are buried at the cross-roads overnight 'to gather the news' and next morning are unearthed. When a male passes, a bone representing a male, when a female passes one representing a female, is taken out, and a beer drink is given so as to ensure many passers-by. Thereafter the novice can tell, in a test to which he is submitted, how the bones have fallen without looking at them.

Possession, in the ordinary manner of the cult, but by a spirit who in life was a doctor, constitutes the initiation of a *lelapo* doctor. He may divine during possession when the possessing spirit speaks or chants, or he may throw the dice when not possessed like an ordinary doctor. If during possession the dice are thrown, it is merely for effect, for they are hardly looked at. It is claimed that *lelapo* doctors read dice without training, being guided by their spirit; but in practice we found that either they had for months attached themselves to another doctor or, as members of a divining family, had become familiar with the bones prior to possession. The *magwaw*, like the *lelapo* doctor, is guided by a spirit which manifests its desire that he should become a diviner by making him ill, but, unlike the *lelapo* doctor, he is not actually possessed. The *magwaw* is the master diviner, but in fact he seldom throws the dice more than once or twice before proceeding to divine 'by the heart'. His initiation comprises the curing of his illness, apprenticeship to another *magwaw* and the cooking of the bones. *Lelapo* doctor or *magwaw* and guiding spirit are closely associated. A *lelapo* doctor never uses a goat in healing, without setting

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755 791 aside pieces of meat for his spirit, and a *magwar* always has his special shrine where he reports all money professionally earned. An ordinary doctor sometimes has a shrine where he places horns of goats received or hangs medicine bags when he prays to the spirits, but many do not have these things. To a doctor his divination is like a craft that he has learnt, and he gives offerings only when scarcity of clients is attributed to the displeasure of the gods. When about to divine, he begs the bones to tell him the truth, not the ancestors for guidance.

781 755 The divinatory dice constitute the chief diagnostic method. The Lovedu set is fairly stereotyped, consisting of about forty pieces, most but not all of which are bones; the bones and *hahati* shells (oval-shaped stones of a fruit) of the Shangana-Tongs *magwar* are somewhat different. Dominating the usual Lovedu set are four flat pieces of ivory or bone, two male and two female, which fall in sixteen different combinations, the cardinal positions. Each position has its own name and its own praise referring, though vaguely, to its meaning; and it is these four pieces from which the general configuration of influences or prognostications is read. There are other sets of four: pieces from the ventral surface of a tortoise, each with two easily distinguishable sides, and shells, two Olivs standing for males and two Cyraea standing for females. Having thrown the dice, the diviner looks first at the ivory pieces and gives the praise of their disposition, which indicates the general situation, say, dissension, loss, or complaints of the father's sister. But this general situation must be related to the lie of certain other bones, particularly *malope*, the knuckle-bone of the steenbuck (*Raphicerus campestris*), from which, as representing the chief, the diviner next orientates the situation. The procedure thereafter involves linking this situation, on the one hand, with events or specific prognostications of good or evil and, on the other, with people playing a part in these events. *Thokoda* or *madimo*, the talus of the antbear, represents the ancestors, who, like the antbear, live underground, shows whether they are angry or not, and is diagnostic of the health or life of a person which in the last resort lies in ancestral hands. *Dam*, the phalanx of the lion (or in some sets *ngwe*, the phalanx of the tiger) which is also a pointing bone showing direction, *phiri*, the knee-bone of the hyena, of which there may be two, male and female, and *tshwai*, male and female kneebones of the baboon, all stand for the evil power of witches and their familiars. The baboon bones, in addition, indicate, by the side on which they fall, danger or illness on a journey, suitability of the spot for building upon and, in case of barrenness, whether or not a child will be born. Every set contains two morula pips with functions less specific, depending as they do upon the whole configuration of forces or events, and a river pebble, *lemajo la gurwa*, the thing swallowed by a crocodile, which is diagnostic of *bhiloro*, the illness caused by foreign substances which sorcerers cause their victims to swallow with food or drink.

To bring these evil or good influences into relation with specific people, to determine who is ill or who is bewitching the consultants, the diviner turns to certain astragalus bones, capable of falling on four sides and representing people. Two or three sheep bones stand for important

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643 bring with them in addition dancing performers (*grahe*) to please her and
789 to evoke her pity at the sorrowful sight of people dancing in summer when
535 they ought to be ploughing. The movements of this dancing do not
521 differ from those of ordinary dancing, but the music consists of *lengwe* songs sung also at the annual harvest ceremony, on the death of important royal people, and at the girls' initiative 'school'.

643 The most renowned of all dancing for rain is the *legbetshele*, a special
789 kind of *grahe*, the mourning dance of a section of Thovela people living
535 under one of the district heads, Maculana. It is more dignified, its move-
533 ments slower and more stately, and its drumming more subdued than in an
521 ordinary *grahe*. So lightly are the drums struck that the clear, silvery, varied tones of the reed pipes ring out like the peal of bells. Only two drums are used, and none but those who have lost at least one parent may perform, and it is begun in the dim light of the dawn before sunrise, when, after a short spell, it stops and is resumed later in the day. When some one person has greatly angered the queen, and drought is believed to be due to her displeasure on this account, the married women from all the villages in the royal neighbourhood assemble every morning after cooking to dance, singing, 'We are being killed on account of a bogyman in skins' (*re rulaiwa gi Madikadyana di selestgana*). Grandmothers nurse the babies and encourage the younger women with their trillings and dancing movements. The dust rises high and by sunset they are black with dirt and sweat; but next day and the next they come again, sometimes for as long as a week, till rain falls or continued drought makes it clear that some other cause is operating as well. The great hardship this dancing entails (for nursing mothers who perform have no time to feed their babies) is thought to melt the heart of the queen. Too much rain, as well as too little, is laid at the door of the queen. On one occasion, when it had rained almost incessantly for six weeks, the chief councillor said in the presence of the queen, 'Fat does not fill the pot' (*makhura a a ghale bijo*), meaning that there can be too much of a good thing—a hint to the queen to regulate things better.

643 There is no belief that is stronger in the tribe even to-day than that
789 in the power of the queen to transform the clouds. This does not, how-
521 ever, mean that they do not recognise the regularity of the seasons. People know that the month of February is generally the rainiest in the year; that the month *Morwamne* (October), when the Southern Cross sets just before bedtime, is the time when the first rains are approaching, and no one would *love* rain in winter any more than Europeans would organise a day of prayer for rain in that season. Yet if rain doesn'tnot come at its proper time or the season is generally bad, it may be said, 'The queen has not changed the hoeing season [i.e. the year] nicely' (*a ne fedula lodzwane ha ewine*); for if the cycle of seasons is considered inevitable, whether the new year is brought in propitiously or otherwise is in the hands of the queen.

643 Though renowned as the greatest rain-maker in South Africa, Mujaji
789 never works alone. She always has a rain-doctor, of whom there are many
711 in the tribe, to work with her. She chooses any renowned doctor, but may change him for another if people complain that the rain is bad—

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that is, insufficient or accompanied by too many thunderstorms. For these deficiencies, the queen herself is never blamed. The chief function of the doctor is to co-operate with the queen in some of the things she cannot do: he divines the causes of drought and discovers which forces are hindering the queen's power from taking effect; and, using his own medicines, he aids her in removing these causes and setting right what is wrong. The relation between rain-doctors and the queen is interesting. They are specialists in their art, which they have inherited from their fathers, and are even consulted independently by outside tribes. Khiobwa, the queen's own rain-doctor, is often called by Nwamniwa, the Shangana-Tonga chief, in time of drought, and Tshivolane, a Venda chief, comes, not to *Iowa* Mujaji, but to call Levea, a rain-doctor on a farm within her jurisdiction. Any payments they receive are their own. Yet these doctors themselves unreservedly state that in the last resort they are dependent on the queen: if she stays their hands, their powers will avail them nothing. It is said, 'If the chief holds the rain from falling, the doctor cannot cause rain' (*he khosi a ga tsaswa hula hove e khi na, Dagu e ga se swa*). A rain-doctor sent by the queen to make rain for a Venda chief who came to *Iowa* once in our presence urged the chief councillor, 'Tell the queen not to hold my hands.' In addition to the chief's right-hand man in rain activities, there are certain lesser rain-doctors whom she employs as her messengers when outside tribes *lowa* rain, for she would never dream of giving a suppliant medicine to take back with him. These messengers, though sent by the queen, are, strange as it seems to us, not given any medicine or charm to use in their rain-making. It is considered enough that they come from her, and their payment is the entertainment they receive at the foreign court.

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What the queen does to transform the clouds and the exact nature of the objects and medicines associated with her work are enshrouded in the greatest secrecy. It is doubtful whether any one other than the queen herself is in possession of this secret, for it is bound up with the title and power to succeed to the throne. The secrets are always imparted to the successor just prior to the death of the chief, and on occasion in Lovedu traditional history the would-be usurper, to whom the secrets had not been entrusted, has been deposed in favour of the 'chosen' heir. The queen's rain medicines are kept in rough earthen pots (*mabaga*) in a part of the village to which few have access. Some of their power is said to derive from a human skull in the rain-pot, and there are horns which are kept in a hut. When these rain-horns (*dinaga ja hula*) are placed on the ground, rain falls; when they are hung up, it clears up and is dry. The medicine in the rain-horns is said, when burnt, to produce smoke which rises up in the air to draw and to produce the clouds. The technique is not unlike *lukwawa*, luck medicine, which when burnt draws customers to traders and tents. Associated with the rain cult are the *gumma* drums the beating of which in former times was believed to bring rain, but the true *gumma* ceremonies have not been held for about thirty years. The rain cult to-day is largely confined to observances connected with the queen and her medicines or charms (*dikhagula*).

The chief ingredient of the rain-pots is the skin of the deceased chief

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of the lines of the father's mother and mother's father, such as is [782] mentioned by Stayt for the Venda. The complete absence of any awe 781 or reverence when the Bantu approach their ancestors is seen in the loud talk, jokes and laughter of all except the officiators themselves, and the discussions that frequently take place between the officiator and his neighbours in the middle of proceedings as to what he should do next and how he should do it. As is the case with Europeans, some families are more religious than others, and the very human tendency to forget the gods when things go well is well marked. Some people are always giving to the gods, telling them of all important happenings in the family, giving them a share of any beer that arrives at the kraal, asking their blessings; others forget to perform even the harvest thanksgiving and, unless illness or other trouble comes to show the anger of the ancestors, years may elapse without any religious ceremony taking place.

THE DOCTOR. No religious ceremony of any importance takes 791 place without the co-operation and advice of the doctor; indeed the 759 majority of offerings that are made are done on the advice of the doctor, who determines in every case all such details as which charms are to be used, whether any special relatives have to be present, what if any beads are to play a part. The great doctor is a figure of inter-tribal importance; he works not in one tribe but in many, a fact which largely accounts for the uniformity in the religious practices of different tribes, in contrast to the diversity found in any one tribe. All doctors are not, however, of the same importance. The herbalist, of whom there are hundreds, both male and female, has a limited sphere. He has inherited from his parents or some other relative, often, in the case of a woman, from her husband, one or more medicines or type of medical treatment such as the cutting of veins for blood-letting and a cure for epilepsy, and this he dispenses to all who come.

The doctor, *par excellence*, is the bone-thrower who combines with 791 his divining an extensive knowledge of medicine. There is nothing spectacular about the Sotho doctor; he wears no special or distinguishing dress; his methods are not directed to securing any dramatic effects. Unlike the doctor in Zulu-Xhosa society who is called to his profession by the spirits, undergoes a long period of *ukuthwasa* during

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which he acts in a strange manner, hears voices calling him and often runs amok, the Sotho bone-thrower learns his art in the same quiet manner as any other craft and completes his training not by any public ceremonial but by a private strengthening consisting of drinking water in which the bones have been cooked together with the blood of a cockerel make him wakeful and clever. There is no objection to people practising their profession long before they have completed their training, so that doctors range from the novice to the renowned diviner of long standing. The profession, though open to all, is usually inherited from a relative; but there is an increasing number of men to-day who become doctors for the money they make out of it and without undergoing any extensive training.

The doctor associated with the new cult of possession that has within the past thirty years spread over the Lowveld from the east resembles in his methods the Zulu-Xhosa doctor. He is possessed by spirits who talk through him and order him to throw bones and guide him in the use of medicines, and he uses all manner of wonderful tricks. But he undergoes no initiation other than that of all possessed people. The cult is confined largely to women who, during possession, speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thobolo or Kgalaka, but in reality a kind of gibberish. Possession takes the form of dancing to the accompaniment of tambourines, rattles and a special kind of drum beat, initiation into which is believed to cure the ailment which accompanied the first manifestations of the possessing spirit. These spirits are always those of relatives, usually on the mother's side, in contrast to the foreign spirits who are thought to possess Shangana-Tongs who have the same cult. Only a few of those who are possessed ever become doctors and then only when the possessing spirit was a doctor. They are the only class of Sotho doctor who receives inspiration direct from the spirits.

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A class of doctor that does not belong to the Sotho culture yet is indispensable to Lowveld Sotho society, who is seldom or never a Sotho yet has a place in Sotho life, is the *mofomo* or Shangana-Tongs smeller-out. He divines chiefly by the head without much use of bones, is able to find things that have been hidden, and is the final judge or smeller-out of witches.

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The doctor is not, in the minds of most people, clearly distinguished

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from the witch: it is generally argued that he who knows how to counteract wizards must himself be one, and Lowveld doctors are known to 'try' one another by sending lightning or familiars to their rivals to test their powers. Doctors have been openly accused of witchcraft. This confusion is, however, in no way detrimental to the practice of great doctors since not only is a doctor unlikely to work against a client when it is in the interest of his practice to please, but as there must always be a motive in evil-doing, witchcraft without intention being impossible, doctors harm only their enemies.

DAY AND NIGHT WIZARDS. The term *mulai*, wizard, is in the Lowveld equivalent to 'criminal' and implies evil intention, desire to kill others. In contrast to the Shangana-Tongs, there is thought to be no such thing as unintentional witchcraft. The wizard knows he is a wizard and harms others because he bears towards them feelings of envy or malice. The methods employed in witchcraft do not differ from those of good magic; the distinction between the two lies in the evil motives, injurious to social life, which lie behind witchcraft. Hence use of magic on one's possessions to hurt the fingers of whoever tries to steal them or sending animals to frighten a deserting wife into returning home is not witchcraft, though the technique is identical with that of the witch, because designed not to kill or injure seriously but to uphold the social order.

All tribes in the Lobedu culture area have a technical distinction between two classes of wizards—the night wizard (*mulai ya busiu*) and the day wizard (*mulai ya matsuru*). The night wizard, usually but not exclusively a woman, inherits his evil powers from his mother who teaches him the art in early infancy. His methods are direct: by going himself or sending familiars, various animals such as the stoat and *wildebeest* (human beings whom he has killed and enslaved), he works his harm. He works mostly at night, and there exists a sort of society of wizards who dance together at night and recognize one another by day. The day wizard, on the other hand, does not necessarily come of a stock of wizards. Any one who uses medicine to poison or kill is a day wizard. Sending lightning, using people's footprints or pointing at them to harm them, poisoning food and beer, these are the methods of the day wizard in whose work the 'spell',

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571 619 to the spirit of Mamujaji. These Matsui Crocodiles, though they can trace their ancestry to the Ngwato of Bechuanaland, are, firstly, a closely linked lineage in their district and, secondly, they are relatives-in-law of the royal group as well as of several other groups, including Maculana; but the other Crocodile groups never so much as obtrude themselves in their interests or consideration. There are the Crocodiles of Maunadala, who also answer *wyigoni*; yet they have a distinctive praise in which they refer to themselves as the 'outcasts of the rain' (*maroka ma matsi a hale*), because they are unable to make rain. They also are Crocodiles of Ubukpi, but they are quite distinctive. They have a long history; they lived on the furthermost southern boundaries of Ulolovedu relatively independent even for these parts; they held their national 'schools', as they still do to-day, with scant deference to the precedence that should be accorded to the queen; and among them are celebrated doctors of the *rubowa*, *syuli*, and *gomana* complex of institutions. They owe their solidarity not so much to their common ancestry as to their concentration in a district in which they have been able to rule themselves and to build up their own traditions; but it is the solidarity of the people of Maunadala, whatever their totem or ancestry, not that of the Crocodiles. And much the same applies to Khaḑa, the Elephants of Sefareni, also called *ḑou Khaḑa*. Their genetic relationship with the Leba, though, by way of derogation, affirmed by their neighbours, cannot be credited; there is no association, no intermarriage, no acknowledged relationship with the Leba. Their immediate alliance is to Khaḑa and the district; their ultimate alliance is with the royal nuclear group; with other Elephants they have nothing in common. And so we may go through all the constituent groups.

We have said enough to dispel the idea that the tie of real or supposed common ancestry in itself is of importance. In the larger groups the union that exists is due to other factors. The bonds within them do not even necessarily imply an informal feeling of preferential comradeship. The groups and sub-groups are not as such charged with specific functions, though, as we have seen, individuals in them may have special functions. For some time now one of the families of the Mudiga has been responsible for distributing the rain medicine (*mafuro*), but it would be a conception foreign to the Lovedu that the Mudiga only could be entrusted with this work. Not only Ramafalo, a Pig of Lundu, but many others of different groups are doctors of rain; and the same applies to other special positions.

571 ●777 619 It is not difficult to see how these things work. One may still observe the process of the introduction of a new cult in neighbouring tribes. Ramokwalo, a Crocodile, recently brought the *gomana* to the Tswale tribe, just as another Crocodile brought it to the Ubwa of Makhetho. By running the 'school', these foreigners pocket some of the fees and naturally try to safeguard their rights. Their children follow them and the special function or privilege appears to be attached to the group of Crocodiles. But in time the drums of the cult become the drums, not of the Ramokwalo, but of the chief; his descendants may still take a prominent part, not because they are Crocodiles, but because some of the secrets

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and medicines are in their hands, or rather in the hands, not of the group, but of the specific family. That family may be honoured by being given a district to rule, and, as marriage is patrilocal, the area gradually may contain a fair percentage of the lineage of Crocodiles of Rasakwalo. They may be lucky and retain the privilege, but there need be no necessary continued association between the *rarasekwalo* and the *gomana*. All depends on the circumstances.

No one thinks of a certain group as having certain functions, from which other groups are excluded. Yet only some district heads may, for instance, hold the great national 'schools'; it is rather the privilege of those heads whose people have traditionally held them. But this is not considered to be a privilege of the groups; it is the privilege of a lineage if that lineage happens also to be in charge of a district, for the organization is territorial. The Lovedu, indeed, use the word *khwa*, but, as applied to groups of people, it does not mean a segment of any kin group. One speaks of the *khwa* of Mavulana, for instance; but the term refers to the people that live in the district of Mavulana, not the *vavavulana* who are scattered over many districts. One may even speak of the *khwa* of Mulogwane, meaning a section of the capital which was in charge of Mulogwane. Equally, one hears of the groups, the Mudiga, the Mahasha, the Crocodiles of Dudupi and so on spoken of as the *dikhwa* of the tribe. The connotation of the term is quite indefinite; it is as likely to refer to a group or sub-group of people as to a district; the word is not commonly used and is considered to be foreign.

The patrilineal groups or sub-groups have as such no functions. They do not regulate marriage, nor do they imply co-operation and mutual helpfulness. They are not at the basis of solidarity in legal and political situations. It is not unilateral grouping which unites people in their common interests or common activities, except when we come to the smaller sub-divisions, in which close relationship is acknowledged. If there was any real cohesion within these, the groups or sub-groups would cut across both tribes and districts; they would constitute a challenge to the principle of local contiguity, and the culture would be as diverse as the groups are numerous. Lack of group cohesion helps the diffusion of the fundamental values and institutions. There is great diversity in details, but the broad pattern of the culture stands out boldly. Unilateral grouping of a smaller kind, such as the core of a lineage, is not disruptive, for, on the one hand, the lineages which give tone to the remarkably autonomous districts are intimately linked with the queen and the tribal structure and, on the other hand, they harmonize admirably with that local unit which is a great political unit. Co-residence tends to be limited to the immediately effective lineage, the regulative principle being patrilocal marriage. The sentiments developing about co-residence are strengthened by inheritance and succession in the male line; the core of the lineage has common property and other interests. The expansion of this core is promoted by the tendency to take a name which, according to the circumstances, is the name of a grandfather or a father. It is the lineage, or, rather, the operative segment of a lineage, that may be regarded as an important institution in the society.

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CHAPTER VIII

FERTILITY AND THE DRUM CULT

The setting of the sacred drums in a mystical cult—initiation into the secrets of the whistling ancestors—calendric observances connected with fecundity, masks, and mummeries.

794 BESIDES the girls' puberty ceremony and the circumcision of boys, there are other initiation ceremonies among the Lovedu. One is the *nyali* (often looked upon as the women's counterpart of circumcision because of its regimentation), contemporaneous with which is the boys' *vukuwa*, consisting largely of masked dancing; another is the *gomana* for men. These are closely interwoven with a fertility and rain cult which, because of its association with sacred drums, one may call the drum cult. Their educational object, never very strongly marked in Bantu initiation schools, pales into insignificance before the ceremonial. Indeed the *gomana* as a 'school' is only an aspect of *gomana* ceremonial as a whole, the primary function of which is to secure rain. The *nyali-vukuwa-gomana* complex is characterised by esoteric masks, mummeries, and mysteries and by a category of values which we may term the 'mystical philosophy' of the Lovedu. We shall give merely a brief picture of the complex, because, at the time of writing, the first *nyali-vukuwa* held for thirty-five years is still in progress and our ideas as to its true meaning are far from being settled.

794 796 The sacred drum cult has many ramifications. The *zwiqiqiani*, supposed to be ancestral spirits coming to earth to take part in *gomana* singing and drumming of the sacred drums, have become incorporated into other aspects of the culture. They appear in the bush near the village whenever a harvest offering has been made in the families of royal relatives; they come at the installation of a new district head and at the [783] death of close relatives of the queen. On these occasions they join in the singing and dancing of *lengu* songs, songs associated with the *nyali* of men and which, in addition to the above-mentioned occasions, are employed also when women dance for rain. The type of instrument by [774] means of which the *zwiqiqiani* whistle or blast out their songs and messages is used also by the Bird, the ruling spirit of the *nyali*.

534 778 Drums are much used in Lovedu life; they are played in the *guke* dancing to the accompaniment of reed pipes, they are important in all initiations except circumcision, they are beaten for days at the dancing of possessed people, and it is significant that the public recognition by the queen of a new district head at his installation consists in the handing over of a drumstick (*khisha khe gwa*). Drums are of two types: the long cylindrical drum played with the hands as it lies on its side and the *gwa*, a rounded drum with handles, played by means of a drumstick as it stands in an upright position. The sacred drums (*digomana*) of the tribe are of the *gwa* type, but, unlike ordinary *gwa* drums, are played by hand, not with a drumstick. They are four in number, each with its special

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name, and are kept at present in a village beside the bush in which the last three rulers lie buried. Their keeper is a descendant of Malegudu, eldest son of Mugodo, who fought with Mujaji for the throne. These drums are not to be seen by the public, nor are people, except inmates of the royal district, supposed to pass anywhere near there. In appearance and decoration they are no different from ordinary drums, but they are made in a special way and it is said that the maker 'will see them with his eyes but never hear them with his ears' (i.e. he will be put to death when his work is done). The largest is *phaqaqr*, which stands about 4 ft. high; next in size is *payya*; then comes *pohohare*; while the smallest and most important of all is *ragwedi*, to which is attributed powers even of locomotion, because in 1892, when Albasini set fire to the royal village, it was the only one of the *gomana* drums that was not burnt. While all four *gomana* drums are said to contain a human skull instead of the stone that one usually finds inside it, *ragwedi*, the smallest, has the facial skin of a human being placed (in strips, it is said) under the resonator of ox hide and has, smeared on the outside, the body dirt of the person (said to be always a chief councillor or other important person of royal blood) killed for its manufacture. This drum is thought to be closely associated with the welfare of the tribe. Should the chief have occasion to escape from enemies, she should take with her this drum, and it is said that, when the heir to the throne receives instruction in the use of rain medicines just prior to the death of the ruling chief, she must be sitting upon it. In some of the neighbouring tribes the sacred drums are pierced on the death of the chief.

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The care of these sacred drums, involving periodic smearing with fat and ochre to keep out weevils and moths, renewal of the skin resonators, building and repair of the hut in which they are kept, is the work of a special section of people, those of Razothata, whose totem is *ghwe* of Dulebye. Dulebye is in Phalaborwa, where this drum cult is much stronger than among the Lovedu. These Razothata are also responsible for closing the *ryali* initiation at the capital when they come at its end with their weird-costumed dancing performers, the *magagabye*. Thus once again the *gomana* and the *ryali*-*vubowa* are linked into a common complex. The sacred drums, played only on special ceremonial occasions and by men, not women, who are usually responsible for drumming, are looked upon as gods (*madimo*). The praise of *phaqaqr*, the largest, is 'Leg of *phaqaqr* of Mubale [the old chief]; if it is not a god we can throw it away rattling to the pool' (*Gotsi la phaqaqr a Mubale ha ngo ro a ro madimo ro go laqa ro khaqolosa ro isa madiwani*). T'ao Thawina and Nareni, tribes to the south of the Lovedu, offer to the sacred drums the first-fruits, and everywhere their beating is associated with rain and the agricultural year. Not only are the drums gods, but their sound is thought to be very pleasing to the *masiqiqiwi*, those ancestral spirits who, when the drums are sounded, come and sing and dance. The knowledge that their part is played by initiated men does not appear to detract from their importance in the eyes of those who are in the secret. The instrument used consisted in the old days of the tibia of a human being with a feather inserted (and there is reason to believe that some of these are still extant) but to-day

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534 they use mostly two pieces of wood slightly concave on the inside in which
778 a piece of sinew or reed is temporarily inserted. The language being
794 tone-bound, messages and songs can be understood when whistled.
769 Not all ancestral spirits, but only those of the Lovedu proper and of some of the important groups, such as the Khaba and Nareni, are thought to be able to visit the earth as *midjiwi*.

794 The most important feature of the drum cult was the beating of the
769 sacred drums in an enclosure near the village, usually in the afternoon
782 and evening on six successive days twice every year: in the spring just before the sowing and in winter after the harvest thanksgiving. The spring drumming was preceded by propitiation of the royal ancestors by means of a libation on their graves in Deja Forest, where the earlier chiefs lie buried. There was a special procession which no one was to see on pain of death, the Mulodzi River had to be crossed at a special spot called *Khijubo-nakolo* (washing place of great people) and it is maintained by some that a black ox was also slaughtered. The district head at Deja, who was responsible for clearing a way to the graves, had to plant near the royal graves a little of every seed cultivated. The people would then see, it is said, which grew best and would plant much of that. The *gwamu*, the beating of the sacred drums, 'was the chief thing that had the power of asking rain from the ancestors'. The sounding of the drums at harvest-time was a thanksgiving. The first harvest *gwamu* after the circumcision took the form of an initiation, in which the neophytes were introduced into the drum ritual and the secret of *midjiwi*, and received cuts on their faces as a sign that they had passed through it.

794 Though the sacred drums are still kept and the Raothaga people are
782 still called to repair the hut in which they are placed, the regular beating of *gwamu* drums has fallen into disuse. The last *gwamu* initiation held officially by the queen in the tribe was in 1892, just before the accession of the present queen. It is difficult to account for this lapse when among neighbouring tribes the cult is still fully carried out. Some say the reason lies in the ritual murders that are associated with the drums, but since it is an accepted principle that a sheep may satisfactorily take the place of a human being and, moreover, this difficulty must somehow have been overcome in other tribes, this reason does not appear good enough. Possibly the cult was introduced from the south and had not become sufficiently assimilated or taken deep enough root to survive the lethargy induced by European contact. Perhaps the rain-making powers of the queen herself made it largely unnecessary. It is not impossible that it will suddenly spring back to life, as did the *vyali* in 1938-9 after a lapse of over thirty years.

794 Though the queen herself now holds no *gwamu*, the institution is not
dead. Elements such as *midjiwi* have taken permanent root and the queen has allowed a stranger, Ramkwebu, a rain doctor of the *Lemba* totem who came to live on European-owned land under her jurisdiction, to hold a *gwamu* with, of course, his own drums, and in 1949, when he came to ask that boys from the royal village should be allowed to attend the initiation, she gave her consent. He holds one *gwamu* a year, receiving

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IX. MASKED DANCERS OF RAGOTHATA

[facing p 128]

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special permission from the queen on each occasion, and initiates circumcised and uncircumcised alike. 794

Gomane initiation to-day as held by Rasekwale does not differ from the ceremonial in the queen's own *gomane* of old, though it is regarded as a 'business', a source of revenue to Rasekwale, without the great power of the old Maulwi ceremony. Maduane relates his experiences in 1929. He and about twenty others from the royal village, some of them over forty years of age because there had been no initiation for so long, set out for the scene of the initiation some twelve miles away in the charge of some men (*madabi* or shepherds) who had been through the *gomane* initiation. They walked at a very fast pace, almost running, because they 'were anxious to be initiated'. As members of the royal village, they did not, like the others, pay 5s. entrance fee, but on arrival in the evening were offered two huts to sleep in and given a meal. At sunrise next morning, when the *gomane* drums began to sound in the enclosure kept permanently for *gomane* purposes, the initiates gathered in the courtyard to be ceremonially beaten. This beating with sticks that have been medicated is said to *thuse* (help) the neophytes just as the *ku thuse* ceremony of a baby on the day it is first taken out of the hut strengthens it to withstand evil influences of the outside world. This beating is thus conceived to give health to the neophyte. The head of the school (Rasekwale) himself stood at the gate holding two canes, a bent one in the left hand, a straight one in the right. As each boy passed with bent head and bare back, Rasekwale, while pretending to beat with the left hand, really beat on the back with his right. The boys then put on the shirts they had had to doff for the beating and were conducted, filled with fearful anticipation, to the lodge by shepherds, who surrounded them and told them to look straight ahead.

On their arrival in the enclosure, they were made to kneel in two rows facing each other with bent heads for the operation. First some one blowing a spirit whistle brushed a handful of *mukolowi* grass (*Rhynchelytrum repens*) over their heads, then two operators, one for each row, came with awl and knife. Four semicircular cuts are made on either cheek from mouth to cheekbone, the awl being used for lifting up the flesh. The process is very painful, but no importance is attached to manliness and the drumming and whistling drown all cries. Immediately after the operation, a piece of cloth (of any colour), bought by each boy for 6d. at the store, is put over the head, with loose ends hanging over the face and tucked in at the back under the shirt. This cloth must be worn when the initiates walk about, so that the cuts are not seen by the uninitiated, who are told that the boys are bitten by the *gwas*. To Maduane it came as a great surprise to find that the crying of the spirits was caused by whistles. After the operation the men whistled the song, 'Whoever reveals a *gwas* brings about his own death or that of his father or mother', which was interpreted for the benefit of those who found it difficult to follow the whistling. They set out for home again almost immediately after the operation, for the formulae of the *gomane* are taught them at home. 794 304

The journey home was slow. The initiates, accompanied by five 794

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779 shepherds, walked, whistling as they went and holding sticks they had cut. Soon they met a man and were ordered by the shepherds to whistle '*mulao wa go*' (my law). The stranger in reply recited a *gomono* law for them. A little further on they came upon three women and a man, all of whom fled on their approach, for, should they meet any one unable to give them a law, he is beaten unmercifully. The next initiated man they met asked the initiates to give him a law after he had recited one and, when they could not, he demanded 'his leg', i.e. each boy was to sit down holding up the left leg to be seized and beaten. As, however, they had not yet had an opportunity of learning any formulae, their shepherds procured exemption for them by giving the man snuff instead. That night they asked for food at a village, for they had had nothing all day, but the man insisted on their sleeping there and killed a goat in their honour. They set out again long before dawn so as not to be seen by women.

At home an enclosure of branches was made for them very near the village where they had to spend their time for the next few weeks. Here their food was brought from home by the shepherds, but they slept in the village in huts set aside for this purpose, coming in late at night and leaving again before dawn when women began to stamp. There were no food regulations. By day the smallest boys went out to herd goats, but the old initiates remained in the lodge, going out every afternoon either to fetch wood, each one log only, for the evening fires, or sometimes to hunt birds. When outside the lodge, they have to whistle as a warning to the uninitiated not to approach too near. They may not talk to each other except when out of sight. During this time many formulae, most of which are quite meaningless to the initiates as well as to older people, are taught by the shepherds, who beat them when they are unable to remember them; but there are no songs. The *lifes* are passwords which indicate that you have been initiated. On the day after their arrival home, powdered medicine was given the initiates to put in their wounds, but for the rest one day was much like another. By the fifth week, when they were all thoroughly bored and tired, the order was given that they must go and wash at a place near Maulwi called *sajabo-manoba* (where the *gomono* initiates wash). While they washed, the *masiajoni* were crying in the bush and the big sacred drum at Maulwi was beaten a few times. Then they went home where, on kneeling to greet, each one received 1s. from his parents (*ka nomo*). The lodge is merely broken down and the cloths taken home to be used. The *gomono* initiation is an initiation into a cult rather than a 'school', for, beside the formulae, the boys receive no instruction beyond the warning not to divulge what they have seen in the *gomono* lodge. The main purpose of their seclusion is to enable their wounds to heal before they can take part in ordinary life.

881 The *nyali*, generally looked upon as an initiation for girls, is to a great extent also the concern of old and mature men, who from a certain stage take part in it as fully as, if not more so than, the older women. Further, in many districts, though not at the royal village where they do not have *nalomo* (their boys undergoing a kind of attenuated form of this initiation for a few days only at Maunedale's), the *nalomo* for boys is held simultaneously

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the *nyali* courtyard by their sisters. They are taught a few 'laws' or 881
formulae associated with the *vukwere*, but their main activities are 272
learning to make the elaborately woven costumes and later to dance in 536
the *nyali* courtyard. Towards the end of the initiation they spend most of their time going about to dance, accepting invitations from other district heads and paying their respects at the royal village. They do beautiful movements to the drumming of their own *nyali* girls. Only two dance at a time and, while they dance, attendants (*madali*) stand near by supervising. The masked boys may whistle out the tune to which they wish to dance or may beg snuff by means of whistling (for this is their only means of conversation during their initiation). When they dance well, women and girls come to give them gifts of leg- or arm-rings. The *vukwere* is a kind of finishing school, an initiation into the secret of [776]
what the Bird is and how the costumes are made. It is almost as though this is an esoteric art, the preservation of which has become the main function of the *vukwere*. A person who enters the *vukwere* enclosure may be required to display his skill at weaving and in 1939 a man who was unable to weave (and thus showed himself to be uninitiated) was heavily fined. The fact that there is no *vukwere* held at the royal kraal, whose boys used in the old days to go for this initiation to Khafa or to the *Tsonwi*, a section of the Khafa, suggests that the institution is a more recent adoption than the *nyali*.

It is not easy for a European to appreciate the meaning and value of 881
such institutions as *nyali* and *vukwere*. Most of their features cannot be explained by the Lovedu themselves. They are the result of a long, historical development which, in the absence of all evidence, may never be unravelled. The *nyali* has many aspects. One of the most important is that of a crossing or initiation similar to circumcision. The initiates are often called *vowali* (crossers) and initiation may be referred to as 'to cross over' (*ku wela*). It is conceived as a period of hardship, a crossing for which medical treatment and ancestral blessings are essential. Respect for those older than oneself is emphasized: the initiates must be humble; but older people, especially the old men who remain in the Bird's enclosure, live royally on the beer and delicacies brought daily by initiates. There is emphasis, too, on the importance of the rank of district heads and chief, and the learning of praises of all the areas, followed towards the end of the initiation by inter-district visits, is an important feature.

Intermingled with and overshadowing the *nyali* as an initiation is the 799
nyali as a fertility and rain cult, related to the *gwanse* drum cult and 784
serving the same purpose. The *nyali* lasts a year, a full agricultural cycle, 778
and some of its stages are associated with the seasons: the typical *nyali* dress of the girls cannot be plaited till the grass has grown long; the Bird arrives only when there is plenty of food. The singing of *nyali* songs is believed to bring rain. Even before the rains of the summer of 1938-9 had fallen, it was said in Ubhombu that the year would be one of plenty on account of the *nyali*. These expectations were more than realized, for not only was the summer rainy, but even the winter, which is normally dry, was exceptionally wet. Stress is laid in the *nyali* on grass and vegetation: the girls wear plaited headdresses of grass which are said by

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784 783 778 some to render them fertile; the *digwa* are almost all made of grasses, reeds, or leaves; the remarkable *nabowa* costumes are made of various special kinds of grass; and on one of the most important excursions made by the *nyali* girls, called *mangiwi* (at the locusts), they are made to collect the bark of various kinds of trees. The *nyali* as a fertility rite is most clearly seen in the sexual intercourse at the order of the Bird which used to be indulged in towards the end of the initiation on the approach of spring. The true meaning of the Bird is difficult to discover, though it is significant that it is associated with moonlight, comes from a pool, and declares on its departure that it will leave mists behind it. In one praise song of the Bird it appears to be referred to as *vuqiqia*, the ancestral spirits: 'I have heard you, Bird of cure and Rabuda of Muhale. The father of giving has gone, O *vuqiqia*. There remain only things for which one must pay' (*Gi hu phalaphalo nowi yowa le vulilahafa o Muhale vuhafa hhi ile, vuqiqia, hu sadi hha mathego fela*). This Bird, *gowa* of the old men, is related to the *gomowa* cult, using the same method of whistling through an instrument.

881 714 771 The Lovedu appear to have borrowed *nyali* and *nabowa* and the *gomowa* drum cult from neighbours. Some elements, like *mangiwi*, have become firmly embedded in a number of institutions; others, like *nabowa*, are looked upon more as entertaining opportunances without any very serious meaning beyond that of giving pleasure. But the sacred drum cult clashes to some extent with the rain cult of the queen and there is little doubt that to this fact one must partly attribute the failure to beat *gomowa* drums in recent years.

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immediate and usually not consciously phrased, yet in the total complex of the culture all things are interconnected, albeit in ways that are not easy to see clearly. The gods help good and bad men alike, they send illness whether one is careful or neglectful of the observances due to them, and the after-life is the same for all. But we should be careful not to deduce too much from this. The position of a sister and her privileges are sanctioned by the gods, as is also the respect due to old people. In general the gods are not upholders of custom, yet on one occasion in 1937 two *sangqiowi* cried all day in the bush at Maulwi because some women had broken the taboo against cutting wood there. The chief concern of the gods appears to be to look after their own interests. They complain when they dislike the manner of their burial, but they are undisturbed when twins are not buried in wet soil, even though this has a disastrous effect on the whole country. If they were disturbed about custom in general, instead of things directly affecting them, they would complain of many disturbing changes in these days of culture contact; instead, one only finds that possessing spirits dislike European things and that at offerings European utensils are generally not used.

Another outstanding characteristic is the almost entire absence of any speculative element. The Lovedu are not concerned with such things as the life hereafter and the mode of life of the gods; theirs is essentially a practical religion in which rites are of far greater importance than attitude of mind, action than belief. Its rites are directed to practical ends, such as recovery from illness and the procuring of rain. In vain does one inquire into the meaning or reason of a rite, for the reply always is, 'The bones tell us to do these things,' and the practical end is phrased as determined by the bones. There are considerable differences from one family to another in the conduct of religious rites and the nature of shrines and, since religion is primarily a family concern, few people know what their neighbours do. Not uncommonly one finds a practice said to be impossible by some people accepted as normal by their neighbours.

Lovedu religion is not distinct from magic. The very terminology of the two is identical: *thagula* is a shrine, dedicated animal, or a sacred object once in the possession of the ancestors, but it is also any charm of bone or herbs concocted by a doctor. *Diphaba* are used in shrines or offerings to make the ancestors forget, as well as to ward off witches from the village. *Hu rivalela* means both to pray and to utter a spell. *Hu phase* is used both to approach the gods and with medicines when sending back disease to a witch; one may also *phase* on the charms in the village gate on the arrival of beer in order that more may come to the village. In a sacrifice for rain, the magical rites are of as great importance as the purely religious; and *hu phase* in case of illness is thought to have a compelling force. It cannot fail; if it does, there must be some other cause, for an ancestor can never refuse to be placated by the *phase* rite.

The merging of religion with magic and medicine is everywhere evident, but nowhere is it more prominent than in the cult of possession. This cult is not indigenous; it came with the Thonga and, since its first reception some thirty years ago, has gained considerable popularity.

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771 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-
794 Tongs and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion.
177 Among Shangana-Tongs, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult
753 is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body' and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolatela was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthwasa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature.
[828] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwashe in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudumma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), or *muntchebe* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit
755 wishing to manifest itself, a *lebpo* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known in the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the
794 spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.

755 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to
536 enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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possessed, they often say they have come to 'play' with the others and 774
they may even cause slight ill-health on this account. Hence quite often 755
when a possessed person does not feel well, he will ask for the drums, 535
saying he must dance. *Lelopo* dancing consists of fast movements of the foot to the accompaniment of drums or tambourines and rattles. At a seance of *malopo à zwiliwe*, those who speak *Thwala*, the large hemispherical *gwa* drum is used in addition to the conical drums. All are, however, beaten with the hands, the elbows being placed on the drumskin in a peculiar manner. *Malopo*, who speak Sotho or Lovedu, use only the conical drums in the ordinary manner.

If the dance has a great fascination—after a seance one finds even small children practising the steps—the dress worn by the possessed adds to the attraction. Cloths of different colours are worn round the waist [292] and tied at the back; round the legs are usually leggings of the outer shell of the *dipani* (*Ourabe spinosa*) fruit filled with pebbles to rattle as one dances; on the head is a cap of fur or brightly coloured wool or a head-gear of black feathers, while very often a spear, battle-axe, or stick is brandished in the hand. These are the *zwiphamo* of the spirit, worn only during possession. The nature of the dress of each possessed person has been indicated by the spirit itself, and people do their best to comply, lest the possessed person dies. Once at a seance the spirit of a woman asked that a beast or, failing that, a goat be 'placed' for him. 'We'll do our best,' the relatives replied, 'but remember we are poor and it is a matter that will take time.' The spirit, angry at this unwillingness, retorted, 'If you don't comply, I'll take away my person [in whom I manifest myself] and go and sleep with her. Tell Makhade (elder brother of the possessed who learnt the profession of doctor from the spirit) I'll take away my profession from him.' 'We'll do our best,' urged the relatives, 'but don't go away in anger.' In spite of this power, possessing spirits have nevertheless to take cognizance of public opinion and the desires of royalty. The spirit of the wife of a royal relative asked for a man's loin-cloth, which women possessed by male spirits occasionally wear, but he refused to allow it on the grounds that for a woman to wear man's attire is unbecoming. An old woman therefore addressed the spirit, saying, 'People here don't like it,' and the spirit was satisfied.

A short description of an institution which contains all the elements 794
of an ordinary seance must suffice to illustrate some of the main features 795
of the cult. When the doctor, called to conduct the initiation, has arrived 535
with his or her attendants, drums are fetched from the district head, and 786
other disciples of the doctor invited to be present. Nothing can, however, be done before the spirit of the doctor descends upon her. To allow this, they retire to a hut and lie down as if to sleep, while an old woman puts down some pinches of snuff on the ground and calls upon the spirits to come. In a few minutes the doctor groans and quivers and the spirit signifies its arrival by a song of greeting. It calls for its *lelopo* clothes and the doctor is dressed. Soon the spirits of her attendants also arrive and treatment, which consists in making the novitiate dance, is begun.

When Betty was being initiated, we arrived early one Saturday evening, attracted by the noise, to find a picturesque scene. It was winter and

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794 755 535 786 five little fires had been lit in the vicinity of the courtyard of Betty's hut. In the centre were three women dancing to the music of drums and rattles. We sat down by the nearest fire and found ourselves with a group of old women. For people had arranged themselves, naturally as in their manner, in age-groups round the various fires; young married women at one, small boys at another, girls above the age of puberty at a third. The dust rose high; what had sounded pleasant enough at a distance became, as one sat in its midst, an almost unbearable din; while in the flickering and uncertain light of the fires the dancing took on a frenzied effect that lent to the scene a wildness and weirdness seldom met with except in travellers' tales of darkest Africa. Never again in our frequent attendances at *malipo* dancing did we recapture that first sense of weirdness so largely due to its novelty and our own ignorance. That night the dancing stopped at 1.30 a.m. but by dawn it had begun again, continuing with intervals of rest during the whole of Sunday and Sunday night. Betty danced most of the time; if she rested too long, the women urged her on, saying, 'How do you expect the spirit to come out if you don't dance?' All this time she was being treated with medicines: black powder mixed with butter fat was smeared on her legs, white froth of medicine churned with a porridge stirrer was applied on various parts of the body, some being administered also internally, and infusions were given her to drink. No food was eaten either by Betty or by the women whose spirits were upon them; the very sight of porridge makes some *malipo* vomit and the only sustenance allowed while dancing is beer, if there happens to be any.

Late on Sunday afternoon they called her mother's brother to try to induce the spirit to manifest itself, for doctors had indicated that the troubling spirit was on the mother's side. Taking a calabash of water in his hand, the mother's brother knelt near the dancing girl and spat mouthfuls of water out on the ground, saying, 'Come out, spirit, that this person also may be well. She remains ailing, and when we go to doctors they tell us it is a spirit. Come outside that this person can be well [cool].' Sometimes, instead of *lu phase* with water, mixed grains of all kinds are thrown over the dancer and the words used are, 'We are giving you everything to come.' It may even be that something, which can be overcome only by magical means, is holding back the spirit, as when, on one occasion, the spirit was said to be bewildered at the cross-roads, not knowing which to take. All the roads except that leading into the village were magically 'barred' and the spirit, thus guided, came straight in and manifested itself. Difficult as it is for a spirit to come on the first occasion, once initiation has taken place, it becomes a simple matter. To make a spirit manifest itself, a person has only to dance in the manner of the cult or to lie down while some one calls on it to come. The spirit may also come of its own accord at any time without being induced.

794 755 Early on the Monday morning Betty, showing signs of exhaustion, began to stagger in her dancing, and people knew the spirit must be near. Her movements became more frenzied, she put up her hands to her head and dragged her feet uncertainly, and then fell to the ground. Several women who had been expecting this, caught and carried her, still quivering and groaning, into the hut. 'Good day, grandparent. Come nicely,

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grandparent,' they kept saying. After a few moments Betty began a song, 794
one usually sung on the arrival of a spirit, giving the name of the spirit 755
upon her—namely, Mamaile, her mother's mother. These people sang the refrain to the accompaniment of rattles. Staggerings and fallings, groanings or growlings are always signs of an approaching spirit; sometimes the possessed person runs away for a short distance. A goat was now brought into the hut. Its body was smeared with medicine, some was poured down its throat and, after the patient had breathed hard into its mouth, it was taken out and killed. Under supervision of the doctor, small pieces were cut from all parts and placed in a bowl, while the stomach contents and portion of the liver were set aside to be used in curing the patient. The experts say that the sickness from which the ancestor suffered before its death and which presumably causes the patient to suffer, goes into the goat. Before proceeding further, the doctor took the bowl of meat to the hut entrance, where, after setting aside half of it, she placed it with a little snuff on the ground, praying to her spirit. Later this meat was roasted and eaten by small boys. The stomach contents were smeared on various parts of the body of the patient; the small pieces of meat were roasted, mixed with a black powder, and administered on the end of a stick to all four of the possessed people present.

The doctor now busied herself charring chips of various kinds of bark in a basin in which some of the goat's liver had also been put. With this the patient was smoked three times under a blanket till she coughed and spluttered. This took a considerable time, during which the other possessed women sang songs in turn. Mabelowa, who is possessed by a man, called for her pipe in which some hemp was put and evinced great astonishment when her fellow wife, her attendant when she is possessed, struck a match to light it. This was a European innovation unknown in the days of her spirit. Similarly, when a potato was brought, all the possessed women examined it with wonder, asking each other whether it was edible. While the meat of the goat was being cooked with medicine in three pots for three persons, the possessed women sat outside on a mat, an honour accorded to their spirits. They sat, silent and dignified, saying nothing. A fowl was killed in order that its leg might afford a medicine bag for the patient and the chips of bark used in smoking were ground to a powder to be used by the patient when eating of the first-fruits. It might be mentioned that the doctor carried home with her the hind leg, shoulder, and breast of the goat as her share, while the other meat was regarded as a reward to the crowd for its share in dancing and singing.

For some time people sat and talked to their friends while the doctor 794
worked with her medicines and the possessed women sat quietly in the 755
shade. Suddenly we became aware of a kind of pantomime in which the 595
initiate, directed in song by the doctor, was made to play-act all the work of women. She went to fetch water and wood about 20 yards from home, swept the courtyard, imitated hoeing, the stamping and winnowing of mealies, cooking and dishing up, finally serving food in the correct manner to the small boy whose mother she had married (Betty had married her father's sister). Last of all she was taken to the drums and

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794 shown how to dance in possessed fashion, all, it was said, lest when her
755 spirit left her she should be lazy and not know how to work. Betty
535 walked as in a dream with a wooden, expressionless look and at times appeared so exhausted that we feared she would not be able to lift the stamper when imitating stamping. This mime-show is not performed in all initiations, nor is a goat always killed, for the methods of doctors differ considerably and the patient's relatives may have no goat. Often the patient is set to dance and treated with medicines till she falls down with the spirit upon her.

794 It was now three o'clock in the afternoon, and, the initiation being
755 complete, the doctor thought it time that the spirits departed. She
535 ushered the possessed into the hut, where they all sat down, offered them each a pinch of snuff, took a rattle and began her farewell song, the whole company (for the hut had filled with spectators) joining in the refrain. Next the initiate sang her farewell song, mentioning what she wanted as her accessories—several white cloths, a woollen cap, and a spear to hold when dancing. When all had finished singing, they took off their *emphanso* (clothes), which their attendants (for each possessed person has some one to help him when his spirit appears) put into bundles to take away, and lay down to sleep. After three minutes the doctor grunted and groaned as departing spirits are apt to do, sat up and began dressing in everyday clothes. The others followed her example and went outside. The patient, but a short while before so exhausted, came smiling out of the hut and scolded the people for letting her oversleep in this shocking manner (appearing to have no knowledge of her initiation). Then all washed their faces and urinated in the hedge, as women do on rising in the mornings.

794 Initiation into the cult is said to make the person well again, and all
755 into whose history one inquirer claim to have been cured. Betty herself
535 had no further trouble. If, however, they become ill again, it may be a second spirit, for many people have three or four. There is, however, no further initiation; the second spirit is merely called upon to manifest itself. A second or third spirit may take possession without causing any illness, merely announcing its arrival and making known its wants when the person is possessed. After initiation the spirit manifests itself when it has some complaint or desire, when the person has broken some taboo, or when specially induced by dancing or prayer. A possessed person has to keep certain taboos: he may never eat such firstfruits as pumpkin leaves or green mealies, marula fruits or beer made of the newly-harvested corn without medicine given him at his initiation and renewable every year or every two years; any new thing undertaken, as when a possessed woman becomes pregnant, must be reported to the spirit. Some *malipo* may not be beaten with a green stick, lest the spirit descend upon them; others may not touch European medicine. Many of them run away from Europeans even when not actually possessed, and one man had to keep his books securely locked in a suit-case lest his wife should see them and become troubled by her spirit. The very mention of the word *lalipo* in the presence of some may cause the spirit to come. Observances are not the same for all and taboos to be observed depend largely on the doctor who

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does the initiation. There are no special burial rites associated with the cult. There is, however, a vague belief that injury to a snake in the village may in some cases harm a possessed person, an interesting belief in view of the fact that there is so little trace in Lovedu religion of the Zulu idea that ancestral spirits manifest themselves in snakes.

There is a special relationship between a possessed person and the doctor who initiated him: every year when the medicine needs renewal, beer or *marula* cider is prepared, the doctor, who comes with a number of disciples and attendants, is called and there is a great dance of the possessed often lasting several days. This is 'dancing for medicine' (*ba eiela tshidi*). Some possessed people have to be specially doctored before drinking the first *marula* cider and the *marula* season is always a time of *lelapo* gatherings; others are required to contribute corn at harvest time for a large *lelapo* dance at the home of the doctor. These gatherings, at which a goat may be slaughtered in addition to the cider provided, add greatly to the prestige of the doctor. There is sometimes considerable jealousy between *malapo* doctors, who, with those initiated by them, may form rival schools. Some doctors refuse to allow their followers to dance with those initiated by other doctors without special permission. At one seance, at which there had been some unpleasantness, the doctor smeared some powder into incisions on the neck, tongue, crown, and sides of the heads of her disciples. Then, taking some medicated water in her mouth, she squirted (*ba phasa*), saying, 'I "place" you. Don't you dance any more. I don't like dancing every day without my special permission. Any *lelapo* who dances where you are dancing will break her leg or be badly hurt.' The remainder of the water was given them to drink.

An interesting feature of the cult of possession is that many people when the spirit is upon them speak in a foreign tongue, said to be Thovolo or Kharanga. Investigation into this matter, however, shows that this is not so startling a phenomenon as it might appear. When possessed, a person for the most part sits silent unless he is a doctor. If he speaks at all, this is in monosyllables, for all his wants and messages are conveyed in song. *Lelapo* songs are stereotyped and known to many because the uninitiated have to join in the refrain when rattling the accompaniment. In these songs there is usually a number of foreign words, though many consist purely of meaningless sounds, such as '*We le mor ene o mor mor mana mar*'. Often peculiarities in the pronunciation of vowels are interpreted as Thovolo. When the refrain begun (*ba mana*) by the possessed person has been taken up by the chorus, he continues with the song or interpolates his own words, usually Sotho with a few foreign words interspersed, till he wishes to stop. In this way he makes known his wishes. It quite frequently happens that no one understands the gibberish of the possessed person, and doctors generally have an attendant who interprets what they wish to convey. There are, however, numerous well-known words in general use by people when their spirit is upon them—for instance, *mafoto* or *manoto* for *lefola* (snuff), *bula* or *mula* for *mantsi* (water), *na ga mbaya* for *na ga ntiya* (they may beat me), *hayu* for *hae* (home). But many possessed people speak pure Sotho, and it is recognised that a newly initiated person may not

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know Thowlo. The Lovedu themselves are not critical, and the usual reply when one expresses any doubt about the genuineness of the possessed or the possibility of fraud is, 'If they were not really possessed how could they speak a strange tongue?'

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It is not our purpose to discuss the psychology of possession among the Lovedu. We should, however, point out that it is in no way associated with abnormalities of character or with crises in the life of the individual. Its symptoms are not of a nervous nature, such as indicate abnormals among Nguni; there are, except when the spirit descends upon them, no twitchings; uncontrollable hiccups are unknown; members of the cult are not hysterical or mentally unbalanced nor can they be distinguished in their daily activities from others. There is no change in the personality of the individual when his spirit is upon him, although some of them sing in a low voice when possessed by a man and others dance in a peculiar way. Nor is there any difference to be seen between one possessing spirit and another in the same individual: when his second spirit comes upon a possessed person, it often continues the conversation where the first spirit left off, and the only indication of its arrival may be its own announcement in a song or perhaps gulping movements and a gentle falling back of the patient. Finally, of interest psychologically was the farewell dance of all *malopi* just before the *nyali* initiation for girls in September, 1938. Their songs and dances were taboo during the period of the 'school' as they were not allowed to compete with those of the *nyali* which had not yet ended in October, 1939. We must not conclude from this or from the fact that Christians do not become *malopi* that possession is imposture. There are wide avenues for fraud, but most *malopi* are genuine victims of mass-suggestion. The cult, though open to men, is confined largely to women. It is not associated with gifts of prophecy or the finding of lost objects, and there are no revelations concerning the Beyond.

The bearing of the possessed when not dancing is quiet and dignified and detached in contrast to the diabolical manifestations of the possessed in Europe in the Middle Ages. It appears to be neither a paranoic nor a compensatory phenomenon. We dare not relate trance experience with neuroses or psychoses, for we need to orientate ourselves, not from our own, but from a wider relativistic psychology or psychopathology; the mental reflects the cultural configuration and the disposition of drives in the mind must be viewed relatively to the disposition of forces in the culture. The whole cult among the Lovedu is remarkably stereotyped; behaviour under the influence of the spirit, the songs, the things demanded by spirits, conform to a type. Even the possessing spirits themselves are stereotyped, being almost always grandparents.

It is our impression that if any one in the least degree suggestible were made to dance without sustenance for several days in the noise and excitement of seances, he would be liable to fall down exhausted and respond in the traditional manner to the attentions of the women. But not all initiations are successful. In one case witnessed by us, the young woman quite obviously did not want to become possessed: she danced in a half-hearted manner and, under the pretext of tending her baby, kept

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away as much as possible from the doctor. In another, the patient began to stagger towards the end of the second day, but, though every one expected the spirit to arrive, nothing happened and so the doctor left. The reason for failure in this case may have been (but we are not sure) the loud complaints of her brother that no one in the family had ever been possessed before.

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CHAPTER XV

THE RAIN CULT

The rain-queen in her sphere of safeguarding the seasons—technique of transforming the clouds—evils that cause 'heat' and act as impediments to rain—'cooling' rites counteracting the 'heat' of the earth.

At the centre of the agricultural cycle, rain is the focus of many human interests; as the elixir of life, it is one of the ultimate bases of man's sense of security; and as a manifestation of celestial grace, it is the supreme justification of the divine right of the queen to rule. The queen is primarily not a ruler, but a rain-maker, and men rely for their security, not on regimentation, armies, and organization, but on the queen's power to make rain for the tribe and to withhold rain from its enemies. All ultimate reliances are based upon the magico-religious world, and rain-making and its cult are an important part of that world. The rain cult is not composed of a few magical passes made by the queen; it is a whole complex of institutions with ramifications through many aspects of tribal life. The cult is not confined to measures taken to secure rain in times of drought; its observances must be kept at all times and a good year involves as much care on the part of the queen as a bad one.

The chief actor in the rain cult is the queen. During life, she is not merely the Transformer of the Clouds, but she is regarded as the changer of the seasons and guarantor of their cyclic regularity; when she dies, the seasons are out of joint and drought is inevitable. Her very emotions affect the rain: if she is dissatisfied, angry, or sad, she cannot work well, and in 1934-5, when the first rains did not come till December, the drought was attributed to her being upset at her daughter's liaison with a commoner. Her rain-making is not confined to dramatic ceremonies in time of severe drought; it is conceived of as continuous care throughout the summer. Furthermore, the Lovedu do not attribute every fall of rain to some special activity or volition on the part of their queen, but rather believe that the queen exercises some general control or care which ensures a good season.

Such being the powers of the queen, she is the person to be approached when there is no rain, not only at the beginning of the season, but any time during the summer in a country in which three weeks' drought might ruin the maize crop. There are various ways of doing this. Great councillors or important relatives may approach the queen in person, saying, 'The people are crying,' and asking her to help them. When there was no rain, Mugwena, related to the queen through his mother, used to walk near the queen's hut complaining, in a voice calculated to reach the royal ears, that it was a bad thing for the chief to kill his people by withholding rain. When the first summer storm of 1937 opened with much lightning and thunder, the two chief councillors mentioned informally to the queen at beer that they hoped she would ward off wind and thunder and give them a good year. Heads of districts approach the queen (*ku loma*) with a gift, usually nowadays of £1 or £1 10s., and very often

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tion. There is no trace whatever in the Lowveld of the Tswana ward. 43
Lowveld tribes are totemic, but the totem is neither exogamous nor bound up with any single lineage group. People of the same totem are often not related at all and the lineage group cuts right across the tribe, relatives from the same place of origin and with the same totem often being found in several different tribes. Indeed, the tribe consists only of a small nucleus of members of the ruling family after which it is named, the greater portion being accretions from any and every neighbouring tribe. Thus the majority of members of the Nzerne are not Nzerne at all; they are Lobedu, Khaba, Phalaborwa, Kwena, Tokwa, and others who have joined the Nzerne at various times; and so it is with all Lowveld tribes.

FORMAL EDUCATION. The tribes of the Lowveld have five initiation schools, two, known as *khube* and *lyale*, for girls, three, *bodika*, *boxwere*, and *komane*, for boys. These schools are not peculiar to the Lowveld; all of them are found also among Sotho tribes of the Highveld of the Northern Transvaal while some, like the *bodika* or circumcision, have a very wide distribution in South Africa. But the *lyale* and *boxwere* in our area have a typical form, not found elsewhere, being held at the same time, while the *komane* appears in its strongest and most characteristic form among Phalaborwa, Khaba, and Nzerne in the south of our area where, most probably, it had its origin, for it is absent from Pediland. 881 794

Khube is the private initiation and seclusion of a girl at or shortly after reaching puberty when she is taught the things she should know and do as a woman. The *bodika* or circumcision school is too well known to merit attention here, but the *boxwere*, for boys, which in Sekukuniland and other parts of the Northern Transvaal is held alone, in the Lowveld is linked with and held together with the *lyale* girls' school, the central feature of which is a wonderful 'bird' in a special enclosure which appears on moonlight nights and dances and speaks in a whistle.[1] The true significance of the *komane* has not yet been

[1] In late years these schools have been languishing or dying out in the northern portion of our culture area. The Lobedu have held neither *lyale* nor *komane* for 30 years, while their last circumcision was in 1919. In the south of the area, on the other hand, all the schools are still in full swing, the Lowveld having held their last *bodika* in 1934 and *lyale* in 1936.

[See 2: Krige and Krige for further information on Lovedu cults — A]

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established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on either side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dajow* or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, wailing manner.

An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tendency for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools, to set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where they are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they are a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Highveld have no *komane*; but a Narene man who has come to live in the area has brought *komane* drums and holds schools to which many Dikxale go.

Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowveld tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa in having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved of by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adultery, which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in any way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widows, especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even though they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attached to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness is better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where there is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act will send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the bare word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepted. Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adultery, with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head of cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more than a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in the fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the parties concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a boy whose people they do not consider suitable.

Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution of preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu-Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully 40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with the

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783 789 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite of *fuge*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 821 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season propitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gwama*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 821 789 731 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time, people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*ba loea*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle, or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lenga*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may [789] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mafuge* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 784 821 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially when a gale disperses suspicious black clouds, people come to condole with her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 821 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers suspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digoma

778 794 881 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests of man consists of *digoma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *goma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *nyali-ruhwere* (fertility cult) is one. A *goma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *goma* which is said to 'bite'

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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *gwma*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794 881

With the *nyali-vukwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*nyali*) and for boys (*vukwera*), are associated many *digwma*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khindqane*, Bird of Mohale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *nyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *gwma* and a symbol of the royal ancestors.

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *nyali-vukwera* with its great *digwma* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digwma*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalaborwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir sits on the smallest drum while being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vadimo* (gods) as well as *digwma*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gwmane* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [794 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digwma* are the *mridajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thugula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gwmane*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *lirugu* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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437 wealth; and the rewards of the society do not go to those who can manipu-
late the trading situation. Land cannot be traded, and cattle, the only
other recognizable form of wealth, are completely absorbed in the
ceremonial exchanges. For the rest, the economic unit is as nearly as
possible self-sufficient. There are occasional shortages, but usually they
affect everybody more or less equally. The volume of internal trade,
apart from gift exchange, was and still is insignificant. There are no
markets, and skilled workers do not usually produce articles in anticipa-
tion of the needs of others. Hoes were, and pots still are, exchanged for
agricultural products. The small interchange of agricultural products
in normal times never unduly benefited one man at the expense of an-
other. Animals constantly died, but only those people who had little
consideration for their relatives—for elaborate rules exist as to the
distribution of the various parts of an animal—thought of selling the
meat. In abnormal times people sold and still sell cattle: the instinct of
self-preservation overrides the sentiments against tampering with one
of the main pillars of the social structure.

The Lovedu are in this respect wholly unlike their neighbours, the
Shangana-Tonga, who undertook commercial journeys and had com-
panies of carriers with elaborate organization and sharing of profits. The
earliest Europeans constantly mention the begging propensities and topsy-
turvy economic conceptions of the Lovedu. And even now it is useless
to attempt to buy a valuable thing from them. You may succeed in getting
it by begging or appealing to sentiment or showing how much you need
it. With a Shangana-Tonga you may bargain; with a Lovedu bargaining
arouses suspicion, the suspicion that you are making a profit out of his
ignorance, and it is considered better to give than to sell. Begging is not
[705] socially disapproved; it is contrasted, not with self-reliance, but with
theft; and a man, it is said, should always ask for, not steal, the things of
another. Begging is really the counterpart of mutual helpfulness, of the
feeling of dependence on one another. Where such sentiments have a
right of existence, even in royalty itself, the only consideration that
evokes a sympathetic response in the trading situation is the need of the
person who wishes to transact the exchange. A man does not sell for his
personal gain and the price is not a matter of great moment; either goods
have their fixed price or they have no price at all. The situation is always
an embarrassing one. The Lovedu, in short, have no commercial in-
stincts; they have been conditioned to mutual helpfulness and non-
competitive trading.

437 They distinguish sharply between trade carried on in the traditional
577 manner and what they call 'bizzniz' (business), which generally involves
●795 money transactions and is associated with subterfuge and personal gain.
'Bizzniz' is beyond the pale of decency; it is specially debased in the hands
of those upstarts who hold initiation schools for their own personal
profit. The most depraved people are the few Christians, who, in league
with Europeans or on their own account, constitute themselves as middle-
men and exploit their fellow men. They are *liars*, deceivers and
breakers of promises, comparable only with prostitutes who 'are eaten
on the road'. The Christian Church, with its fees and collections, falls,

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to the Lovedu manner of thinking, within the 'kinship' scheme: one buys baptism and confirmation; at communion one pays for the flesh and blood of Christ. Here different is the institution of marymale. No wonder the work of the Church is infinitely difficult.

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177 duplicity and ingratitude, suspicion, and attempts to take advantage of
797 kindness. These were construed as barbaric traits that had to be uprooted. There appeared, in addition, to be an unusually large number of anti-Christian practices: the tribal justice, proceeding upon no fixed principles, seemed corrupt; there were periodical smellings-out of witches; people believed in the divinity of the queen. Dancing and drumming were obnoxious, not merely because they were 'heathenish din', but also because of their association with the idolatry of the *digwa* and the 'schools', the sexual laxity at the *gwba* dances and possession by spirits.
[533] There were also mendicant minstrels who played the xylophone (*dibila*) and sang for their food and lodging, whose songs did not always express Christian sentiments. One, for instance, not long ago, used to sing, 'Christians are cheats who put us to sleep before we eat [referring to grace], so as to kill us unawares', and another's song rang more crudely: 'The husbandless woman climbs to the roof of the hut; she urinates and the rats fall down in a faint'.

Early Church policy laid down what should be outlawed on mission-owned farms; wife-purchase, shrines, *digwa*, rain-making, witchcraft, divination, 'strengthenings with medicine', the consecration of weapons, and other repugnant customs. It stamped as particularly reprehensible theft, sexual offences, opposition to the Church, and, later, migration to seek employment in the sinful towns. The sanctions with which it can enforce obedience upon a self-governed estate include refusal of such privileges as baptism and confirmation, public denunciation in church, various penalties, such as road-making and catechism classes, and even expulsion from the mission station. Natives believe that the whole system is served by a network of espionage, and the intrinsic difficulties of the situation have been immensely increased by the fact that financially the mission station largely relies upon the contributions in fees and work of its tenants. On one occasion a self-constituted committee of disaffected tenants in Johannesburg, who were in arrears, accused the mission of capitalistic exploitation and of robbing the Natives of their country, and drastic action was necessary.

177 The Christian attack upon the marriage pattern and especially polygyny
●795 has led to many subtle reactions. Devout Christians of the old order still
184 refuse to accept cattle, but surreptitiously pocket money payments which by the nature of the case can be used to subserve personal, not social, ends. The Church no longer sets its face against *mumyamalo*, but seeks to turn it into a kind of dowry, and Christians call it 'thanks'. The Christian's freedom of choice of a mate weakens the reciprocities and emphasises independence and materialism at the price of the patterns of co-operation and long-range mutuality. A Christian often marries a non-relative, but cannot easily escape the complex net thrown over the whole social structure by the cattle exchanges. He may have to face the opposition of those relatives whose displeasure may cause illness to him or his family. If he marries a second wife, his cross-cousin, he is excommunicated, and he will be unable, even on his death-bed, to secure the final consolation and blessing of the Church unless he sets aside his pagan wife. Polygyny, the inheritance of wives, and beer are so deeply rooted in

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the culture that they constitute the gravest difficulties of the mission as well as the most formidable obstacles to embracing Christianity. Christians are required to build a house before marriage: this again tears them out of the context of parental influences. Wedding feasts and bridal gifts introduce the pattern of the highveld Sotho and of the towns, but without serious disruptive effects. 177 795 184

Christian marriage sets up community of property and strikes at the economic independence of women; it emphasizes patriliny, but, in compensation, introduces a conception of marital companionship. Families are larger, because the old spacing of children has broken down: monogamy, proscription of the institution of 'lovers' (*rugaru*), the opposition to anything pagan, the diminished control of the old women are some of the reasons. There is more illegitimacy because the marriage of girls is later, examination for virginity is considered un-Christian, the disciplinary influences of the initiation 'schools' and of parental authority have weakened, and there is no training in the rules of incomplete sexual intercourse. Among some of the other results, it may be said that Christians are less complaisant about the infidelity of their spouses and that the care of a brother's widow occasions serious conflicts.

The iconoclastic effect of Christianity may be illustrated in a few other spheres of culture. Christians often object to performing the services to the chief expected of every tribesman. At the capital they plough one of the queen's fields, but have largely withdrawn themselves or have been excluded from the political and legal organization. They do not submit themselves to procedures involving appeal to the smeller-out, regard as repugnant the duties of messengers in 'blood' cases and, by extension, those of all court messengers, and, since the regular court sessions are held on Sunday, they cannot attend them, nor indeed are they welcomed as members of the *khwr*. At Medingen the districts are not recognized and the majority of offences come before the council of elders or the missionary. Christians disregard traditional holidays and taboos, such as those after deaths and the first rains or when lightning strikes down to earth. They defiantly plough over sacred places to show the absurdity of superstitious fears. They neither kill twins nor observe the rules as to burial in wet places. They oppose the 'schools', avoid the dances and ignore the firstfruits rites.

It is un-Christian to become possessed or to have the 'dirt'-removing rite after death. Even important royal kinsmen who become Christians must be buried in the Christian cemetery, not where they will be contaminated by heathenish associations. The bearers are Christians, and pagan relatives follow the hearse in the rear, segregated from the Christians, for they do not know the hymns that are sung. The corpse is made to face west, towards the setting sun, not north, whence the Lovedu came. When the queen's brother, who became a Christian on his death-bed, was buried, the only concession permitted to custom was the placing of an ox skin upon the coffin; no wonder that his spirit did not long lie at rest and that subsequent drought was attributed to his complaints. Not only are pagans and Christians separated in the

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177 procession to the grave, but, after burial, relatives on each side have
795 their separate rites.
184 All this is but a reflection of the attempt to make the segregation as complete as possible. Even the visible evidence of different styles of building, of dressing, and of living together was in the past more boldly thrown into relief by the geometrical villages, with their square houses fronted by flower gardens and straight streets crossing one another at right angles and ornamented with orange trees. But the Christians' efforts to differentiate themselves from pagans are limited by two main factors. Neither the Bible nor their limited experience of the world has suggested too many different ways of living and behaving. In large spheres of culture they know no more than is supplied by the traditional background; and limited resources often make impracticable the adoption of different standards and attitudes.

Christians tend to defer in everything, not to the tribal, but to the church authorities. Local problems and church matters, as well as relations with the European, are advised upon and guided by the church and its officials. Christians set themselves up as interpreters of and intermediaries with the European; they tend to assume command upon occasions of European festivities or of intervention, except that of official business with the chief or the councillors. They crowd round inquisitively when agricultural officials arrive, while pagans avoid them; they prepare the programme or draw up the illuminated address when there is a celebration, such as the Coronation in 1937 or an agricultural show. And they work out these plans and addresses in consultation, not with the tribal authorities, but with the evangelist. It is not unnatural, for they complain that the tribal authorities will never learn and never listen to their advice or accept their suggestions. All this occasions friction and divided allegiance, it weakens the authority of the queen, and it antagonizes the pagans.

In recent years there has been more co-operation. The old influential Christians have died and the educated young pagans have learnt to manage things for themselves. Agricultural officials, despite active resistance from pagans and co-operation from Christians, realize that their work is incomplete without sustained efforts to secure the interest of the pagans. Christians are vouchsafed no information from the capital and their opportunities of leadership and interference become limited. Jealousies among Christians have led to disunity and they have lost control of the postal arrangements. The secretarial duties of the chief are undertaken jointly by a Christian and several pagans. And young men who in the past found their major opportunities in identifying themselves with the Christians are beginning to find it more profitable to side with the pagans. This is but a reflection of more universal trends: the importance of the church has receded before the rapid expansion of the activities of the administration, industry, and commerce; these activities are no longer in active co-operation with Christianity, and differences in religious outlook between pagans and Christians tend to be over-shadowed by the feeling of common hostility to and distrust of the European. How far the new tendencies will lead to constructive

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co-operation and to bringing Christians into more realistic touch with the total tribal environment are questions too large for consideration here. 177 795 184

But Christianity has not destroyed only; it has also built up. Christians wholeheartedly embraced education; pagans, believing that education implies the acceptance of a foreign faith, are torn by conflicting loyalties, and their ardent desire to acquire the three R's expresses itself in the attempts made to set up a tribal school, which will be the agent, not of an alien creed, but of traditional values. Education and the outlook it has engendered have equipped Christians for meeting the impact of Western conquest and culture. Schoolchildren lose much of the lore of the veld and the training of the tribal initiations, but they gain new games, new skills, and new knowledge, implicit in which are assumptions regarding the nature of man and the purpose of existence. The church, through its preachings and schools, has been the channel of more than half the influences of Western ethics and culture in their positive effects. Its future lies in its control of education, for its religious mission has become submerged in a mass of technical and routine duties, entailing the preparation of pupils for examinations and the filling up of forms, with consequent loss of personal contacts and pastoral care. Its religious influence is evident in grace at meals, prayers for oneself, church services, Biblical Christian names, feasts, sacraments, and periodical visits of the women of one settlement to commune with and advise those of another. But on the whole the purely religious has been eclipsed by the educational effects. The two are inextricably interwoven; and their separation might well mean that Christianity will have no message for modern man and will be regarded as linked with the repressive, not the progressive, forces of Western civilization.

The valuable adjustments brought about by Christianity are the adjustments towards the modern world: receptivity to Western standards, less reluctance to co-operate with Europeans, and aspirations to seek self-realization amid the opportunities offered by them. Christians are less sceptical than pagans of European health services and of the innovations of the agricultural demonstrator; and they are better equipped and, until recently, were more eager to accept such Government posts as those of interpreters, policemen, and forest rangers. Only Christians can be teachers. Christians are driven to action by the idea of progress; they seek their future and achievement in change; and they attribute the disabilities under which the tribe suffers to the ignorance of their pagan rulers. Not much of what they have learnt intellectually has merged integrally with their lives, but they are less frustrated than the pagans.

Their outlook stands in close relation to the great extension of economic needs necessitated by Christianity, such as church and school fees, books and occasionally newspapers, better clothes and more European household articles, brick houses, wooden coffins, and burial societies. Their contributions, which help to support the widespread organization and institutions of the Church, constitute one of the main resistances to conversion; but the necessity to meet the new demands has made them keener agriculturalists than are the pagans. You sometimes hear a pagan derisively call out to Christian workers, not the friendly greeting '*Vashumi*'

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177 (workers), but 'Fools, why labour when others rest'; the Christian
795 reply is, 'We are orphans and must work to satisfy our needs.' Christians
184 are for ever planning new schemes and trying new methods; even their women-folk take in washing and, despite the church's discouragement, occasionally seek work in the towns. Christian men eagerly take to making irrigated gardens, and some become transport riders or itinerant hawkers; while it is Christian women who hire out their services to neighbours and make a business of pottery. It is chiefly among Christians that salt, meat, and cash take the place of beer in the work party. The total result is not merely a better economic sense, but also a growth of the spirit of competition and calculation; not merely greater industry and less improvidence, but also exploitation of their fellow tribesmen and self-seeking; and, instead of relying upon the roundabout reciprocities, Christians demand more immediate satisfactions and more precise and personal rewards. Aggressiveness and display, rivalries and suspicion, develop side by side with ideas of progress and a desire for advancement.

177 There are often fierce jealousies in the Christian settlements, and the
795 tensions occasionally set into motion waves of accusations of witchcraft
184 which break up the settlements. The classical example quoted as evidence of the great incidence of witchcraft among Christians is the disruption of
578 the station at Moila. No one could be trusted, and witches were said to
754 administer medicines to children, taking them out at night to crack their skulls upon the rocks. Christian boys are said to gossip more about witches than do their pagan brothers, and nowhere except in Christian settlements were we warned against accepting food from strangers. Witchcraft among Christians is difficult to observe, as it is driven underground; Christians do not publicly appeal to the smeller-out or seek the diviner to discover the cause of death, but they secretly consult the bones and slander the enemies that are thought to have sent the death. They tend to combat witchcraft, not by open accusation, but by privately 'sending back' the evil; and they firmly believe that the queen makes rain, albeit through the grace of the Christian God. The pollution that prevents rain is ascribed to sin—especially incest, rape, adultery, sexual offences, murder, and witchcraft—rather than to wrong burials. Tensions in the Christian settlements and the suspicion of espionage increase secretiveness about personal business, fields, and crops; but Christians are far more communicative than pagans about tribal matters and custom.

Amid conflicting tendencies, we find it difficult to say whether witchcraft is more prevalent among Christians than among pagans. The new outlook upon the nature of man and of his purposes increases tensions and rivalries, but also calls into question the assumptions of magic and witchcraft; and proscription leads to more underground activity and the development of new techniques, but also drives out of the field the visible reminders of the world of supernatural forces. In our opinion, the total situation may be summed up in the words of a Christian informant who has maintained intact his tribal background: 'Education gives men the power of witchcraft, and when we all are educated we shall all be witches, but, like Europeans, quite harmless to one another.'

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The repercussions of the Christian outlook in the tribe as a whole may be referred to briefly. The tendencies are changing because of the recent re-absorption of Christians into the tribe, but the main results to-day are still those coming from the segregated Christians. Christian holidays have to some extent become part of the life of the tribe. Sunday is, as far as agriculture and building operations are concerned, a day of rest, but, for this reason, it is set aside specially for public business, such as tribal gatherings and *khɔrɔ* trials; and one result is that Christians, even if their moralizing and attempts to improve law and procedure were better tolerated, are excluded from participation. People occasionally have 'beer of Christmas' or 'New Year'. Twin murders can no longer be reported to the queen, as there is danger of implicating her, and Christian women, more interested in the pregnancy, legitimate or otherwise, of their friends, threaten to take action if they suspect a murder. But the effect is unsuspectedly complicated: a pagan mother who under pressure allows her twins to live may be refused assistance by her husband's mother, and often reacts by underfeeding them in order to starve them to death; and much greater secrecy is maintained. In 1923, after a few convictions in the European courts, the queen forbade the killing of twins and ordered births to be reported to the mission station; but the rule became a dead letter as soon as it could be safely circumvented.

Real or pretended sensitiveness among pagans to Christian values has had some effects. Not only do pagans ascribe their misfortunes to disregard of duties fostered by the example of the Christians, but they advance Christian values as excuses for not fulfilling their own obligations. They may condemn the Christian intrusion as causing drought or disobedience, but they may justify their own doubtful behaviour upon principles of Christian ethics. In 1937, for instance, Mashishimali refused to accept a *gɔsha* dance on the ground that his wife's brother, who lived in the village, was a Christian, but the real reason was self-interest and unwillingness to kill a beast and to burden himself with feeding the dancers. For a similar reason, an old woman, nominally a Christian, refused to allow her son to accommodate the dancers, but the reason she advanced was the pagan associations of the drums. Slackness in obeying the queen is ascribed to the example of the Christians, who break taboos with impunity and escape their obligations as messengers of the *khɔrɔ* by declaring that the work is un-Christian.

At one time Christians could terrify pagans by predicting eclipses and locust invasions, visitations which they ascribed to the obstinacy of the pagans in refusing to accept the gospel; this weapon is useless to-day, but the Christian hell causes some uneasiness of conscience and repressed fear, especially evident in dreams and during illness. There are death-bed conversions, and the evangelist is sometimes anxiously called to interpret alarming dreams. Masilu, a budding doctor still learning the bones, which had been discarded by a Christian relative, suffered from a persistent illness. While bed-ridden he dreamt that he had ascended a great ladder half-way to heaven and came to a luxuriant country. There he saw two roads, but he was stopped by the guardian of the gate to which one of these roads led, and told to take the left-hand road going to the

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177 west. He suspected that that road led to hell. The evangelist, called in
184 for consultation, prayed for his soul, explaining that the dream clearly
195 warned the pagan sinner to mend his way of life if he wished to be admitted to the road that led to salvation. Masilu was half-persuaded, but when his wife scorned the imposture and he had regained health, he let the matter slide. But sometimes conversion takes place in such circumstances, especially as the view is held that many people, after a dream of this nature, suddenly die. We may also associate with Christian ethics such phenomena as the growth of a sex-guilt complex, the wearing of blouses to cover the breasts, and the repression of virginity observances.

The persistence of a belief among Christians that the restrictions imposed upon the tribe may be attributed to backwardness and refusal to give up custom has not been without its effects. Sophisticated pagans share this belief with the Christians, but on the whole the assumption of enlightenment and superiority derives from the conception, fostered by Christianity, of the darkness of the pagan world. There is much that can be advanced in support of their contentions: the location allotted to the tribe, it is urged, would have been larger if the whole tribe, not merely a portion of it, had presented itself to General Joubert when, in the 1890s, after their defeat, he commanded their presence in order to enable him to give them land proportionate to their numbers; and, similarly, the stringency of the dipping laws, the absence of any benefits from the fund of the local tax, the ascendancy of the Shangana-Tonga are laid at the door of the ignorance of the councillors. Christians allege that in other tribes, where there has been enlightenment, disabilities have disappeared. Some pagans, half-accepting the impeachment, blame their leaders; others, and they are in the majority and the most influential, resent the imputation and fiercely resist every suggestion that comes from the Christians. On the whole, however, the obvious advantages of knowledge of the ways of the white man and of the outside world cannot be gainsaid: it is the educated Native who gets the best posts and secures exemption from carrying passes. But where enlightenment is paraded by Christians, it merely occasions more resistance and opposition.

THE CHALLENGE OF WESTERN CONQUEST

177 The influence of Western culture, as a force distinct from Christianity, can be fully interpreted only against a background that extends, as regards time, to the earliest contacts between Bantu and European and, as regards space, over the whole of South Africa. Attitudes and reactions observable in Ulovedu are often intelligible in the light, not of local misfortunes, but of experiences of tribes in other parts of South Africa. We cannot here discuss this question; indeed, the problems arising from the impact of Western culture within the tribe alone are too complex for summary treatment. On the whole, there has only been legislation against utterly repugnant custom and, until recently, the restrictions that have been efficiently enforced were few, and did not strike directly at the integrity of custom. The policy has been one of *laisser-faire*; and no active attempt has been made to graft new culture elements upon the old patterns. The

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by the institutions and by the reciprocal duties and responsibilities between individuals and groups inherent in the social structure. 577

Effects of Culture Contact

This picture of the world view of the Lovedu presents living practices and conceptions, not a dead and reconstructed past. Christianity has, indeed, modified some aspects of the culture: Christians are prevented from performing their kinship obligations in the traditional manner; they have accepted European ideas of trade for profit and use institutions such as the work-party for the exploitation of their fellows; but witchcraft, which they are supposed to have rejected, is as a result of increased tensions even more rampant among Christians than pagans. Christians substitute God for the ancestors, but continue to believe that the queen makes rain, albeit by the will of God. They tend to discredit the powers of charms but not of *vunaga*, while 'heat', *makhuma*, and 'shadow' are still real forces, and the underlying conceptions of the causation of disease and misfortune still hold sway. Even these minor modifications have to be viewed in the light of the fact that Christians constitute only about 5 per cent. of the tribe and are relatively isolated. 177 795 771

The influence of Western culture as a whole is more insidious. The knowledge acquired by young men working in the towns and returning to the tribe holds implications as regards the nature of the universe and the destiny and purpose of man which they cannot harmonize with the traditional world view. They tend to despise what the old men cannot or will not make intelligible to them, such as the significance of the *digoma* and the *zwidajani* which appear to them to be shams. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect for their elders and for traditional values and institutions. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older, begin to play a part and to have a stake in the culture. Moreover, they are sensitive to insinuations that their doubts are due to the white man's insidious influences and soon repress them as unworthy and disloyal. 177 771

The younger generation tend to shirk unpleasant responsibilities. Thus Jim refused to take over the family office of keeper of the rain-medicine, fearing the risk of sterility which handling of this medicine entails. The absence of many adult men, who are away as migrant labourers, makes the organization of the great ceremonials difficult. Reconciliation and the restitutive sanction are no longer the great forces they used to be, since the closely knit system of reciprocities, everyone's dependence upon day-to-day mutualities and the imperativeness for social life of co-operation, no longer exert the irresistible pressure on the parties to carry out compromises reached in the courts. Aggrieved litigants, reluctant still to invoke European intervention, increasingly resort to magicians who have developed a whole new system of revenge magic to even up matters. The trend is to put their faith in magical retaliation rather than in the sanction of reciprocity. 178

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CHAPTER VIII

FERTILITY AND THE DRUM CULT

The setting of the sacred drums in a mystical cult—initiation into the secrets of the whistling ancestors—calendric observances connected with fecundity, masks, and mummeries.

794 BESIDES the girls' puberty ceremony and the circumcision of boys, there are other initiation ceremonies among the Lovedu. One is the *vyali* (often looked upon as the women's counterpart of circumcision because of its regimentation), contemporaneous with which is the boys' *vuhwera*, consisting largely of masked dancing; another is the *gomana* for men. These are closely interwoven with a fertility and rain cult which, because of its association with sacred drums, one may call the drum cult. Their educational object, never very strongly marked in Bantu initiation schools, pales into insignificance before the ceremonial. Indeed the *gomana* as a 'school' is only an aspect of *gomana* ceremonial as a whole, the primary function of which is to secure rain. The *vyali-vuhwera-gomana* complex is characterized by esoteric masks, mummeries, and mysteries and by a category of values which we may term the 'mystical philosophy' of the Lovedu. We shall give merely a brief picture of the complex, because, at the time of writing, the first *vyali-vuhwera* held for thirty-five years is still in progress and our ideas as to its true meaning are far from being settled.

794 The sacred drum cult has many ramifications. The *zwidajani*, sup-
●796 posed to be ancestral spirits coming to earth to take part in *gomana* singing and drumming of the sacred drums, have become incorporated into other aspects of the culture. They appear in the bush near the village whenever a harvest offering has been made in the families of royal relatives; they come at the installation of a new district head and at the
[533] death of close relatives of the queen. On these occasions they join in the singing and dancing of *lesugu* songs, songs associated with the *vyali* of men and which, in addition to the above-mentioned occasions, are employed also when women dance for rain. The type of instrument by
[776] means of which the *zwidajani* whistle or bleat out their songs and messages is used also by the Bird, the ruling spirit of the *vyali*.

534 Drums are much used in Lovedu life; they are played in the *gosha*
778 dance to the accompaniment of reed pipes, they are important in all initiations except circumcision, they are beaten for days at the dancing of possessed people, and it is significant that the public recognition by the queen of a new district head at his installation consists in the handing over of a drumstick (*khiɔba kha gɔma*). Drums are of two types: the long cylindrical drum played with the hands as it lies on its side and the *gɔma*, a rounded drum with handles, played by means of a drumstick as it stands in an upright position. The sacred drums (*digomana*) of the tribe are of the *gɔma* type, but, unlike ordinary *gɔma* drums, are played by hand, not with a drumstick. They are four in number, each with its special

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services to a chief, residents must also build his village and mend his huts. These privileges and obligations are not merely theoretical; they are very much in evidence and can be observed to-day in the districts as much as, if not more than, at the capital. The first edible termites found in the district must, in the case of some of the more important heads, be brought to the district head; these ants are ritually associated with rain-making and are put into the rain pots which these heads have. 634 651

The national 'schools' are sometimes held independently by district heads; in 'biting' the first fruits (*hu luma*) and in turning the first soil, the precedence of the queen is hardly recognized. The head at Ḍaja and the senior male line of the royal family have theoretical precedence in *hu luma* and, in contrast to many neighbouring tribes, there is little stress upon having the queen's field hoed first; in practice to-day her field is never ploughed first. Maunadala, it is said, in the old days paid an ox to anticipate the queen's hoeing and thus avoided threatening starvation; but dispensations of this nature, while recognizing a theoretical rule, throw into relief the much greater autonomy of the district here than elsewhere. The district head is solely responsible for *hu upa*, the rite that drives away destructive birds and monkeys when crops are ripe; to him the death of every resident is reported (the report being transmitted to the queen only when a relative of hers dies) and the resulting 'holiday' is held only in the district. Each district head has his own drums through which he controls dancing (*gɔsha*), religious observances, and some of the 'schools'. The girls' puberty rite (*khɔba*) is entirely district-controlled. 634 796

The individuality of some districts is seen in esoteric customs; elsewhere by taboo, succession ceremonial, and a distinctive community life. At Khiobeni people may construct on the edge of the village a rain-shelter (*kwado*) in which fire is made; in neighbouring areas this is taboo. Work on the day following the new moon is said to have been taboo in the old days at Matsui, though the rule is never observed to-day; in neighbouring areas there never was such a holiday. The Thɔvɔla in one district have a special dance with a special ritual. As regards succession, the queen usually merely confirms, though she maintains touch through an elaborate ceremony: she is notified of the death of the head, sends the 'mother' of the district to take part in the ceremony of installation and, in the case of heads of the royal group, the *zwiḍajani* appear. The ceremonial, however, more intimately concerns the district: there is a local 'holiday' after the death, the *gɔsha* dance is taboo for a year, girls undergo puberty initiation elsewhere, beer is made by the district to 'open the drums', and each head of a family sends a goat or 10s., 'the eye of the chief', to acknowledge their new head. The life of the district is often distinctive. Matsui is said to be wasteful and, according to one of their praises, people there, instead of stamping, for which they are too lazy, 'burn their finger-nails roasting green mealies'. Everything is rather slack and happy-go-lucky, beer drinks are apt to be unruly, the district head is at loggerheads with his uncles, and his subjects talk disparagingly of 'this district-head business of going about and drinking beer'. Bacchanalian orgies after the harvest, slack morals, and other irregularities at Matsui contrast strikingly with conditions at Bagoni, an adjacent district. At Bagoni there is a tradition 634 184 [784]

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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *gɔma*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794

With the *vyali-vuhwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*vyali*) and for boys (*vuhwera*), are associated many *digɔma*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khiudogane*, Bird of Muhale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *vyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *gɔma* and a symbol of the royal ancestors. 881

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *vyali-vuhwerâ* with its great *digɔma* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digɔma*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalavorwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir sits on the smallest drum while being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vadimo* (gods) as well as *digɔma*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gɔmana* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [794 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digɔma* are the *ɔwidajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thugula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gɔmana*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *lesugu* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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THE LOVEDU

1. The Lovedu-tribe took its origin in Mashonaland. Therefore, when a Lovedu salutes, they say :" In truth, Lovedu, in truth Khalaga,[1] person of Ledaża,[2] person who comes from Mashonaland ! " Furthermore they are " the Pigs of Mohale."[3]—They say there is the home of the Lovedu.[4] 173 576

2. They say the king there had two sons. Now one of them[5] was given the rain.[6] Afterwards the elder brother desired the thing of the younger one. He went to ask his younger brother for the rain. But the younger brother refused to give him the rain. The elder brother rose against him with spears.[7] The younger brother escaped southward,[8] he crossed the Limpopo-river of Mashonaland. On the way they separated into two groups. One tended towards the South and settled at Vyaḑadi[9] namely the Mamabolo-tribe. They are also " Pigs[10] of Maḑaži."[11] 173

3. Now the Lovedu were looking for a nice country with fertile soil and with ant-hills.[12] They sent the young men in advance to look out for such a country. And indeed—when these passed Vendaland they found the right country having merula-trees and ant-hills in the east of the mountain where there is established " Medingen "[13] to-day—namely at Khumelo.[14] [197]

4. They found that there was living another tribe called that of Kheoga.[15] Those people did not know the fire. They ate all their food unboiled. They ate it just like the wild animals.

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[1] Name for the inhabitants of Mashonaland.

[2] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[3] Name of chief.

[4] I was given the following explanation of the word " Lovedu ": *Volovedu hhe hho khe fhedolwa ge hhore : mo hho lovahho zwilô, e lêhho vathu le likhomu le riṅgu.*—Lovedu means : there where things namely persons, cattle, goats and sheep are being brought as offerings. [101]

[5] The younger one.

[6] The instruments and formulae to prepare the rain-medicine.

[7] Chief weapon.

[8] Literally : upwards.

[9] Mountains near Haenertsburg.

[10] Lovedu and Mamabolo praise the same animal : the wild pig.

[11] See later the praise-names of the kings.

[12] Ants = a delicacy. [262]

[13] Mission Station.

[14] Name of mountain.

[15] Another Bantu-tribe.

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girls and asked that the chief might pardon them this trespass. Then the chief sounded the horn to assemble his troups. When the troups had assembled on one place, they were told that it was finished. Now the chief seized his war-horn, blew it and jumped about. All the troups intonated praise-songs to praise the chief; they said: "Mogôdô, the neck with fat-wrinkles, Mogôdô, he rules with the rain-horn." It is 'Mogôdô-Mme-a—Phedola," he says: 'I kill a person'—he kills; he says; 'I make live'—he makes live." 173 643

28. Then the chief took his spear, danced, pushed it into the ground and pointed to the East. He said to his warriors: "From the East there are coming black ants. You will fight with them, and you will defeat them." Then he pushed down again, pointed to the West and said: "From the West there will come red ants, these will defeat you over and over again."[29] 173

29. Chief Mogôdô fought also with Khašane, the son of his father. But Khašane fled into the country called Tshale.[30] Then the people called him to come and stay in another country called Moduveni,[31] where a certain man namely Mamadêba, a son of Khašane grew up, who found the Word of God at Port Elizabeth, who was found fighting against the darkness in the days of Rev. Knothe and Reuter.[32] He was killed by the second female chief Masalanavô for the sake of the Gospel. [797]

30. Mogôdô had two sons. When they quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father, the chieftainship was given his daughter who became the first female chief Možaži. The brothers were driven out of the country by the magic power of the little calabash[33] and the fire-stick[34] which had been strengthened with medicines of driving people out of the country. 173 643 [789]

31. So Možaži became chief, she was a good ruler over the country Lovedu like her father. She also killed the wrong-doers namely the socerers and thieves and liars. She produced rainfall like her father, she received homages of chiefs who came from far with treasures of different kinds and elephant-tusks—coming from Zululand, Sekhukhuni, Ramabulana[35] and Ñguñgunyane.[36]

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[29] A prophecy attributed also to the chief Sekhukhuni.
[30] In the West.
[31] In the West.
[32] Missionaries among the *Golovê*.
[33] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[34] The holy vessels of the tribe.
[35] In Vendaland.
[36] In Thongaland.

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32. Therefore the praise-song of chief Možaži says: "Možaži—when the sun sets—trader in the hut;[37] I sleep on the road,[38] I am a widow,[39] I have no one who watches me. I am the elephant-knife on the hip in the sheath;[40] she eats meat,[41] the trader in the house." 173 643

33. The second chief was Masala-Navô. She was given this name by the dead (queen), when she was raised to the throne. She governed also like the other chiefs. Her praise-song says: "Mmasala-Navô,[42] speak good (words). When you are speaking bad (words), the tribe will split. It was the chief Khethubudi of Mashonaland who said: "I do not like the people.—Finally I got an ulcer on my back and said: 'People, scratch me."[43]—The hawk, at which they look with fear, they look at me with hearts full of hatred."[44]

34. This queen had milk-cows. They were called "the selected" of the chief-kraal. They were milked by a head-man who had been chosen to milk them. When they were milked, and the carrier of the milk was carrying it to bring it home—when it happened that he met people, they had to kneel down until he had passed. This was a custom to honour the food of the chief. When a person was standing when the milk passed near him, it was a great crime. These cows were not kept in one kraal together with the cattle of the village, but they remained separated. 173 234 643

35. Furthermore chief Mmasala-Navô hated the believers (in Christ). A Christian was not allowed to enter the chief's kraal. When a Christian had a case to be settled in the chief's Court, he had to sit outside the village under a tree; he sent his words through the messenger of the chief. 173 797

36. Chief Khesêthwane who governs to-day, and who is also called Možaži, is the third female chief. She produces rainfall. She allows the Christians to enter the official meeting-place and her village. She is fond of education. A church has been built near the meeting-place of 175 797

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[37] It is not necessary that she goes round to "sell" the rain. People are coming to her to buy in her hut.

[38] Like a prostitute (?)—she was not married but is said to have had many lovers.

[39] Because she had no husband.

[40] Praise of her blood-thirstiness.

[41] She killed her chief counsellor always after a short service.

[42] "She who remains with them."

[43] That chief thought that he was able to live without needing other people, until he became ill and was unable to help himself. Then he was obliged to call for assistance.

[44] Praise of the cruelty of the Queen.

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the royal kraal. The children of the chief's kraal are attending school at her command. 175 797

37. Chief Khesêthwane does not allow that a person enters her kraal with shoes on his feet. When somebody approaches the main entrance, he must take off the shoes and leave them outside the main-entrance that he may be allowed to enter the meeting-place. 643 576

The beginning of the government of female chiefs in Loveduland

1. The last male chief is Mogôdô. He had two sons: Malegudu and Kheêbe. These young men quarrelled about the chieftainship of their father when he was still alive. Now they had a sister who was called Možaži. So the chieftainship was given her that she might be the ruler of the tribe. The brothers were driven away. 173 643

2. When a person is made chief in Loveduland, he must be given the fire-stick and the water-calabash. Now they gave the sister the fire-stick and the calabash that she might bring it to Malegudu, the elder brother. But it is said that they had been strengthened by magic charms which make a person mad who looks at them with his eyes. He will behave like a mad person, he will leave his home, go away and move to another country and dwell there. 643 789

3. They say when Malegudu had looked at the fire-stick and the calabash, he left the land of his father, went to Vendaland and died there. Kheêbe the younger son who had quarrelled with him about the chieftainship was treated in the same way as the elder one. He left the country went to Thôvôlô[45] and died there. 173 643

4. So the chieftainship was given the daughter of Mogôdô namely Možaži I. She had a daughter called Masala-Navô. She followed her mother in the chieftainship.

5. Masala-Navô had no child until her old age. But she had a younger sister. She had two children. The first child was a boy, the second one a girl. The girl-child called Khesêthwane was chosen to be chief. She is Možaži who governs still to-day.

[45] In Portuguese-East-Africa.

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561 are not at all anxious that their children should be taught craftsmanship in the mission schools.

887 In contrast to our customs, education never ends. As the physiological capacities vary, so new activities are undertaken. The culture always provides a place for the aptitudes of every stage of life, and neither men nor women become redundant in their old age, unless, indeed, they are utterly decrepit. With their physical decline, the culture provides new avenues and interests, to which they are continuously adjusting themselves. They suffer no sense of frustration, because their adjustments are dynamic. With us old age may be tragic: among women, the menopause may precipitate a crisis; among men, retiring from work often causes loss of interest in life and mental decay. But old Lovedu men and women always have something more to learn and to do. Women are not perturbed about external signs of age and complacently accept the end of their childbearing years, for these years bring increased influence, a fuller life, and greater rewards. If physical disability excludes old men from active political life, they receive ample compensation in reduced responsibilities and added prestige. There is no sense of impotence that upsets their balance. Instead, the changing sphere of their roles and their interests both keeps them stable and makes them precious to the society. The distress of old age among us is seldom seen, for rewards always stimulate the new adjustments that have to be made. Utter decrepitude is, however, a tragedy, fortunately ended by the neglect that we may regard as pitiless, but which realistically eliminates those who cannot attain even the mediocre level of achievement that the society calls for. He who cannot attain this level cannot make simple adjustments. But he who can still use his faculties in his old age may become a doctor of note, or a recognized authority on tribal legends or history. Finally, the psychological effect of beliefs attaching to the very old is to provide them with new incentives and renewed opportunities. The widespread suspicion that they have personal contacts with the world of darkness enhances their power, while their elevation, in anticipation, to godhead, for they are already so near death that they may be referred to as gods (*vadimo*), invests their dignity and their wishes with a supernatural halo.

871 Beside this all-pervasive system of tribal education, the modern school, 197 with its three R's, is as yet of small importance. It reaches, and only in 177 an attenuated form, no more than 3 to 5 per cent. of the children. Its methods are foreign, divorced from life; its teachers are immature, handicapped by inadequate equipment and by being uprooted from the soil of tribal culture. Yet the modern school is the force of the future. Education is passionately desired by the young, and the old would welcome it if they did not feel that it was subversive. There is no compulsion upon a scholar to become a Christian; but the belief persists that education and Christianity are inseparable. It is a belief that raises an awkward dilemma: must the school, which at the same time is the gateway to Christianity, give up its task of breaking down, or can it compromise with superstition? Can it work from within, integrated into the culture, without defeating its purpose? The answer cannot be given here. The task of the school and the Church is no less prodigious and delicate than

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the difficulties of the young boy or girl are great and the conflicts within him irreconcilable. He is ragged by other scholars unless he also attends church; he is discouraged from playing with his friends, the pagans who do not attend school; he is deprived of the joys of dancing and drumming. The *khɔba* and play-housekeeping are taboo to him. Tensions and maladjustments arise: Christian girls disgrace themselves and outrage Christian sentiment by having more illegitimate children than pagans; people laugh when they see Christian men attending beer-drinks and scornfully remark upon the bad manners of pretentious school-children.

The school, nevertheless, has made a notable contribution. Its teachings have some immediate life-adjustment value. Reading and writing, a training for a profession, a knowledge of English or Afrikaans are valuable aids in the economic struggle. But more important in the modern world is the long-run adjustment value of the outlook engendered in the schools. In the culture-contact situation, with the scales weighted in favour of a capacity to accommodate oneself to European thought and methods, the training of the school prepares the way to some measure of co-operation with agricultural demonstrators, European health officers, and those who are concerned with the reclamation of the reserves. The idea of progress takes root and, though it is a perverted idea, it provides new incentives and counteracts the sense of frustration before the march of an overwhelming force, the force of Western culture.

Unfortunately, the gains are counterbalanced by the losses. It may be that the losses are temporary, because, on the one hand, they are losses from the point of view of the old culture and, on the other, in a period of transition there must inevitably be tensions and conflicts. Men are guided by vast systems of values and sentiments, built up laboriously by centuries of tradition; these cannot be replaced by a new set of standards inculcated by a single institution, such as the modern school, especially when that institution uses ineffective techniques and is external to the main trends of the culture. Some of the losses are not inevitable: it is not the school as such which disables educated young men from accepting manual labour and housework. It might even be possible to avoid the loss of that valuable body of veldlore which the herdboys learn during the years of herding. Boys and girls need the three R's; they need to understand and trust the ways of the white man; but they also need the knowledge and the standards that make life worth while in the society of which they are part. It is the task of the school to take account, not of one, but of all these needs.

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177 to the European hardened Lovedu antagonism and resistance both to the European and to his protégés.

THE ICONOCLASM OF CHRISTIANITY

177 797 Effective European contact with the tribes of the lowveld began only in the decade 1880–90. At first Mujaji II hoped to play off Christianity and the secular authorities against one another, but they proved to be inseparable allies. Christianity in those days tolerated no compromise with pagan practices: it could not envisage the salvation of souls except through sweeping away heathen custom. It interceded on behalf of the Native against the encroachments of an acquisitive society, but conducted its crusade with the support of the civil arm of that society. When Mujaji was recalcitrant, she was reminded of the fate of Sekukuni (1877) and Cetewayo (1879); when she complained that the new creed was iconoclastic, Albasini replied that the Government also 'had the Book'; and when farms were parcelled out to settlers, the missionary became landlord of 4,856 acres and exacted labour and fees from his tenants. The Native was already angered by the raids of Buys, servant of the Republic, freebooter, and 'upperhead or great captain', and of Albasini, Native commissioner, Portuguese trader, and self-appointed chief of the Magwamba (Knobnose-Shangana-Tonga). Thus he could hardly have been expected to receive with open arms either the missionary or the settler.

The highest praise is due to the missionary for his superhuman efforts, his espousal of the cause of the Native, his intercession that gave the Lovedu their location, his unrewarded labour of love, and the inestimable gift of education and a new outlook on life that he brought. Too little has been made of these services, of the difficulties overcome and of the ingratitude he encountered. Khashani, first evangelist and royal kinsman, was martyred (1884); and so fierce was the resistance to Christianity that the drought of 1881–2 was attributed to those who were its apostles. But all this we must pass over, for it is with the reception of Christianity and Western culture into Lovedu culture and its response to the challenge that we are concerned.

The historical background of Christianity is a sharp differentiation of converts from pagans, in order to minimize the danger of relapsing and to ensure the growth of solidarity and communal interests in splendid Christian isolation. But the result was the ranging of Christians and pagans in opposite camps and fierce conflicts of loyalty. The history of Western culture is not distinct all along the line from Christianity, but it may be distinguished as distant and distasteful control rather than direct and deliberate disruption of custom, causing hindrances and frustrations and antagonism among all sections, not preaching a new way of life to the carefully segregated few.

The great changes effected by Christianity are those among converts. Half a century of evangelization has brought forth conversion among 3 to 5 per cent. of the Lovedu. Beyond this small insulated minority there have been repercussions, but, owing to the segregation of the Christians in mission settlements and the protective secrecy of the pagans, these repercussions have not been great.

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By far the greatest concentration of Christians is upon Medingen, the mission-owned farm. In 1936 the total population of Medingen was 1,870, of whom 893, or just over 47 per cent., were Christians. In 1911 the population was 1,731, and, as nearly as can be determined, 780, or 45 per cent., were Christians; and the figures respectively for 1921 were 1,883 and 990, or 52 per cent. The striking fact is that, despite the many influences favouring an increase of numbers, the percentage of Christians has remained practically stationary. The most powerful missionizing agent is the school, which is attended by about 300 children, who tend to complete their school careers with confirmation; moreover, in the past, Christians from everywhere sought sanctuary on the mission station, while there are powerful evangelizing forces on the station as well as obstacles to the settlement there of pagans. Figures of increases or decreases are not available for the rest of Uulovedu, where one of the most significant phenomena is the relapse to paganism in the last decade of large numbers of the royal sons. Among those who have relapsed, however, an impression has been made, though often they are, like the sophisticated Native, the most implacable enemies of the faith in which they have been nurtured. It is the disruptive effect of Christianity upon custom as seen among converts living on mission stations that we propose first of all to examine, turning thereafter to positive contributions among these converts and ending with a brief consideration of the repercussion among the rest of the population.

The distinctive feature of Christianity is that it breaks down in order to build up. In the form in which it appears on the mission stations it is not merely hostile to repugnant custom, but also works against everything that can be recognized as custom. Converts and their teachers hold that, without complete and irrevocable severance from traditional values, the emotional background easily reasserts itself and undoes the work of Christianity. Participation even in innocent heathen life evokes disturbing associations. To outlaw merely the repugnant part of a custom is useless; the prohibition must be total. An attempt to differentiate is like an attempt to give reasons; the reasons for a thing are liable to be confused with its substance and explanations often merely obscure the issue. The old, even if only doubtfully incompatible with Christian practices or beliefs, must not be presented to conscious attention. Hence Christianity draws the individual away from all things tribal. Compromises are impossible upon such questions as the freedom of the sexes, beer-drinking, polygyny, and among the older population even *munywalo* (bride-price); there is no room for a liberal interpretation of our system of religion or morality. The policy in the past has never been to graft the new upon the old; it has been to destroy the cultural pattern and to substitute another, irrespective of whether it could be woven into the remainder of the social scheme or harmonized with existing beliefs and institutions.

This is not an indictment of missionary effort; it is the result of a considered policy conceived to be in the best interests of posterity. The mission had, from the earliest times, to contend with lack of discipline, slackness where there was no supervising foreman irritating habits of

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177 duplicity and ingratitude, suspicion, and attempts to take advantage of
797 kindness. These were construed as barbaric traits that had to be uprooted. There appeared, in addition, to be an unusually large number of anti-Christian practices: the tribal justice, proceeding upon no fixed principles, seemed corrupt; there were periodical smellings-out of witches; people believed in the divinity of the queen. Dancing and drumming were obnoxious, not merely because they were 'heathenish din', but also because of their association with the idolatry of the *digoma* and the 'schools', the sexual laxity at the *gisha* dances and possession by spirits.
[533] There were also mendicant minstrels who played the xylophone (*dibila*) and sang for their food and lodging, whose songs did not always express Christian sentiments. One, for instance, not long ago, used to sing, 'Christians are cheats who put us to sleep before we eat [referring to grace], so as to kill us unawares', and another's song rang more crudely: 'The husbandless woman climbs to the roof of the hut; she urinates and the rats fall down in a faint'.

Early Church policy laid down what should be outlawed on mission-owned farms; wife-purchase, shrines, *digoma*, rain-making, witchcraft, divination, 'strengthenings with medicine', the consecration of weapons, and other repugnant customs. It stamped as particularly reprehensible theft, sexual offences, opposition to the Church, and, later, migration to seek employment in the sinful towns. The sanctions with which it can enforce obedience upon a self-governed estate include refusal of such privileges as baptism and confirmation, public denunciation in church, various penalties, such as road-making and catechism classes, and even expulsion from the mission station. Natives believe that the whole system is served by a network of espionage, and the intrinsic difficulties of the situation have been immensely increased by the fact that financially the mission station largely relies upon the contributions in fees and work of its tenants. On one occasion a self-constituted committee of disaffected tenants in Johannesburg, who were in arrears, accused the mission of capitalistic exploitation and of robbing the Natives of their country, and drastic action was necessary.

177 The Christian attack upon the marriage pattern and especially polygyny
795 has led to many subtle reactions. Devout Christians of the old order still
184 refuse to accept cattle, but surreptitiously pocket money payments which by the nature of the case can be used to subserve personal, not social, ends. The Church no longer sets its face against *mukwalo*, but seeks to turn it into a kind of dowry, and Christians call it 'thanks'. The Christian's freedom of choice of a mate weakens the reciprocities and emphasizes independence and materialism at the price of the patterns of co-operation and long-range mutuality. A Christian often marries a non-relative, but cannot easily escape the complex net thrown over the whole social structure by the cattle exchange. He may have to face the opposition of those relatives whose displeasure may cause illness to him or his family. If he marries a second wife, his cross-cousin, he is excommunicated, and he will be unable, even on his death-bed, to secure the final consolation and blessing of the Church unless he sets aside his pagan wife. Polygyny, the inheritance of wives, and beer are so deeply rooted in

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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58 and married Nakampe (G), Mogodo's son by another wife.
602 Makeakati's (C's) 'house' had first claim on the daughter of
[597] the man (her father's brother) who had used her cattle, but as her son was a Christian the girl was given to the son of a different 'house'.

Once a link has been created by a marriage a bride-giving-bride-receiving relationship follows, which tends to be reinforced not only by one but by numerous subsequent marriages. Thus, A married a girl from lineage B. Both his sons and his grandson followed in his footsteps (see Figure 4).

595 The same tendency is present in Lobedu polygyny where the
602 sororate is very popular. Most Lobedu who are not Christians have more than one wife. But it will almost always be found

58 LINEAGE A LINEAGE B
602

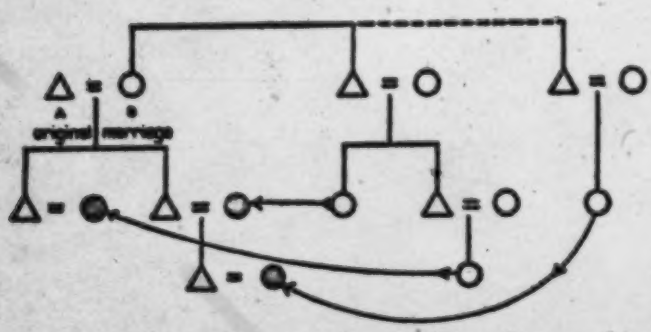

FIG. 4. Reinforcement down the generations of a marriage link between two lineages.

595 that at least one is a sister or younger relative of one of the
602 other wives. Thus M, a chief councillor, married seven wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's daughter; (2) his mother's half-brother's daughter; (3) his mother's half-brother's daughter's son's daughter; (4) a non-relative; (5) a non-relative; (6) his mother's brother's son's daughter (brother's daughter to No. 2 and therefore a wife's brother's daughter); (7) a sister to (1) by the same father but a different mother.

S, a man in his thirties, has three wives: (1) his mother's mother's brother's daughter; (2) a non-relative and (3) the uterine sister of his first wife.

Old K had five wives: (1) his mother's uterine brother's

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absence of their menfolk at labour centres, reported everything that took place to B. Later C moved away from his uterine brother B and in 1961 there were three separate homesteads.

The cleavage in a homestead then is on 'house' lines, though uterine brothers living together after the death of their father also eventually separate. The break may be the result of an accusation of witchcraft or there may be an amicable separation as in the case described above. Reasons for separating vary: Batamedi moved away from his uterine brother, a district headman, to satisfy political ambitions—he hoped to be made headman of an area to which his family had an ancient claim; Poke, a married man, left the homestead of his brother with his mother and siblings for health reasons, suspecting that someone in the homestead might be bewitching him and hoping that a change would improve his condition. After many years in a different district, he returned to live in the original homestead. Sons do not move away before the death of their father unless there has been a quarrel in which their mothers are involved, or unless they become Christians and marry Christian girls. Even the death of the father does not necessarily bring about the separation of his sons; brothers and half-brothers may live together for years. As they marry more wives the size of the families increases, the homestead becomes more congested, the likelihood of quarrels greater and gradually the 'houses' move asunder. If half-brothers and brothers have not separated before, then the final break-up of the old homestead will come with the death of the eldest brother. For it is rare for a man to live under a young heir of the generation below him. Close religious and social ties, however, persist long after separation. Half-brothers continue to 'inherit' each other's wives and there may be a good deal of co-operation in work-parties and much consultation in family affairs. Lobedu homesteads are stable over long periods and there is a great value attached to remaining together.

Preferential Marriage down the Generations

The development of the 'houses' in a homestead, leading to the gradual segmentation of the domestic group and separation of

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583 There are scores of aspects we cannot even touch upon. There are rules as to the kind of cattle or other beasts that may properly be used as *munywalo*: the rules may seem curious to us, but they have their reason in social and other arrangements. The number seven is taboo, for [801] the seventh finger 'points', as does a witch when he says, 'You'll *see*,' and it is wrong so to point at one's in-laws, with whom co-operation is [825] essential. Similarly, as the size of the testicles of full-grown male animals is an insult, because it is a challenge, such uncastrated animals cannot be part of the *munywalo*. So also yellowish cattle presage jealousies between co-wives; they will cause the bride to run away. Marriage is patrilocal, otherwise a man is said 'to have been married by his wife'; it is good to live near, but not too near, one's wife's people; for, if proximity is an economic and social advantage, to live under the roof of the parents-in-law is to relinquish all authority in one's own home. Generally speaking, the bride's family do not call the bridegroom to help them with actual work, such as building huts or ploughing. But the idea of service instead of, or in addition to, *munywalo* is faintly reflected in the fact that men now still living were required towards the end of the ceremonial to build a hut for their parents-in-law. The rule was that, when bridegroom had completed the hut, he climbed to the roof and refused to come down until the bride was immediately released to go home with him and she by greeting (*hu lɔsha*) signified her willingness to come. Such a hut in case of divorce counted as one head of cattle. And perhaps we should add, though it is clearly implied in all we have said, that no one except the boy's parents contributes and no one except the house of the girl's mother receives the *munywalo*. More than that, a man cannot help the son of one house by taking the cattle of another, for it is said, 'One house cannot eat the property of another,' though this, as everything else, is subject to the supreme principle that 'if they agree', the rigidity of the rule may be relaxed. It may involve difficult readjustments, but agreement is conceived as being able to overcome the difficulties. Sometimes also a relative who has brought up the bride is given one of the beasts of her *munywalo*, but it is not a custom as in many tribes, it is merely a matter of agreement.

581 The sexual aspect of marriage is treated with great moderation. Among us, where love looms large and represents a romantic ideal when we are young, it more often than not ends in disillusionment when we are old. The structure of Lovedu society lays no stress upon sexual compatibility, and marriage almost completely ignores sexual adjustments. Co-operation and agreement as regards its main purposes, both economic and structural, not companionship of husband and wife, is the ideal. Agreement is the watchword of the society, the guarantee of harmonious relations between spouses as well as co-wives. In describing the possible relations and dispositions within the family, no phrase is more frequently used than the phrase, 'if they agree'. No custom, no rule, no arrangement, decreed by the laws of the family, are absolute; and because the *khɔrɔ* judicial proceedings deal with difficulties in the family and in the social structure, they also are guided and controlled by agreement and compromises. And so it is agreement, not sexual compatibility, which is the

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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On [883] moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khoro* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels [786] and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however, 241 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in 221 much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides the seasons into three: *khilemo*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *lełavula*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *maria*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

241 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February, 221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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In the Lovedu configuration of values, moderation is allied to toleration of differences. The Lovedu do not attach much importance to precision and punctuality, rigid procedures and meticulous fulfilment of promises. Time is not valued and the word for slowness or absence of hurry is the same as that for goodness or moral virtue (*vuya*); the only way to ask a man to go slowly is to ask him to go in a good manner (*ga vuya*). Time is not the first consideration, for most actions can, within certain limits, be performed to-morrow as well as to-day. 'The far-off well causes thirst', they say, implying that one should drink [beer] where one can and not rigidly pursue some distant goal; the saying is an appraisal of opportunism as against inflexible purposes. Interest very rarely centres in exact forms, word-perfect formulas, or the precise execution of a rite. Prayers and spells are extempore, communications with the ancestors are often disturbed by gossip and intrusions, and consultation of a doctor about questions of life and death may be interrupted by all manner of irrelevancies. In the *khoro* the procedure does not rely upon set forms; there is toleration even of the differences of customs and laws in the districts; and great deviations from the norm are possible if people agree. An actual performance of a rite differs widely from the ideal description given by an informant. The important thing is always the broad pattern, the underlying spirit, not the exact form, the letter of the law; and magical power is hardly ever derived from a precise unfolding of a rite or adherence to meticulous details. The most highly formalized aspect of the culture is the *digoma* complex, where we seem to see the remnants of a highly ceremonious outlook upon life, which was characterized by secret societies, masked gods, and symbolic objects, and by esoteric mysteries enmeshed in fixed forms and calendric observances. The obscure symbolism of the drum cult is inscrutable, but its dramatic interest keeps it alive, even if the power of its mysteries and mummeries appears to challenge the prerogatives of the queen.

Toleration of variations is necessary among the Lovedu to effect the incorporation and willing co-operation of so many divergent elements, especially in view of the fact that the ruling group has neither the means nor the inclination to impose its will by force; it is also implied in the autonomy of the districts and necessitates the elaboration of the links which overcome the weaknesses of decentralization. Variability adds to the scope of individual expression, permitting of the realization of very different temperaments and avoiding the dangers of repression. This is so because individuality will have, within the limits of the pattern, great play, not only in specific situations, such as rites and ceremonies in which the forms are not rigid, the roles of persons not fixed, and the precedences and procedures not invariable, but also in whole societies in which wide expanses of culture are not externalized in conventions or ceremonial. This is true of specific Lovedu rites, ceremonies, and institutions, as well as of Lovedu culture as a whole. Another aspect of the idea that man has many potentialities and many ways of realizing them is expressed in the saying, 'Man is an elephant; he does not eat one [kind of] plant only'—that is, he should try many things.

The socially stressed Lovedu values and the social arrangements are,

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171 The *gɔmana* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend
778 *gɔmana* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an
881 outsider. The *gɔmana* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *zwidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and
772 magic (*vuŋaga*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of
821 the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digɔma*. The seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digɔma*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal
811 evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a
821 much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu. To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: man and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of
772 the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from con-
811 ditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desiccation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon
821 the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Lenwa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *dere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches. 753 772 811 821

'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mashɔthɔjɔ* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death. 772 789 811 821 766 757 831

Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is 783 753

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

[787] The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again.

[789] Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figchcla*) unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 826 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ɖere* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 766 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ɖere*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are 754 sometimes called *mashəthɔjɔ*, because they *rəthəja* (cause to be cool,

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754 send misfortune by means of medicine. The witch may mix your footprint with medicine or put a medicated thorn in the path you usually take, to cause pain in the leg, which gradually passes into the rest of the body and kills you. He may cause your death by pointing a medicated finger at you, or using water you have washed in or clothes you have worn. Hair and nails are, however, not much used in witchcraft and only a few people, more especially women, are careful about their disposal. To point at a man in a menacing way, or to say the words, 'You will see' (*u ḑɔ vɔna*), suffices, should evil befall him, as ground for an imputation of witchcraft. In a violent quarrel between a woman who had a child by her lover and the lover whom she had jilted because the liaison was causing trouble with her husband, the angry lover flung out the challenge, 'You've got a daughter who is my blood, yet you love me no longer. You will see!' A few weeks later the child became ill and died. The mother, overcome with grief and fury, carried her dead to the lover's house and threw it down, saying, 'Here is your meat. Cook it and eat it.' This phraseology suggests, though no one believes, that witches eat human flesh; it was construed merely as a dramatic accusation and created quite a stir; but it was considered justifiable in view of his threat. The *mugɔme* to whom the matter was taken pointed out, not the lover, but the woman's own husband as the culprit. When the latter, refusing to accept the verdict and to pay his bet, was required to leave the area, his wife, a staunch believer in his innocence, accompanied him. Use of *malego* by ordinary people is witchcraft, but its use by doctors against one another is legitimate. Doctors often 'try' their skill against one another: one doctor, we were told, turned himself into an elephant for the purpose of attacking his rival; not to be outdone, the latter became a bird and flew away.

754 Sending lightning, to cause lightning to strike (*hu tiisa ḑadi*), is a
821 common means of harming one's enemies employed by day-witches. To say of a person, 'He knows lightning', is tantamount to calling him a witch, for, unlike the Zulu, the Lovedu have no socially recognized lightning doctors. The Lovedu distinguish two kinds of lightning—natural or 'lightning of the bird' and 'sent' lightning. The former comes with rain and is caused by the lightning bird, which has blue feathers and looks somewhat like a goose with large feet. These birds get no food unless there is lightning and then their food is the *xuhululu*, the blue-headed tree lizard. When the bird strikes a tree, it leaves its urine as a white substance at the root; then doctors come and take the soil into which it has soaked to be used as medicine to cause lightning or for curing burns. Natural lightning, in theory and according to the diagnosis of the dice, is believed to strike only trees or rocks far from villages, never animals or people; but some say that it is dangerous to men in autumn, when it follows the sweet sorghum spat out on the road. 'Sent' lightning, on the other hand, strikes near the village, killing cattle or people. It comes with little or no rain and is more terrifying than that of the lightning bird. Lightning is judged almost solely by its results: if it does no harm it is natural; if it strikes any one or destroys anything in the village it is *ḑadi ya vathu* or *khiḑadi muthwana*, 'sent' by people.

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Doctors frequently 'try' one another by sending lightning. A lightning witch may either fly himself or may smear medicine on a dove or a red-winged locust which, when it thunders, is able to 'go with the lightning' and strike where its owner wishes. Use of the lightning bird itself for this purpose is impossible. A man who himself strikes as lightning must be scarified with medicine containing some portion of the lightning bird, and when learning to strike may be taken to a high desolate place where he is taught accuracy by being required to strike one of a number of aloes in a row. An informant once saw a man with black-and-white stripes all over his body and two branches tied to his hips; he concluded that this must be a lightning witch (*cf.* the striped hyena with its mane of upright hair on neck or along back, or the striped polecat, which bristles up its tail in anger). One who controls lightning is able to prevent it from striking him by cutting or piercing the flash with a medicated axe or spear, telling it to go elsewhere. Lightning frequently strikes villages and people in Ɓulovedu and in many instances some accusation is brought before the court. Huts may be magically protected against lightning. If a witch strikes a protected village, it is believed that he will 'fall', change into a person, and can then be caught. There are no taboos against milking or working during lightning, but the day after it has struck the whole district has a holiday. 754 821

Day-witches use several other techniques. A very common form of day-witchcraft is *hu lesa* (to cause to eat), the introduction of medicine into beer or food, which on being swallowed turns into an indigestible piece of meat or other object that makes one ill. Most people one meets have at some time or other suffered from *khileso*. To pour real poison into food (*hu shɛla khitaba*) is a modern though still very uncommon method of killing. *Hu fahɛltja* (*hu fa*, to die, *hu ɛltja*, to cause to go for) is to cause a person to leave home, e.g. for European employment, and die far away. This is done chiefly by day-witches, but also sometimes by night-witches; it is, however, neither common nor well-known. Modern conditions, with increased tribal contacts in European towns, have led to a tremendous increase in day witchcraft. New methods and medicines for *hu lega*, unknown in the tribe before, are being introduced. Some even go so far as to say that the sending of lightning is a relatively recent thing from Nareni. 754

There are many practices bordering on witchcraft, indistinguishable from day-witchcraft in technique and method of procedure, but considered legitimate and therefore not witchcraft in the true sense. Some of these are so close to, that they are sometimes looked upon as witchcraft. The deciding factor in such cases is always the result: if it causes death it is witchcraft; if it does not, or if it is done with an object that is recognized as legitimate, it is not witchcraft. *Hu dabɛka* is essentially legitimate. Its technique consists in changing the nature of things, making medicated pieces of the skin of an animal turn into the animal itself, changing a person's sex, and one of the best-known doctors in Loveduland is skilled in *madabi*. It is a technique confined to men, employed to make a woman marry you or to frighten her into coming back to you when she has run away. No one has ever heard of a woman sending 754 789

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CHAPTER XV

THE RAIN CULT

The rain-queen in her sphere of safeguarding the seasons—technique of transforming the clouds—evils that cause 'heat' and act as impediments to rain—'cooling' rites counteracting the 'heat' of the earth.

As the centre of the agricultural cycle, rain is the focus of many human interests; as the elixir of life, it is one of the ultimate bases of man's sense of security; and as a manifestation of celestial grace, it is the supreme justification of the divine right of the queen to rule. The queen is primarily not a ruler, but a rain-maker, and men rely for their security, not on regimentation, armies, and organization, but on the queen's power to make rain for the tribe and to withhold rain from its enemies. All ultimate reliances are based upon the magico-religious world, and rain-making and its cult are an important part of that world. The rain cult is not composed of a few magical passes made by the queen; it is a whole complex of institutions with ramifications through many aspects of tribal life. The cult is not confined to measures taken to secure rain in times of drought; its observances must be kept at all times and a good year involves as much care on the part of the queen as a bad one.

The chief actor in the rain cult is the queen. During life, she is not merely the Transformer of the Clouds, but she is regarded as the changer of the seasons and guarantor of their cyclic regularity; when she dies, the seasons are out of joint and drought is inevitable. Her very emotions affect the rain: if she is dissatisfied, angry, or sad, she cannot work well, and in 1934–5, when the first rains did not come till December, the drought was attributed to her being upset at her daughter's liaison with a commoner. Her rain-making is not confined to dramatic ceremonies in time of severe drought; it is conceived of as continuous care throughout the summer. Furthermore, the Lovedu do not attribute every fall of rain to some special activity or volition on the part of their queen, but rather believe that the queen exercises some general control or care which ensures a good season.

Such being the powers of the queen, she is the person to be approached when there is no rain, not only at the beginning of the season, but any time during the summer in a country in which three weeks' drought might ruin the maize crop. There are various ways of doing this. Great councillors or important relatives may approach the queen in person, saying, 'The people are crying,' and asking her to help them. When there was no rain, Mugwena, related to the queen through his mother, used to walk near the queen's hut complaining, in a voice calculated to reach the royal ears, that it was a bad thing for the chief to kill his people by withholding rain. When the first summer storm of 1937 opened with much lightning and thunder, the two chief councillors mentioned informally to the queen at beer that they hoped she would ward off wind and thunder and give them a good year. Heads of districts approach the queen (*hu lova*) with a gift, usually nowadays of £1 or £1 10s., and very often

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643 789 535 821 bring with them in addition dancing performers (*gɔsha*) to please her and to evoke her pity at the sorrowful sight of people dancing in summer when they ought to be ploughing. The movements of this dancing do not differ from those of ordinary dancing, but the music consists of *lesugu* songs sung also at the annual harvest ceremony, on the death of important royal people, and at the girls' initiation 'school'.

643 789 535 538 821 The most renowned of all dancing for rain is the *legɔbathɛle*, a special kind of *gɔsha*, the mourning dance of a section of Thɔvɔlɔ people living under one of the district heads, Mavulana. It is more dignified, its movements slower and more stately, and its drumming more subdued than in an ordinary *gɔsha*. So lightly are the drums struck that the clear, silvery, varied tones of the reed pipes ring out like the peal of bells. Only two drums are used, and none but those who have lost at least one parent may perform, and it is begun in the dim light of the dawn before sunrise, when, after a short spell, it stops and is resumed later in the day. When some one person has greatly angered the queen, and drought is believed to be due to her displeasure on this account, the married women from all the villages in the royal neighbourhood assemble every morning after cooking to dance, singing, 'We are being killed on account of a bogyman in skins' (*re vulaiwa gi Madikadyana di vɛlɛvɛḍana*). Grandmothers nurse the babies and encourage the younger women with their trillings and dancing movements. The dust rises high and by sunset they are black with dirt and sweat; but next day and the next they come again, sometimes for as long as a week, till rain falls or continued drought makes it clear that some other cause is operating as well. The great hardship this dancing entails (for nursing mothers who perform have no time to feed their babies) is thought to melt the heart of the queen. Too much rain, as well as too little, is laid at the door of the queen. On one occasion, when it had rained almost incessantly for six weeks, the chief councillor said in the presence of the queen, 'Fat does not fill the pot' (*makhura a a ḍale bija*), meaning that there can be too much of a good thing—a hint to the queen to regulate things better.

643 789 821 There is no belief that is stronger in the tribe even to-day than that in the power of the queen to transform the clouds. This does not, however, mean that they do not recognize the regularity of the seasons. People know that the month of February is generally the rainiest in the year; that the month *Morenane* (October), when the Southern Cross sets just before bedtime, is the time when the first rains are approaching, and no one would *lova* rain in winter any more than Europeans would organize a day of prayer for rain in that season. Yet if rain does not come at its proper time or the season is generally bad, it may be said, 'The queen has not changed the hoeing season [i.e. the year] nicely' (*a va fedula ledzema ha vutse*); for if the cycle of seasons is considered inevitable, whether the new year is brought in propitiously or otherwise is in the hands of the queen.

643 791 Though renowned as the greatest rain-maker in South Africa, Mujaji never works alone. She always has a rain-doctor, of whom there are many in the tribe, to work with her. She chooses any renowned doctor, but may change him for another if people complain that the rain is bad—

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by 789
the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told 261
that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen 643
can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if 789
they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of 766
rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figthela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 821
'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, 754
spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering 766
(*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why [824]
witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' (*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *ɖere* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *hu pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts 821
of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, 527
after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khumela*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

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821 has been reached), and we were told that in the old days men of import-
527 ance used to come and condole with (*hu emela*) the chief on such a day, as though to sympathize with her in the frustration of her efforts. There are other holidays associated with rain. On the day after the first rain of the season has fallen no hoeing or fieldwork is to be done. Such a holiday is called *le-nkhi-nteme* (do not cut me), as if the earth, believed still to be hot, dislikes being broken up by the hoeing. Such a holiday is also observed after the rain charms have 'bitten' the new termites and first-fruits of the year and when, any time during the summer, rain falls after two of three weeks drought, it is called *muene* (guest or stranger) and the next day observed as a holiday, for one honours a guest.

766 Wrong burials which stop the rain are righted by the use of *mufugo*
821 medicine and the water obtained by squeezing the undigested stomach
789 contents (*muswane*) of a sheep down a hole made in the grave with a stick
842 and reaching the body. This is thought to disperse the 'wind' and cool the grave. The flesh of the sheep is eaten without salt. The conception is thus of a grave agitated by ghostly heat and wind, which may be 'laid' by 'cooling', or, as we might say, calming, in the treble sense often of pacifying [the ghost], modifying [the heat], and causing [the wind] to subside. *Mufugo*, the medicine so important in the removal of impediments to rain, has to be obtained from the queen and a specially appointed person is responsible for doling it out in bottles when needed. The office is not conceived to be hereditary, but it has been held by a Mudiga family for some time, being handed down by father to son. When the last official in charge of *mufugo* died, his son was an unmarried man too young for the responsibility of office. Some five years later (1938), when the queen decided that he should assume charge, he protested his youth, though he then had two children, fearing that after contact with the medicine he might forget to wash his hands before eating and thus be rendered impotent. In this he had the full support of his mother, who prevailed upon the queen to allow an older relative to undertake the work provisionally; but the present position is that, should this old man be away, the heir to the office will have to act. Whether *mufugo* is identical with the rain medicine of the rain-pots is not quite clear; but, whatever its ingredients may be, it is considered extremely dangerous, liable to rob men and women of their fertility, and great care is thus necessary when working with it.

789 Sometimes it is said that 'the country is not right' (*naha a e loge*) and
372 then there is a special ceremony in which all the fires in the country are put out with *mufugo*. No generally recognized set of circumstances lead up to such a line of action, nor is there any idea that the fires are defiled in any way. It is simply looked upon as a method of getting rain when there is drought, resorted to when the divining bones of the doctor declare it to be necessary. People sometimes say, 'Fires are put out to usher in a new year,' but this does not mean that putting out the fires is an annual ceremony, as it is, for instance, among the Pedi. The word 'year' must not be taken literally, just as it does not refer to an abstract period of time in the phrase, 'The year has been infected by *hu khuma*', when what is meant is that the rain charms have 'weakened' (*hu khoma*). In this ceremony

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which 789
the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, 372
when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of
mufugo and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gummifera*) to every village [824]
in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard
and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are
cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used [842]
that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been
smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new
fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a
brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In
return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or
groundnuts, which they eat in the *khɔrɔ*. Each married man in turn must
give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s*. or a
fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other
gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khɛthe*), anything may
be given. Each boy must give 1*s*. or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping
the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on
the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine,
took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water,
which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay
five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps 821
have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the 769
close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the 782
queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khaḍa; sometimes it is Mugɔdɔ's
sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's
brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery,
instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place
only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lova* the
queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods
to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lova*, 787
but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 643
'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the 789
queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The
reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for
the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case,
no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as
to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome
spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it
was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to
do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital
approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she
impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but
they have "weakened" (*hu figchɛla*) it. They want me to be troubled.'
She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people them-
selves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft,
had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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were placed on the grave, the assembled people greeted and trilled as before, the queen took away her little horn from the grave, and they all departed, carrying the sheep to an open spot some distance from the grave. Here they kindled a large fire and began cooking the meat in two large pots, one containing the internal organs (*mala*) and head, which, on this occasion, are not to be eaten by women of child-bearing age. Normally *mala* of a slaughtered animal are the portion *par excellence* of the women. While the meat was cooking, the doctor took a potsherd containing the 'water' of the stomach contents, his medicine bags and a stick of *khadi* creeper, and proceeded alone to the grave. It is surmised that he must have made a hole in the grave to pour down the water and medicine.

Meanwhile the clouds which had been in the sky at dawn had thickened and, while the pots were still cooking, rain fell and extinguished the fires, which had to be rekindled. The meat was eaten on the spot by all present and just before they all departed the bones were collected, wrapped in the skin, and placed on the grave. Prior to this, however, the doctor had spoken seriously to the councillors to approach the chief about the *pukudi* in the valley below, where a woman who had died in childbirth had been buried 'in the open' without *mufugo*. Ten days later the doctor was called to set the matter right.

This sacrifice is exceedingly rare, but it illustrates well the significant and usual intermingling of religious with what we should call purely magical rites. Thus, as the prayer is offered, it is rain medicine, which works by magic, not beer, the food of the gods, that is poured. The royal grave is treated, not to propitiate the gods, but to constrain them, to keep them cool so that they will be unable to stop the rain. The sheep is an offering to the gods, a tangible indication that men still 'care for' their ancestors, but the use of the stomach contents on the grave falls into the magical pattern. Another point worth mentioning is that the queen was only one of several officiators: even her divinity does not give her precedence over the nearest living descendants in approaching the complaining spirits.

It has been shown that a great variety of steps can be taken to procure rain, their nature depending upon what is believed to be causing the drought. If the queen herself is thought responsible, and this is usually believed to be the case in the first instance, then her subjects will *lowa* her with gifts or dances to excite her pity and to please her. If there have been wrong burials and rain taboos have been broken, these must be righted, while if the trouble comes from the ancestors, they must be placated. Sometimes one finds a combination of causes, but always it is the divining bones which decide what steps are to be taken. There are rain rites throughout the season, for not only may there be good rain in one area and not in another, but an inopportune period of drought in the best of seasons may have drastic effects on the crops. As an indication of the type of action taken in connexion with the rain cult in any one season, the following has been taken from our diary for the season 1937–8, by no means a very bad year, but one in which the rainfall was below the average:

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1937	
789 821 November 12th	A rain-doctor sent to make rain at Mtimkulu's village, a petty Shangana-Tongs chief to the north, who had sent messengers to *lowa* a few days before.
November 14th	A thunderstorm, with very little rain, but a very strong wind, broke in the afternoon.
November 15th	Holiday observed to 'turn back' the rain which has been scattered by the wind.
November 23rd	Rain fell with much lightning, which struck at Khiobeni, one of the districts.
November 25th	There was a thunderstorm in which lightning struck at Khidommamathcka, a sub-area of the capital. The place was treated with medicine and in the evening soft rain fell, but not enough for ploughing.
December 2nd	Real set-in rain fell till the 3rd.
December 4th	Hoeing began.
December 8th	First termites brought, but given to dogs, as carried by girls above the age of puberty.
December 12th	First termites given to rain charms.
December 13th	Holiday.
1938	
January	Period of drought.
January 23rd	Mukupi, an important woman district head, came to speak to the queen, as there had been no rain for three weeks. The sun beat down fiercely and the crops were beginning to shrivel up. Several other district heads came to *lowa* with money.
February 11th	People were consulting doctors about the drought. Bones declared a sacrifice necessary. Councillors approached queen and messenger sent for a black sheep.
February 17th	Kheshidwa, the rain-doctor, called.
February 19th	District head at Muduveni (several farms, but an old area of tribe) came with £1 10*s.* to *lowa*.
March 1st-4th	*Legobathcle* dance for rain by the Thovolo.
February 22nd	Sacrifice at Maulwi. Some rain fell, but not very much.
March 2nd	Kheshidwa called to put right a grave. This was done on the 4th.
March 7th	Levaga, a district head from the north, came to *lowa* with £2.
April 2nd	Rain fell.

241 821 Some beliefs associated with the cultivation of *njugo* beans are relevant to our present subject. Among the Lovedu this crop is not planted until the mealies, among which it grows, are 1 ft. high, but this is regarded as a practical measure to prevent injury to the mealies rather than as dictated by the belief, firmly rooted and still put into practice by tribes to the south and south-east of Vuloredu, that *njugo* beans planted too early impede the rain. Only some Lovedu have this belief and no one, as far as we know, acts upon it; nor do the Lovedu pull up the young plants when there is no rain, which the Phalaborwa do, as one Lovedu suggested, because the beans look like hailstones. The Lovedu also say, but again

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as if it were a foreign conception, that no *njugo* beans should be planted during the year following the death of a chief. The association of rain and *njugo* beans seem to belong to a culture complex coming from the south. 241 821

The insistence nowadays is upon studying culture change as if it were a phenomenon important only in its relation to European contacts, but there has always been and there still is culture change of a different and, as far as the Lovedu are concerned, more vital nature. Even in the rain cult there have been changes. In the reign of Mujaji II, when the father of Kheshidwa succeeded Ramafalo as rain-maker, he instituted *hu ruma*, a new ceremony of medicating all hoes with *mufugo* before the hoeing of the queen's field of eleusine, a practice which has fallen into disuse with the recent abandonment of the queen's hillside field for one in the valley which can be ploughed. The breaking of taboos is not necessarily a reflection of the breakdown and decay of custom. Indeed, the technique of the rain cult was based on the assumption that taboos were broken. Breaches account for drought and the countervailing efficacy of the queen's measures explains her reputation and the confidence people have in her. Wrong burials are known to prevent rain, but, since people try to avoid the unpleasant publicity involved in getting *mufugo* for the burial of, say, an abortion or in burying it in a wet place, these wrong burials are always taking place. 789 821

Neither European contact nor Christianity has succeeded in breaking down the implicit belief of every member of the tribe in the power of the queen to make rain. True, no Christians take part in ceremonies for rain and some do not believe that such things as wrong burials affect rainfall; but they harmonize the new with the old faith by the rationalization that the queen makes rain with the help of God, for they have all seen and can cite corroborative evidence for the powers of the queen. That the queen herself is honest and genuinely believes not only in her own powers, but also in the outside influences that prevent her from achieving success, can be seen in the reply she gave to the messengers who came on February 19th, 1938, with £1 10s. from a one-time district head in her kingdom to beg for rain. 'Go,' she said, 'and tell the master of Muduveni that we are trying, but things will just not come right' (arrangements were being made for a sacrifice to the ancestors for rain). The money, however, was kept. 643 789

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say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is she also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu political pattern follows that of the centralized states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation.

643 772 182 [642]

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical. A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors.

773 [821] 773 776 [842]

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them,

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they deprecated his lack of practical sense and wondered whether he was losing his reason. What is significant to the Lovedu is not the origin but the maintenance of the order of nature. Interest in the continuity of natural forces centres, however, not on an abstract system, but on the benefit of man or rather of the Lovedu people. Among these forces the most important are those governing the auspicious movements of clouds and their transformation into rain. But they stand in no relation to the forces that brought the world into existence. Among Lovedu, in contrast for example to Oceanian peoples, there is consequently complete discontinuity between mythological origins, or the forces that operated at the dawn of the world, and present realities or the forces maintaining the existing order. Even the ancestor gods do not bridge this gap, and man's dependence upon them—and hence the force of religious sanctions—derives not from their relationship to the beginnings of things but from kinship principles.

Myths play an insignificant part in Lovedu life. Almost the only myths are legends of the institution of the present political order which give a generalized account of the migration of the royal nuclear group from Rhodesia and of the reigns of the various chiefs. There is no attempt in them to intensify the beliefs or validate the institutional arrangements underlying the sacred kingship. It is not these myths that give warranty to the queen's mystical credentials and to the complex of customs that supports them. Indeed today scant credence is accorded by the younger men to the legendary royal ancestry which traces the descent of the nuclear group to the Karanga of Monomotapa in Southern Rhodesia, for the Lovedu find it difficult to believe that they are related to a people who now appear to them to be inferior, lacking the prestige and aristocratic pretensions of their reputed ancestors. In one version of the myth the Lovedu broke away from Monomotapa under the younger 'chosen' son to whom the previous chief had given the rain-charms. He fled south as a result of his conflict with the eldest brother who had legal precedence. In another, it is a daughter who, having committed incest with her brother, escapes with the rain-charms and her infant son from her outraged father.

The legends are further concerned to explain the settlement of the Lovedu in their present environment: their choice was determined by the absence of red earth which would soil their loincloths and the abundance of *murula* trees and mounds of edible termites, both of which are valued and ritually significant items in their diet. A later dissension between two claimants to the throne is presented as a conflict between chief son and chosen son, and again the victory of the chosen son vindicates the divine right of the rain-maker against legal precedence, and in that way appears to justify the present flexible system of succession as against the challenge of the Northern Sotho emphasis on primogeniture and certainty. Just as the title to becoming ruler of a new tribe is in one version validated by the incest of brother and sister, so the later and equally momentous change from kings to queens is brought into relation with father-daughter incest.

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But the whole cycle of myths merely emphasizes in very general terms the importance of rain-making as a prerequisite of the claim to chieftainship and for the well-being of the tribe; it does not concern itself with justifying the validity of the various institutional arrangements that are the main support of the beliefs and values of the queen's mystical credentials. 773

Conception of the Natural Order

The Lovedu do not oppose man and nature. There are no explicit formulations of the nature of the universe, but a natural order inexorably going its ordained way is implicitly rejected in their conceptions. The assumption is that cosmic forces are controllable and, in fact, controlled at every turn by man for his own benefit. Since nature is of interest and importance only so far as it is or can be used by society, there is no such conception as a world order unrelated to man's activities and desires. The order of nature is a controlled one. There are various ways in which man is able to use and control powers in nature—by *vuŋaga* (the evil aspect of which is *vulsi*), i.e. by the use of power concentrated in certain persons and objects; by appeal to the ancestor-gods upon whom are projected the powers that the child experiences in relation to its parents; through the mysteries of the *digoma* which are associated with initiation and the fertility cult; and through the divinity of the queen whose concern it is to control nature in the interests of the tribe as a whole. This idea of the control of nature by the chief on behalf of the tribe is not unique; it is common among the Bantu tribes of South Africa. But the Lovedu emphasis is on the divine origin and special affinity with nature of the queen herself, whereas in tribes such as the Zulu and Tsonga, where the mystical relation of the chief to his people and his powers over nature have to be achieved by magical strengthening on his accession and to be renewed periodically, it is largely by means of the magic of the royal regalia that the chief is able to exercise control. Among all, including Lovedu, one of the most important factors in the powers and position of the chief is the fact that he is the living representative of the long line of royal ancestors (tribal gods). There is considerable overlapping of these four categories among the Lovedu. Thus ancestors are kept satisfied and happy by a charm placed in their shrine; the queen controls rain not only through her divinity but also by means of medicines and charms and appeals to her ancestors who can prevent her from making rain. Let us consider these means for the control of nature in greater detail. 821 772 643 [171] [769]

Vuŋaga (skilled use of power concentrated in persons and objects)

The forces of nature may be manipulated through properties intrinsic in various objects, animate and inanimate. The substances in which these attributes or powers (*maada*) reside are mainly *melimo* (medicines) or *mere* (plants). But the term medicines in this context has a wider connotation than the parallel term among us; it includes both medicine and magic, and is a medico-magical conceptual category which to the Lovedu is quite distinct 789 755

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643 physical imperfections, not susceptible to the ills that befall ordinary men; that she cannot die a natural death but departs only by her own volition; that succession to the throne is uncertain since the choice of a ruler must in the last resort be made by the spirits of the tribe; that though she may not have a husband, lest political control become concentrated in him, yet she must bear the heir by a secret consort (a royal classificatory brother) specially chosen to maintain untarnished the purity of the royal blood; that she ensures the regularity of nature and the changing of the seasons; and, more 643 particularly, that her death dislocates the rhythm of nature, bringing 731 drought and famine, the abrogation of law and order. People today still speak with horror and fear of the years (1894–6) following the death of the previous queen, Majuji II. They were years, as we know from documentary sources, when drought, locusts, rinderpest and, in their wake, unprecedented famine and desolation, wiped out practically all the cattle and perhaps a third of the human population.

643 The preservation of the queen's sanctity requires that her life be subject to observances which shield her from the public eye and restrain her movements. She is 'the huckster in the hut' (*mushava-ndoni*) who sells her rain-medicines from the seclusion of her abode, and may not move about freely or leave the district of the capital. She was the only chief in the Union who, a few years ago, could not go to the Native Commissioners' Office to exercise the vote of her people in the election of a representative to the Native Representative Council. She cannot attend large assemblies of men, and is generally inaccessible except to her close relatives and great councillors. But otherwise her activities are not restricted, nor is her life a continuous ritual and, unlike other Divine Kings, there are no elaborate safeguards surrounding her every movement.

Tradition decrees that chiefs may have no physical defect, but not that [768] they must die while still young and strong. Ritual suicide of the queen is by Lovedu conceptions not a means of guaranteeing a timely death lest failure of physical powers should upset the regularity of nature, but rather a symbol of her divinity, for it proves that she is not heir to the weaknesses of ordinary man. It is mystically connected with the fourth circumcision school in her reign: she must see the boys going in but not coming back. The Lovedu queen is believed to be immune from disease, but age does not diminish—it even increases—her mystical powers over nature. The only disqualification to rule is inability to make rain in the early period of her reign. Once she [789] has demonstrated, by her ability to make rain, that the rain-charms have ● 821] been entrusted to her and that she has been divinely chosen, irregularities in the seasons are attributed not to weakness of her powers but to some extraneous factor, such as contraventions of rules associated with keeping the country cool, disobedience to the chief, and the anger of the ancestor spirits.

643 Arrangements connected with succession of a new queen also emphasize 766 her mystical relations with the cosmic order. The death of her predecessor 789

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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season propitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the
821 queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gɔmana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time, people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken
821 to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain
789 in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*hu lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle,
731 or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lesugu*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[754] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale disperses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next
821 day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digɔma

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
794 of man consists of *digɔma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *gɔma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
881 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-vuhwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *gɔma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *gɔma* which is said to 'bite'

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171 The *gɔmana* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the
778 ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend
881 *gɔmana* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an outsider. The *gɔmana* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *zwidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as
772 something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and magic (*vuŋaga*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of
821 the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digɔma*. The seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digɔma*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal
811 evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a
821 much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu. To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: man and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may
772 sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from con-
811 ditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desiccation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon
821 the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Leswa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *dere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches. 753 772 811 821

'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *mashɔthɔjɔ* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death. 772 789 811 821 766 757 831

Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is 783 753

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783 charms or *digɔma*. *Makhuma* which arises from critical transitions causes mainly stomach trouble and general debility in men and cattle; but it also causes weakening of the mystical powers concentrated in sacred objects. These ritual forces do not strike down the guilty person: it is, for example, not the husband who will be revenged if the adulterer approaches the hut of his wife; or when a woman has procured an abortion, it is not she but her innocent lover who will be affected with *ḍɛrɛ*, the most dreaded disease among the Lovedu. The harmful effects of all these forms of impurity are not sanctions against the acts or events causing the impurity, but sanctions for taking the necessary precautions to remove the impurity and prevent it from spreading to others, or from causing some calamity not necessarily affecting the guilty person. And, as so often happens in Lovedu society, it is generally *ex post facto*, and as an explanation of some illness or evil that these conceptions are invoked and steps are taken to put things right.

784 The concatenations of actions and conditions that must be avoided lest they bring about misfortune and evil to men are wider than what is included in the conceptions of 'heat', *muridi*, and *makhuma*. Many things or natural objects brought into relation with men have evil consequences and must be avoided: they are taboo (*hu ila*). Burning a certain kind of wood in the village causes quarrels; working in the fields the day after the first rain is taboo, not sanctioned by a penalty but the breach of which is a bane (*lesola*) that may portend evil. The breach of these taboos is disapproved but leads to no organized reaction or public indignation even where it affects the welfare of all, as in the case of a wrong burial. A man who sleeps with his wife while she is still suckling a child may thereby cause the death of his child; but it is his own foolish and inconsiderate conduct that causes the mother's breast to *khuma* (become polluted and weakened), and it is not the concern of outsiders. He is a fool rather than criminal.

753 Many things in nature are recognized as directly affecting man adversely; various foods and drinks cause stomach troubles; poisonous weeds may kill cattle which, like men, occasionally die of old age; many minor illnesses are attributed to natural causes, e.g. one may contract malaria by walking in the dew in the early morning. Epidemics may be brought about naturally by the air or wind (*phɛfo*). 'Ward off from us these winds' is a constant plea [821] in prayers to the ancestors. Hot, dry winds which drive away rain-bearing clouds or dissolve them in thunderstorms or gales are thought to be specially detrimental to the rain, and it is the duty of the ancestors to keep away such winds. Even anxiety or worry wears a man down (*hu seḍa mutho a hómɛhwa*, lit., scrapes a man thin). [828] A woman who is prone to break her pots is not bewitched; she has *khifyaisa*, a natural propensity for breaking, which can be cured by medicine.

777 The Lovedu also have the conception of natural accident (*gozi*) and of luck (*leshuto*), though bad luck is sometimes attributed to breach of obligations to kin, to malicious gossip, or to the misconduct in one's absence of one's wife.

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that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts. 777

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*ruŋaga*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare. 754 789

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *mahava*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the bones, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased. 829 777 753 [821]

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups is the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *gɔsha*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted. 181

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

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density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an over-estimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwa*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Roka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *kwevo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *kwevo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhopo, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *kwevo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigoa, the Ngona and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·5 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·25 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·25, or 35,232. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,232 and 26,209, we get 32,549 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

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137 [272] morula tree (*Sclerocarya caffra*), from which such delightful cider is made. In the distance you hear the hoarse note of a *phalafala* horn, then the shrill ululations of women. They come nearer. You can hear them shout the words, '*Malematsha wee, Malamatsha wee; bedi ga dzwala ga* [533] *dzwala ga fɔlɔja, ga vucla vuphabaleni*' (Malematsha, Malematsha, the goat I bore, I bore and miscarried, as a goatling I returned)—the praise 431 song of a district in Uulovedu. Then at a bend in the road you come upon a picturesque procession: in front walks a man, blower of the horn, followed by twenty women each with a calabash of beer placed in a basket on her head, a gift to the queen from the area of Malematsha. Perspiration runs down their faces; but they do not lose courage, for before they arrive at at their destination they will sit down by the roadside to quench their thirst from one or two of the calabashes they carry. Any one who then happens to pass will beg for a little, and he will not beg in vain.

576 You continue your way. A pigsty and an ash heap mark the approach [364] to a village. A passer-by, spying a woman about her household duties, shouts her greetings, '*Re fiṭhulelemi*' ('Still our hunger') to which comes the reply, '*Fiṭhulelani zenu*,' a conventional refusal, but equivalent to 'Be hungry nicely' or 'Still your own hunger.' A second woman supplements it with the information, 'We have only just put on the pot.' If the food had been ready or the woman had wished to give the passer-by a tit-bit, the reply would have been, 'Here is food. We are eating.' That one of the ways of greeting should be associated with the begging of food is typical of the Lovedu. Some one returning from a visit to another area is greeted with, 'What are they eating over there,' or 'What are they stinting us of,' and the reply invariably is, 'They are being killed by hunger,' even if there is plenty and you have been royally entertained. There are greetings associated with activities: if you pass a man or woman working in the fields, you say, 'Workers,' and the modest reply is, 'We are hardly working at all'; to a woman carrying wood, you say, '*A di voyi dikhunye*' ('Let the wood return') and the reply is, '*Di voyile*' (It has returned). In fact, learning to greet people politely in the Lovedu language is not at all the simple thing it is in English.

621 At last you find yourself before the village of Raselaka, larger than any 789 of those you have passed on the way and, unlike many of them, surrounded by a thick hedge of thorny *lenḋwa* bush (*Pterolobium exosum*). At the entrance you trip over a slate-coloured river-stone, jutting out a few inches above ground. This is a charm, laid when the village was built, to keep out the witches; it makes them cool, causing them to forget their evil designs. It is part of a more comprehensive scheme for the [417] protection of the village: the gate posts are of special wood (*khirale* or *modutu*, *Celtis Kraussiana*) smeared with medicines on the day they were [824] set up; round the circumference are medicated pegs (*diphaba*) of *khirale*, the whole being completed by the magic circle drawn by the sister or father's sister, if she is still alive, who drags a 'doctored' branch of thorny *mukhalo* (*Zizyphus mucronata*) round the circumference. If this is not done by her before the doctor begins his work, it must be done subsequently, when the precaution of smearing the soles of her feet with medicine is taken lest by entering she 'opens up a way for witches'. The

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methods of various doctors are not the same. Sometimes a goat is killed 621
and very often one finds at the entrance to a village a stick, 3–4 ft. long, 789
on which are the roots of a *ṭiṭigwani* lily (*Hypoxis villosa*) or pieces of skin [824]
of the goat that was killed. This 'medicine of the village', some of which is always kept by the owner, is important for curing certain illnesses caused by witches and may be eaten with the firstfruits. Every year the village needs to be 'awakened' (*hu dzosa mutse*) by the renewal of these protective medicines, a process which Rapaka carries out naked at dead of night by sprinkling round the hedge certain medicine, an ingredient of which is river or sea sand. The river sand has the property of making the village appear as an expanse of water before the eyes of the sorcerer, who thereupon concludes that he has come to the wrong place. A village may have no visible hedge, but the invisible, charmed enclosure is never absent.

On passing through the gate you find yourself in the *khɔrɔ*, an open [361]
space, in which there is a hearth. Hardly have you seated yourself on 576
one of the sprawling, spider-like stools of forked branches that are ranged around it than Raselaka himself, who has been expecting you, comes forward. He sits down and, inclining his body to the left, claps his hands, saying, '*Ndau dona*' ('Male lion'). He asks after your health, politely inquires about the journey, and pleasantries are exchanged. According to strict etiquette, he ought to have taken his visitors straight to the chief hut, where guests are received, but he knows you wish to be shown over the village, and perhaps that is why he lingers with you in the *khɔrɔ*. A woman passes, bends both knees in a curtsy and inclines the head, passing one palm slowly over the other, a manner of greeting usual to women; then goes slowly on her way. Soon afterwards, you are overpowered by a most offensive smell. You turn round and discover that she has opened 251
up a grain pit, from the roomy interior of which a small boy, who has let himself in through the narrow neck, is handing out dishfuls of brownish-coloured mealies. Dampness has entered and spoilt the mealies, but the process has not gone far enough to make them uneatable. They are called *madumi* and, though the smell may be unpleasant, there are many who, [261]
at least as a change of diet, prefer food made of them to that of ordinary mealies. Many people are already inquiring whether the owner is willing to exchange them. Dotted about the *khɔrɔ* are other pits which can be located by means of a stick, for each is covered with a large, flat stone sealed down with mud. The *khɔrɔ* is the place where the men and boys 361
of the village sit, and where cases may be heard; but it is also the playground of the children. Often when children worry their mothers by shouting or playing in the courtyards, they are told, 'Run away and play in the *khɔrɔ*; this is not your playground.' Many villages to-day have no *khɔrɔ*; they are too small to need one or, where there is a much-neglected space for it, it is not used at all, especially when the men are away at work in town.

To the left of the *khɔrɔ* are a small cattle kraal with wire fence, an 417
enclosure for goats, and another with a roof for donkeys. Only a few 231
villages have cattle at all; but, for most of those that have, a kraal outside the village made of rough poles serves now that there is no longer any

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CHAPTER III

BASES OF SUBSISTENCE

The agricultural complex of activities—culture-change adjustments, and problems of malnutrition, education, and division of labour in agriculture—the place in the society, and present-day problems, of animal husbandry—modern threats to the interest in the vegetation as a basis of subsistence.

241 231 222 824 [262] THE Lovedu are great agriculturalists and poor pastoralists. They have a vast knowledge of the vegetation, which constitutes the best example of a science among them. It is a science closely related to their everyday lives and upon which they rely, even more than upon their cattle, goats, pigs, and fowls, for their subsistence. They eat the fruits and roots of the plants, depend for their relishes upon leaves and soft stems, and in dozens of other ways nourish themselves upon the natural products of the soil. Not agriculture and animal husbandry alone, but these, together with wild fruits, woods, and other products of nature, are the bases of subsistence.

These bases are all fundamental, but they have different value in different aspects of the culture. Agriculture is most important as a source of the substantial foods; natural fruits provide relishes and variety, and as a means of nutrition are much more prominent than domestic animals. Cattle and goats are primarily not food at all; their great role lies in supporting the social structure. In considering the sources of the primary needs of man, we should get a wholly distorted picture if we omitted the natural vegetation, the use of which as food, in economic pursuits, and in medicine is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu culture. Tillage and animal husbandry presume an extensive practical knowledge of soils, crops, and grasses; but this body of knowledge takes second place beside the imposing science at the basis of handicrafts, natural foods—indeed, the whole medical, nutritional, and economic structure of the society.

000 Nature is not merely a physical fact; it is a living reality, an integral part of the culture. Environment is not something apart from man and his needs; it is the medium in which he lives and breathes. And it is their direct reliance on nature that makes the Lovedu so strikingly [824] different from us, just as their everyday knowledge of the names, qualities, and uses of trees, bushes, and all kinds of plants so greatly overshadows the corresponding knowledge of ordinary men among us. We, who live in a world in which nature satisfies our primary needs in a roundabout manner, cannot easily realize how different conditions are in a world where the satisfaction is direct. We are often inclined to picture primitive man as engrossed in ritual pageant unrelated to, and unserviceable for, the major ends of human existence. It is very necessary to correct this view. It is often thought that sex, magic, and witchcraft absorb most of the time, activities, and interests of primitive man. But, at all events among the Lovedu, more time and energy is spent, more interest centred,

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iend, they return the compliment by giving you a goat; it is the 'walking- 231
ick' of the old women who brought the beer to her son-in-law, enabling 431
er to go home safely. Goats are dedicated to the gods more frequently
an any other animals. A goat is killed at a burial, and its unsalted flesh [782]
eaten. People pay goats to their doctors; they exchange them for
ealies. Their skins are still used for making skirts for women and [281]
adles for their babies, whereas cattle hides have no use except for the
ongs used in inspanning cattle. Goat's milk, which is never drunk by [262]
lults because of its unpleasant odour, is the food of herdboys and girls.
ll in all, goats play a not inconsiderable part in economic and goodwill
xchanges, in legal adjustments, in ritual and religion.

By contrast, sheep, though in the bones of a diviner they represent the 231
en of consequence and goats merely ordinary people, are of no import- [791]
nce whatever. They are very rarely seen on the hills and difficulties
nnected with dipping have reduced them to a negligible number in the
lleys. Fowls are conspicuous everywhere, but only their meat, not [262]
eir eggs, are eaten. They have recently been introduced by the
hangana-Tonga and even to-day, if found in the capital, are killed and
rown over the hedge. They are never, as among the Shangana-Tonga,
ed in religious rites. Donkeys, introduced in considerable numbers
me thirty years ago, are used in ploughing and for transport, while pigs,
o a recent acquisition, figure largely in trading transactions. Pork is [262]
t eaten except by men who have worked among Europeans, but the
ason is that it nauseates, not so much that it is related to the totem of
e tribe. Finally, hunting, as it is to-day, can be dismissed with a 224
ference to the activities of herdboys, who shoot birds with wooden-
aded arrows, use birdlime obtained from certain trees, and set various
nds of traps to catch rats, dwarf mongooses, and squirrels.

It is a different matter when we turn to the exploitation of the vegeta- 824
n. The role that this source of subsistence plays is evident in a
ousand ways. It is indeed difficult to give an adequate picture of the
anner in which the vegetation enters into all aspects of life and culture.
rhaps, by way of illustration, we may take half a dozen names in order
om an alphabetical list of over 500 plants—a small proportion of the
ra—which we collected, and note merely a few of the ordinary, well-
own uses:

Muvidividi (*Ehebergia capensis*). The wood, which is very white and [322]
nce much liked, is used for making spoons and bowls; being soft wood, it
also used for milk pails and door boards. To ensure that it will resist
evils to some extent, it is not cut when very young.

Muvidisa-vyalwa (*Trichodesma zeylanicum*). In winter, when beer is [273
w to ferment, the leaves are put into the pot to accelerate the process. 278]
e roots, chewed or crushed, are put on wounds to relieve the pain and
heal.

Muvilo (*Vangueria floribunda*). Two varieties are distinguished. The
imary use is medical and magical, e.g. a branch, first presented to termites [278
d then medicated, is beaten on the temples for migraine; a medicated pole 789]
muvilo is placed across gate entrances to keep out witches. For the
ter reason, this wood may not be used as firewood; it would reveal the

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824 protective medicines (*dipiaba*) of the village. The fruits are eaten by herdboys, January to March. The first appearance of its flowers (October) indicates the time when chickens must not be hatched or bought, because of the danger of sand fleas (*madzedzi*). There are, incidentally, many other plants which indicate the approach of the seasons or the correct time for certain activities, e.g. when *musoso* (*Terminalia serecea*) blossoms, edible termites get their wings and children go out to catch them.

Muvizi (*Colocasia antiquorum*). Planted at home—in the old days also [262] in river gardens—to provide relish from August to November. The leaves take only a few minutes to cook, compared with an hour or more for many other relishes. The bulb is cooked separately, like sweet potatoes.

Muvbyani (*Lanna edulis*). A soft wood used for milk pails and bowls. [262] The fruit, which is eaten by children and adults, ripens in November-December. The wood is not suitable for hut rafters, as it is attacked by [283] weevils, but the bark serves as a rough, unworked string for tying together the poles of such structures as pig pens. Water in which the leaves are crushed is used as an eye lotion.

Muvola (*Parinarium curatellifolium*). The fruit, called *grysappel* (grey [262 apple) in Afrikaans, is liked and of very great value in times of starvation. 731] It is said to have saved the people in the years 1894–6, when drought, locusts, and cattle diseases overwhelmed the country. At such times the fruit is prepared, like *morula*, in the form of a cider (*vureba*), which is yellowish and sweet. It also has economic uses.

824 We have in our list over a hundred different kinds of wild edible fruits 262 and berries, many of them, it is true, eaten chiefly by herdboys. But numerous wild fruits are relished by adults, such as wild figs (of which there are seven different kinds), *muukhoma* (*Burchemia discolor*), of which a tasty, if heavy, cake is made, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), *muṭazwa* (*Pouzolzia hypoleuca*), *munnthu* (*Syzygium cordatum*), *mutbe* (*Anona senegalensis*), and many others. The *morula* is, as we have seen, an important national beverage with valuable anti-scorbutic properties. There are also wild bananas (*muvva*), long ago brought from the north, but now practically eradicated by animals. Not much reliance is placed upon cultivated fruits, but there are oranges, some pawpaws, and mangoes, planted by the early Christians; these have not subsequently been added to to any extent and they are very much neglected.

For relishes, without which porridge cannot be eaten, people rely largely upon nature. Apart from the leaves of pumpkins and beans, which are available from February to June, they use a great variety of wild spinaches, chief among which are blackjack (*Bidens pilosa*), *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*), and *thttbe* (*Amoranthus Thunbergi*). In our list we have forty-five greens or relishes. But not only plants provide relishes. In September and in the winter months, when greens are scarce, *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swaziae*), fatty black male termites, are a great standby. The female of the same species (*dinnṭwa*), which swarm from December to March, the rainy season, are so important in the national diet that they must be ritually 'bitten' (*hu huma*) and sent to the queen from every district. They are roasted, winnowed, and eaten as

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relish, the winnowing being mixed with salt and pressed into a cake used as spinach or eaten alone. Children eat *dinnpwa makhura* (flying ants) and grasshoppers; *maida*, a large red grasshopper and a few other kinds of grasshoppers, as well as swarming locusts, form part of the diet of adults. Indeed, during a famine in the 1850's, Mujaji, it is said, sent locusts, not to plague, but to succour her subjects, the Shangana-Tonga. Honey—not only of the honey bee but also of other insects, such as the *muga*—adds, though only occasionally, to the variety of the foods directly supplied by nature.

For nutritional purposes, a considerable body of knowledge of the vegetation is necessary. This body of knowledge expands to a veritable science when we consider its application to the arts and crafts. It is used continuously in all daily activities, such as building, fencing, renewing hoe handles, yokes, and storehouses, extracting oil or fat, and so on. In the old days it was not merely woodwork that was important; iron-making was one of the great industries. To-day, though many implements of Native ironwork are still to be found, the industry has disappeared, partly because the sources of the ore have been appropriated by Europeans and partly because of the cheapness of European-made iron objects. The smith was a specialist, but also an agriculturist and a student of the vegetation. In his industry he used, not only special ores, but also special woods. Similarly, for each of the crafts—hut-building, fencing, making stamping blocks, sledges, hoe handles, milk pails, spoons, platters, winnowing baskets, drums, and many others—different qualities in the wood are regarded as important. There are half a dozen different kinds of plants that yield fibre from which string can be made, each involving a somewhat different process. The value of certain grasses for thatching and making mats, baskets, and beer-sieves is ritualized in the taboo on cutting grass before the queen eats the first fruits; i.e. thatching grass must be left untouched until it is quite ripe in May and June. The elaborate working up of skin, though now restricted to the purpose of making skin cradles and a few women's skirts, involves considerable skill as well as knowledge of the value of oils and repellents to drive off destructive insects and even dogs. Pottery is still a live industry involving a knowledge of the qualities of clays, and what we call 'herbalism', the use of the medicinal qualities of plants, is not confined to doctors, but is to a large extent common knowledge.

A whole volume could be written on the interest of the average man or woman in the flora alone. He knows a great deal about almost every plant. Even a herdboy, as we found in discussing our list of names of plants, could mention one or two practical uses of more than half of them. Young men could add several medical or magical uses, while old men could bring the names into relation with a bewildering number of ritual, religious, and other occasions, and many had specialized knowledge, according to the nature of their occupations or interests. Speaking generally, and in terms of what is commonly known, we find that of the 500 plants we have listed, 200 have mainly economic uses. They are daily applied to such activities as building huts, thatching, making spoons. Some 20 are specially useful for making string; another 20 for

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824 manufacturing baskets, sieves and mats; and still another 25 in the hunting activities of boys (arrows, bows, traps, glue.) Over 100 are known more particularly for their edible fruits or roots and 45 are greens or relishes; 230 are well-known in the everyday medical pharmacopœia, and of these 60 are magical. Among other well-known uses are those of the grasses and sedges (15) from which dancing or initiation costumes are made and those (12) connected with games. Some 5 were considered noxious weeds and 8 had certain taboos attached to them. Plants with conspicuous flowers are not specially observed, and one asks the ordinary man in vain as to the name and uses of the more delicate flowering plants; on the whole, he is far better acquainted with trees than with shrubs and grasses, unless used as relishes.

824 789 What is striking is that the ordinary man regards the flora from a most practical point of view. Only a small proportion of the well-known plants have uses which are mainly magical, and knowledge based upon empirical observation overshadows that derived from mystical conceptions. One does not 'doctor' wood to strengthen it against the attacks of termites or woodborers; one selects the proper tree. In 90 out of 100 cases the quality of the wood, not any magical manipulation, is important for the purpose to which it is put, especially if the purpose is economic; and it is in this sense that empirical knowledge is highly developed. Even in the medical 824 757 sphere, which is predominantly magical, the ordinary man places his faith in the observed action of the herb he uses. The cure may be merely violent internal disturbances, which, in view of the supposed nature of the illness, may be regarded as necessary. The use is not for that reason [753] magical. Many diseases are conceived to have their seat in the stomach; they are to be thrown out by a purgative; and for them purgatives are [755] used with a vengeance. Among doctors, of course, all sorts of magical remedies are added; but that is the sphere of the specialist. The ordinary man uses remedies of which the visible effects are empirically related to the disturbances which he conceives to be the causes of the disease.

824 192 From close observation of the qualities of plants, the Lovedu have arrived at some classification of the flora. They recognize the similarity of plants of the same genus and, if external likeness is a matter of practical interest, there is often a similarity of the word used to designate the various species of the genus. This does not mean that they proceed upon genetic principles; to anatomical similarities in flowers, for instance, they are quite indifferent. If the qualities of two plants of the same genus are to their way of thinking significantly similar, the plants might receive names that are similar; if the qualities are dissimilar, they often know that the two plants are related, though they have different names. The same species modified in its external features by different environments is often given the same name. Species of the same genus are likewise sometimes distinguished by qualifications of the generic name. *Khiphadwa* of the plateau (*kha naha*) is, for instance, *Gymnosporia senegalensis*; *Khiphadwa* of stony places (*kha makhwarem*) is *Gymnosporia buxifolia*. Again, *mudwo*, *mudwatsi*, *mudwatisbi*, and *mudwolisiga*, all containing the root *dw-*, are all species of *Combretum*. On the other hand, *mugavi*, *mukwidi*, and *muhakela thudu* are also species of *Combretum*, but there are

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good reasons for the different names; the anatomical similarities are known, but the uses and other aspects are more important and determine the name. Anatomical differences, clearly recognized, do not stand in the way of designating very different epiphytic plants which secrete 'birdlime' (*vulebo*) by the one name, *khilebo*. What determines nomenclature are not only striking physical features, such as peculiar leaves and seeds, but also a significant relationship with natural phenomena or, most usually, an important use. The variety of unconnected principles used upsets the symmetry, from our point of view, of the classification. But it must not lead us to think that there has been no close observation of the forms and venation of leaves, the taste and smell of the wood, and so on. The details of the flower, except for colour, general shape and size, are regarded as unimportant for purposes of identification. Yet they can name the poorest specimens and wonder why we want flowers and fruit before we can name a plant. The use of many cross classifications is not a burden to the memory, because the names link the plants to their practical uses.

The subject is much too large for adequate treatment here. Yet a few examples, illustrating the general outlook, might be of value. Because of its broad, flat leaves, *Inulata glomerata* is called *xvc ya dou* (the ear of an elephant). The flower of *Wormskioldia longipedunculata*, which is small and crimson and peers through the grass, suggests the name *leiɔ la dau* (the eye of a lion). The baobab is *khivuyu*, something inordinately fat and squat; the root *vu*- also occurs in the names of those fat caterpillars that attack mealies, of the hippopotamus, and of the enormous termite queen. Apt as well as picturesque are such names as *khivede kha muri* (the liver of the tree), for all fungi; *leada la khithii* (the egg of the sunbird), for a variety of the groundnut; *Voandezia subterranea*, *moykhakhilemo* (scent of spring) for *Phyllanthus reticulatus*, the flowers of which fragrantly herald the spring, and many others. One might think that those who named the plants were poets. Perhaps they were, because there is no lack of exquisite poetry in the beautiful praise songs that are the real literature of the people.

But their interests are many-sided and they do not scorn to have more mundane names. Here are a few that bear upon economic uses. For weaving (*ku loha*) baskets they use the *muloha* plant, *Acacia ataxacantha*; *multdo-muloha-phoɔ*, our *Sida cordifolia*, is pliable (*ku leda*), like other *multdo* plants, all of which are of the genus *Triumfetta*, and for that reason specially suitable for weaving beer sieves (*ku loha phoɔ*). *Mukhafisa*, our *Indigofera eriocarpa*, is their herdboys' milk-curdler (*ku khafisa*, to cause milk to curdle). The sap of *muilanthe*, which we call *Asclepias stellifera*, they use to repel flies (*ku ila ntshe*) from the open wounds of cattle. With the branches of *Dusimane-ee-a khafa*, a stinging weed which we appropriately dignify with the name *Achyranthus aspera*, youngsters (*musimane*) playfully fight one another.

Consider also, lest we think that the genius for giving apt names has been lost, the following few recently introduced plants. The pineapple, because of its prickly, xerophytic bracts, gets the same name as the aloes, *khiguni*. The scent of the khaki weed calls to mind hemp, *bgia*, and so is

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824 called the small hemp, *khibajabajani*. The large pods of *legumani*, a
192 peanut of the *masaintiha* variety, are likened to leggings, for which they use a corruption of the Afrikaans word *kamasters*. *Khithawa-mirisi* in scientific nomenclature is *Amaranthus spinosus* but, for all that, it pricks the 'missus' (*ha thawa mirisi*). We link the sunflower with the sun, but they call it *manwatshokhuhu*, fattener of the fowls, because the unaccountable European, instead of leaving fowls to their own devices, fattens them (*ha wastsha*) with its seeds. It would be tedious to give more of these interesting names. Suffice it to say that, upon whatever principle they are given, they furnish examples of close observation, of humour and poetry, and of practical sense.

824 In the command that the Lovedu have over the material supplied by
461 vegetation, knowledge of the suitability of the plant to be used is by far the most impressive aspect. By contrast, preparation of the material, by seasoning or otherwise, and skilful or artistic manipulation to produce the required result lag far behind. Utility rather than artistic beauty is the main consideration; a carelessly made article, generally speaking, serves its purpose as well as one well executed. There is not much specialization and a high standard of workmanship is not aimed at; most men know what wood to select and how to make a great variety of ordinary household articles. Special skill is needed for making wooden dishes, drums, and milk pails. The most skilled work is perhaps the making of baskets (*zwirudwana*), which is done by men. This is not the place to describe the technique of the arts and crafts; all we need insist upon is the widespread knowledge of the virtues and defects of the plants that can be used.

824 Modern conditions have brought about a serious decline in craftman-
178 ship and in familiarity with the vegetation. Schoolboys no longer have the extensive opportunities of learning veld-lore which herding provided. Herding is to them hardly an institutionalized induction into nature study; instead of being a part of life itself, it assumes the aspect of distasteful labour. The introduction of European articles also lessens the interest in the qualities of the vegetation. Yet these influences are in their infancy. They have made some impression upon the material elements of the culture, but they have tended to impoverish rather than to replace the old. You see petrol tins side by side with water pots, ugly sacks ousting the picturesque granaries, patched pieces of boxwood replacing reed doors, cast-off European clothes instead of graceful coverings of skin, machine-made blankets beside hand-woven grass mats, and axes and knives, no longer from the smithy, but only from the stores.

178 More serious is the threat to the traditional outlook. Christianity
313 stresses the virtue of being different from the pagan, but the status of Europeanized Natives is precarious both in and outside the tribe, and there is no co-ordinated view of life that can successfully combat the subtle economic onslaught of European culture. And, since 1938, the legislative prohibition of cutting down trees, except after permission having been obtained and a fee paid, threatens a change of which the results cannot be foreseen. Many trees, and among them some essential for the craft, may not be cut down at all. The inconvenience of walking

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mourning assaulted him, but was worsted; the offender then reported his wound at the capital. A *leharula* was sent to collect the blood fine from the district head, but, not finding him, left a message summoning him to the *khɔrɔ*. There the case was discussed with only initiates of the *gomana* present. The men could not decide upon their course of action. They said, 'Let no one be angry. The district head did right, but we cannot carry out the law of the "school" (the man who reveals the *digɔma* secrets must die). We cannot even impose a fine; no one knows what the fine should be. Let the matter rest.'

Khashani, working on a European farm, called his wife, whose baby was ill, to come to him. The baby died and Khashani, seeing 'medicine' on the fireplace, suspected and severely beat his sister's daughter as well as his sister. The case came to the *khɔrɔ* of the queen, which pointed out that if, as Khashani thought, his sister was a witch, he also probably was one. This did not satisfy Khashani, but his sister demanded back her cattle, and the *khɔrɔ*, attempting to isolate the struggle, said, 'We are discussing the "blood". You, Khashani, must pay your sister one head of cattle.' Khashani replied, 'That I agree to do. I shall even drive away my wife, so that I can return my sister's cattle.' The *khɔrɔ* was not much perturbed, since it thought that Khashani's threat was either bluff or the raving of a madman.

In the last case it was the victim, not the queen, who was awarded the head of cattle. The argument sometimes used by Lovedu men against such an award is better known in other tribes: it is that, if the victim is benefited, all he need do to become rich is to provoke others to fight him. And the theory held by those advancing this argument is that to spill blood is 'to break the queen's calabash', and therefore 'blood' cases must be submitted to the *khɔrɔ*. This is the view gaining ground, so that *maharula*, going to collect the blood fine, become messengers summoning the parties to the queen's *khɔrɔ*, without, however, ignoring the position of the district heads. The whole procedure is in a state of flux, but we can see in outline how the blood feud has gradually receded as the kin groups become submerged by the district organization and how, as a consequence, the procedure of reconciliation gained so firm a hold that it maintains its stand against the forces making for centralization.

Not long ago the procedure appropriate to cases of witchcraft and sorcery was the ordeal (*murɔu*); and though the *murɔu* has given way in Vuloovedu to smelling out by the diviner (*magome*), it can still be seen further east among the Phalaborwa. The test takes various forms; drinking poison, usually an extract of *nwanaba* (*Datura stramonium*), licking a medicated stick or a heated hoe, removing a stone from boiling water, floating the kernels of *mupani* (*Oncoba spinosa*) in water and observing whether they separate or come together, sometimes accompanied by an oath or followed by the washing of hands or the squirting of water (*ku phasa*). All these are well-known in the lowveld, though the Lovedu used only or chiefly the first; but on the highveld, where witchcraft and sorcery are treated as private matters, there is no legal but only a magical method of dealing with them: the evil is sent back by a doctor privately employed by the victim. The Lovedu no longer rely upon the *murɔu*,

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769 Offerings may be poured on the ground or on *thugula* objects. Some-
782 times, however, the ancestors desire a shrine or a dedicated animal. The
825 queen herself and some others have dedicated cattle, male or female, according to the spirit represented; a few families have sheep, while the majority have goats. Fowls are neither dedicated nor killed for the gods. But we have one instance of a dedicated snake, that in the Relela family, to which in 1939, at their burial grounds in the depths of the forest, libations were offered when the *vyali* initiation began in that district; the conception is wholly alien to the Lovedu, though the Relela have been so long linked with, as to be indistinguishable from, them; and the snake, said to whistle, is described as like that dreaded monster, the 'mountain snake' which is often thought of as a mamba but strikes terror like the omen it is. The use of these different animals is traditional in, and bears no relation to the wealth of, the families concerned; some have a dedicated animal, others merely a shrine, while many have both. The dedicated animal receives the name of an ancestor, father or grandfather in the case of the head of the lineage, or of any complaining spirit that has demanded such *thugula*, and it is believed that his spirit (*muya*) has entered into it. Some dedicated animals are credited with abnormal powers: Mamujaji's agitation one day, while being driven to the dip, correctly presaged unpleasantness with the dip inspector; Malegudu is the fiercest bull in the land, like the warrior whom he represents. Though some people unceremoniously pour beer-offerings down the throat of dedicated animals, it is generally claimed that, unlike ordinary animals, they readily drink beer, but the claim is contradicted by the mealie leaves put over the beer to coax the animal to drink. In 1938, when Malegudu, called from the herd to drink the harvest beer, remained immovable, every one was afraid to approach him, but it was considered sufficient to throw the beer over him from a distance, so that by licking himself he might partake of the offering.

778 Shrines, which are to be found generally on the left-hand side of the entrance to the sleeping hut of the chief wife, vary in appearance and contents. A shrine may consist of a small mound of earth, containing the
[824] bones of a sacrificial goat; it may be a sacred plant or tree, usually *pipiguani* (*Hypoxis villosa*) or *lesme* (*Hæmanthus sp.*) and *mutabu* (*Ficus capensis*), a black river stone, a long stick, or even a piece of a certain kind of ant heap (*khithoni*). The queen's own shrine is a mound under which are buried the bones of a goat slaughtered some twenty years ago when it was set up. Mashishimali's shrine contains no bones, but consists of a *pipiguani* lily and a river stone, both visible above ground. Ramatiti has three shrines and one dedicated goat, all of which have arisen out of illness caused by ancestral complaints. Of the first, the shrine of his father, nothing is visible above ground; it consists of a buried piece of ant-heap, used instead of a goat because Ramatiti is not the chief son, who should have the dedicated animal, and a black river stone which keeps the spirit cool and appeased (lying down), as well as the three plant substances
[824] *mufiva*, *lesogo* (*Alipedia sp.?*), *vulewaja*, which are placed in most shrines to make the ancestors 'forget'. The other two are mounds containing the bones and heads of goats, one representing his mother, the other, like the live goat, his mother's brother, his wife's father.

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754 *madabi*.[1] A woman ran away from her husband to live with another.
789 Whenever she was cooking or doing her household duties at her new home, monkeys and other animals appeared at the village till, frightened out of her wits, she ran back to her first husband. *Madabi* are often sent
[845] in connexion with childbirth. Sometimes the sending of *madabi* is looked upon as witchcraft. Malaji changed the sex of Muhale's daughter so as to make the birth difficult each time she was about to bear a child, because the child was his, but the girl no longer loved him. We were not allowed into the hut, but the midwives, whom we knew well, testified to a real change, though probably because certain types of difficult birth are conventionally so explained. Eventually the birth took place, but shortly afterwards the baby was dead. This was considered to be witchcraft, the case was brought to court, and a large fine imposed. Only the doctor who used *madabi* can undo or reverse its power by *hu dabekulla*, but other doctors may, if there has been any injury, heal it with medicines.

789 A practice similar to *madabi*, but differing from it in object is *maḑilebɔ*. At the time of the Swazi raids, Raŋwagu, instead of hiding in the forests, put his faith in *maḑilebɔ* (marvel, wonder). When the enemy came, his village turned into water and they could not find his cattle, though they heard their lowing. Masia, who was wanted by the police during the whole period of our investigation, was able, when chased by them, to disappear even in the open; he would hang like a bat on a plough to look just like a spanner. When eventually he was arrested, he averred, and many people agreed, that it was because he was tired.

Khidɔba is a technique used against thieves and it is both public and legitimate. Some kinds of *khidɔba* are known as a home remedy; some
• are obtained from doctors. By means of medicine used on *ledzigvi* grass (*Hyparrhenia Tamba*), one can cause a severe and painful itching in the finger of the thief which may compel him to confess. Likewise, by *hu dɔba*, a stolen goat may be made to cry out in the thief's belly, as happened in a recent case, probably of compulsion neurosis, in which bleating was taken as conclusive proof of his guilt. Another method of *hu dɔba* causes the eyes of the thief to protrude till they fall out on to his stomach; if his mother then cries on seeing him, he may die. *Khidɔba* strikes the thief even when he hides or sells the stolen goods. Besides these measures, taken to bring a thief to book after the theft, one may by anticipation pro-
tect one's property by means of a piece of *leṭaṭe* rush (*Mariscus sp.*) split at one end to resemble the mouth of a snake and smeared with coloured medicines. When placed at the hut entrance or on the border of your field, it turns into a snake and bars the entry or exit of a thief. A doctor we knew used to have serious talks with his son about the fortune he would make if he knew this medicine, especially in Johannesburg, where theft is common and victims pay high prices. The only recognized cure

[1] The word comes from *dalo* plus *inbi*; *dalo* (well being), is a noun from *hu lala* (to lie down, to be peaceful), and *inbi* means bad. *Dabi* should be calamity, but it is used only in the sense of excessive rain (causing evil). The plural, *madabi*, means misfortune or pain or disease legitimately 'sent'. The verb is *hu dabeka*, legitimately to send misfortune, and its converse, *hu dabekulla*, means to neutralize or remove the effects of *madabi*.

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643 and of important councillors who are her closest relatives: when a chief
789 dies the body is left for some days in the hut, so that, when it is rubbed in a certain way (*hu fɔrɔlwa*), the skin easily comes away. Other ingredients are fat of the scaly ant-eater (*khwara*), a royal animal which, when found, has always to be brought alive to the royal village, and parts of the kudu (*thɔlɔ*). The queen's rain-doctor told us that essential ingredients were sea-water, because it foams and froths (*hu pukula*), feathers of the lightning bird, white and black sea shells, and various roots and
[824] barks, chief among which is the stem of the *khadi* (*Adenia gumnifera*), a tough forest creeper that contains much water. *Khadi* stems are also used for sprinkling 'cooling' medicines and for tying the bodies of dead people. Whether the queen uses these ingredients, we cannot say. From time to time a black sheep is killed to give strength to the queen's rain medicines; it has to be washed with water which is afterwards poured into the rain pots, but it is said that such a sheep is merely a present-day substitute for a human being, usually a child, whose brains were used. Important district
[634] heads related to the chief also have their rain-pots. Every year in about August, at the command of the queen, such a district head collects certain roots and barks, knowledge of which he has received from his father, places them in his rain-pot, mixed with water that has been drawn by girls below the age of puberty, and stirs them up so that rain may be good that year. Rain-pots are great secrets and only after years of friendship were we privileged to see one: it was well hidden in the cleft of a rock and partly buried at the foot of a tree on the upper slopes of a hill where the owner's father had dwelt. The rain-pots of the queen we have not seen, and what regular measures she takes are not known for certain; but, since it is said, when there are good rains, that the queen has firmly laid the foundations (*hu thea*) of the year, it is not unlikely that she also stirs her medicines.

789 Great care has to be taken lest the rain-pots 'weaken' (*hu figchela*).
261 They have to be given (*hu lumiswa*, to cause to be bitten) the first green foods (*mutshatsha*) every year, kaffir water melon (*legwadzi*) mixed with other green foods being used for the purpose, and at the royal village no one cooks and eats the new summer relishes before this has been done. On this day possessed people or people who have epilepsy also eat medicine with the firstfruits, but ordinary people do not *luma*, and there are none of the public festivities of a semi-military character associated with the eating of the firstfruits among Swazi and Zulu. It is very important too that the first termites (*dinnpwa*), which appear usually in December, just after the first good rains, should be given to the rain-pots. Termites are closely associated with rain: they always fly out of their nests just after the rain; in a dry year there are very few; and it is believed that sprinkling the anthesp with rain medicine (*mufugo*) makes the ants come in great numbers. Termites for the rain-pots may not be gathered by married women or girls over the age of puberty, and in 1937, when some young girls carried the first termites to the queen, she gave the termites to the dogs, refusing to use ants that had been thus defiled. The giving of the first termites to the rain-pots is called *bulane*. An interesting case arose out of this practice in January, 1938, when certain people in Vuthudi

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area ate termites before the *bulane* of the head. An inquiry was held by 789
the district head and four men were fined two goats each. They were told 261
that, if their case had come before the queen herself, they would have had to pay a head of cattle. Only the few sub-areas under the immediate jurisdiction of the queen herself send termites to the queen; in other areas they send to their own head, and there is no rule that the queen's own rain-charms should be given before others.

The powers of the queen to make rain are not absolute. The queen 643
can control rain only 'in agreement with her ancestors' who are able, if 789
they wish, to stay her hand just as she herself is able to stay the hands of 766
rain-doctors. There are also certain things that, by causing the rain charms to become 'weak' (*figchela*), have power to stop the rain unless proper measures are taken. It has already been shown how heat is associated with illness and things being wrong. If a person has been burned to death or struck by lightning, he must be buried in a wet place near the river or his grave 'cooled' with special medicine obtained from the chief, lest drought ensues. Similarly, abortions or miscarriages, women dying in pregnancy or childbirth, twins killed at birth, babies dying before cutting their teeth or cutting the upper teeth before the lower, initiates dying in the circumcision lodge—all must be buried in a wet place.

Since an electrical storm often means little or no rain, it is believed that 821
'sending' lightning to kill one's enemies, a common practice of witches, 754
spoils the country by preventing rain. Hence at a tribal gathering 766
(*khivijo*), held in the spring of 1937–8, the people were told among other things that the chief does not want to see 'lightning of people' (as opposed to natural lightning); any district head hearing of anything like this among his people was to report at once to the queen. A common phenomenon in time of drought is the banking up of heavy rain clouds with all the promise of a soaking rain, only to be dispersed by wind. Anything associated with winds is thus thought to prevent rain. That is why
witches, by hanging *lefalaja-maru*—literally, 'disperser of the clouds' [824]
(*Asparagus plumosis*)—or an ordinary broom on a branch where it will sway in the air, can disperse the clouds; and any one dying of a coughing disease, such as *dzre* or consumption, must be buried in wet soil or soil that has been sprinkled with *mufugo* medicine. If abortions or people dying of a coughing disease are buried without these precautions, the grave is called *pukudi* (from *hu pukula*, which perhaps is the opposite of *hu fuga*, to blow upon by a cool breeze, to sprinkle with cooling medicine). *Pukudi* contains the conception of wind issuing upwards or hot air quivering above a heated surface. As soon as the vapour-laden air reaches the grave, it stops or dissolves in the wind and it is even believed that the corpse, thrusting up an arm, waves it about to cause the wind that drives away the rain.

How dangerous wind is considered to be in setting at naught the efforts 821
of the queen was well illustrated on November 15th, 1937. On that day, 527
after propitious black clouds had been dispersed by a gale that lifted the thatch off many a hut, it was proclaimed that the following day had to be a holiday. People said, '*Gi khumela*' (it is a 'turning back' before the goal

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which 789
the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, 372
when the medicine froths up (*hu pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of *mufugo* and a brush of *khadi* creeper (*Adenia gumnifera*) to every village [824] in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used [842] that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been smeared with dung will *khuma* and be unable to have children. A new fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or groundnuts, which they eat in the *khɔrɔ*. Each married man in turn must give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s*. or a fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khɛthe*), anything may be given. Each boy must give 1*s*. or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine, took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water, which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps 821
have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the 769
close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the 782
queen's mother Leakhali, buried at Khaḍa; sometimes it is Mugɔdɔ's sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery, instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lova* the queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lova*, 787
but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 643
'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the 789
queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case, no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but they have "weakened" (*hu figchela*) it. They want me to be troubled.' She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people themselves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft, had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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the space between the huts, neatly smeared with dung, separated off 351
from the next by a low wall, sometimes less than a foot high, or the remains of what was once a wall. Not all villages give an appearance of neatness. Sometimes, especially after a rainy season, the huts are dilapidated and greatly in need of repair; courtyards may be untidy-looking and only partially smeared, while often in summer flies are a veritable pest. 825
It is considered unlucky to kill them. Native ideas of cleanliness also differ from those of Europeans: it is considered nothing for a baby to 515
urinate on the hut floor, while hours spent in smoky huts give the cloths and blankets worn by women an unpleasant odour. Each household, the 592
domain of a married woman, is independent, having its own fields and granaries. The household of the chief wife is opposite the main entrance; on either side of her in Raselaka's village are her two fellow wives; further to her left are the households of an orphaned sister's son to the village head, married to one of his daughters, and of his eldest son, whose wife is still cooking for her mother-in-law and has as yet no cooking hut. To the right, beyond the third wife of Raselaka, lives a stranger, Leṭavula, with his wife and mother. There is an extra hut for the young boys of the village and one behind the rest belonging to a woman 'married' to the second wife of Raselaka. The Lovedu have no ranking of wives apart [595]
from the chief wife (the mother's brother's daughter) and there is no division of the village into right- and left-hand sides as among Zulu.

There are well marked differences even on the outside between cooking 342
and sleeping or reception huts. The latter all face the *khɔrɔ* and have a wooden door; they are well plastered, many having a veranda all round. The former have their backs to the *khɔrɔ*, a framework of reeds as a door, and are more roughly made, very often unplastered on the outside, so that the framework of wooden posts is clearly visible. On entering a sleeping hut, you find yourself in a pleasing apartment. The floor, the greater portion of which is generally to the level of a foot higher than that of the entrance, is well smeared, while beside the wall are one or two raised [352]
platforms used to place things on and sometimes also as seats. The well-plastered walls merge into the roof, forming a white dome. This dome has circular rims marking the cross-laths which, beneath the plaster, hold together the framework of closely packed rafters. Sometimes there are [353]
mural decorations and at intervals an outjutting shelf of clay or a peg. The floor of the hut of Raselaka is empty except for a double or waisted basket (*khirudwana*), a wooden platter of food, a lantern, and two smart [373]
suitcases. But on the shelves are blankets, a rolled-up sleeping-mat, some clothes and beadwork of the wife, and on the walls a calendar and a coloured picture of the King and Queen of England. You must not expect to find this latter sophistication in many villages, but likewise the smooth, plastered dome is now uncommon. New Government regulations against the cutting of trees for wood, and the men's general disinclination to put much work into a building they will inhabit only at intervals, between periods of service in the towns, are combining with other factors to doom to extinction these beautifully made huts. That of Leṭavula, newer than the others, is an ordinary *rondavel* with unplastered roof and supporting beams. He had a European bed, but has discarded it as too cold in winter.

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583 There are scores of aspects we cannot even touch upon. There are rules as to the kind of cattle or other beasts that may properly be used as *munywalo*: the rules may seem curious to us, but they have their reason in social and other arrangements. The number seven is taboo, for [801] the seventh finger 'points', as does a witch when he says, 'You'll *see*,' and it is wrong so to point at one's in-laws, with whom co-operation is essential. Similarly, as the size of the testicles of full-grown male animals [825] is an insult, because it is a challenge, such uncastrated animals cannot be part of the *munywalo*. So also yellowish cattle presage jealousies between co-wives; they will cause the bride to run away. Marriage is patrilocal, otherwise a man is said 'to have been married by his wife'; it is good to live near, but not too near, one's wife's people; for, if proximity is an economic and social advantage, to live under the roof of the parents-in-law is to relinquish all authority in one's own home. Generally speaking, the bride's family do not call the bridegroom to help them with actual work, such as building huts or ploughing. But the idea of service instead of, or in addition to, *munywalo* is faintly reflected in the fact that men now still living were required towards the end of the ceremonial to build a hut for their parents-in-law. The rule was that, when bridegroom had completed the hut, he climbed to the roof and refused to come down until the bride was immediately released to go home with him and she by greeting (*inu lɔsha*) signified her willingness to come. Such a hut in case of divorce counted as one head of cattle. And perhaps we should add, though it is clearly implied in all we have said, that no one except the boy's parents contributes and no one except the house of the girl's mother receives the *munywalo*. More than that, a man cannot help the son of one house by taking the cattle of another, for it is said, 'One house cannot eat the property of another,' though this, as everything else, is subject to the supreme principle that 'if they agree', the rigidity of the rule may be relaxed. It may involve difficult readjustments, but agreement is conceived as being able to overcome the difficulties. Sometimes also a relative who has brought up the bride is given one of the beasts of her *munywalo*, but it is not a custom as in many tribes, it is merely a matter of agreement.

581 The sexual aspect of marriage is treated with great moderation. Among us, where love looms large and represents a romantic ideal when we are young, it more often than not ends in disillusionment when we are old. The structure of Lovedu society lays no stress upon sexual compatibility, and marriage almost completely ignores sexual adjustments. Co-operation and agreement as regards its main purposes, both economic and structural, not companionship of husband and wife, is the ideal. Agreement is the watchword of the society, the guarantee of harmonious relations between spouses as well as co-wives. In describing the possible relations and dispositions within the family, no phrase is more frequently used than the phrase, 'if they agree'. No custom, no rule, no arrangement, decreed by the laws of the family, are absolute; and because the *khɔrɔ* judicial proceedings deal with difficulties in the family and in the social structure, they also are guided and controlled by agreement and compromises. And so it is agreement, not sexual compatibility, which is the

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769 Offerings may be poured on the ground or on *thugula* objects. Some-
782 times, however, the ancestors desire a shrine or a dedicated animal. The
825 queen herself and some others have dedicated cattle, male or female, according to the spirit represented; a few families have sheep, while the majority have goats. Fowls are neither dedicated nor killed for the gods. But we have one instance of a dedicated snake, that in the Relela family, to which in 1939, at their burial grounds in the depths of the forest, libations were offered when the *vyali* initiation began in that district; the conception is wholly alien to the Lovedu, though the Relela have been so long linked with, as to be indistinguishable from, them; and the snake, said to whistle, is described as like that dreaded monster, the 'mountain snake' which is often thought of as a mamba but strikes terror like the omen it is. The use of these different animals is traditional in, and bears no relation to the wealth of, the families concerned; some have a dedicated animal, others merely a shrine, while many have both. The dedicated animal receives the name of an ancestor, father or grandfather in the case of the head of the lineage, or of any complaining spirit that has demanded such *thugula*, and it is believed that his spirit (*muya*) has entered into it. Some dedicated animals are credited with abnormal powers: Mamujaji's agitation one day, while being driven to the dip, correctly presaged unpleasantness with the dip inspector; Malegudu is the fiercest bull in the land, like the warrior whom he represents. Though some people unceremoniously pour beer-offerings down the throat of dedicated animals, it is generally claimed that, unlike ordinary animals, they readily drink beer, but the claim is contradicted by the mealie leaves put over the beer to coax the animal to drink. In 1938, when Malegudu, called from the herd to drink the harvest beer, remained immovable, every one was afraid to approach him, but it was considered sufficient to throw the beer over him from a distance, so that by licking himself he might partake of the offering.

778 Shrines, which are to be found generally on the left-hand side of the entrance to the sleeping hut of the chief wife, vary in appearance and contents. A shrine may consist of a small mound of earth, containing the
[824] bones of a sacrificial goat; it may be a sacred plant or tree, usually *ṭiṭigwani* (*Hypoxis villosa*) or *leɔmɛ* (*Hæmanthus sp.*) and *muṭabu* (*Ficus capensis*), a black river stone, a long stick, or even a piece of a certain kind of ant heap (*khiṭhoni*). The queen's own shrine is a mound under which are buried the bones of a goat slaughtered some twenty years ago when it was set up. Mashishimali's shrine contains no bones, but consists of a *ṭiṭigwani* lily and a river stone, both visible above ground. Ramatiti has three shrines and one dedicated goat, all of which have arisen out of illness caused by ancestral complaints. Of the first, the shrine of his father, nothing is visible above ground; it consists of a buried piece of ant-heap, used instead of a goat because Ramatiti is not the chief son, who should have the dedicated animal, and a black river stone which keeps the spirit cool and appeased (lying down), as well as the three plant substances
[824] *muṭera*, *lesogo* (*Alipedia sp.?*), *vulevaja*, which are placed in most shrines to make the ancestors 'forget'. The other two are mounds containing the bones and heads of goats, one representing his mother, the other, like the live goat, his mother's brother, his wife's father.

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of their illness. Night-witches are not often seen by people, but there is 754
certain medicine which can be put in the village fence to keep a night-witch rooted to the spot, unable to move till you come and find him. As soon as he is addressed, he will scurry away. Those who have seen witches, always describe them as naked, perhaps because people always sleep naked wrapped in their blankets. The most effective way of keeping witches at bay is the placing of medicine (*diphaba*) round the village fence, which either makes them forget their errand or makes the village appear like water or a forest.

Night-witches cause all manner of illness in ways unknown to ordinary people. They may pour blood over you, then next day you are ill; your blood is not right and soon you die. They may cut off portions of your body to insert millet or sand, which causes intense pain. If your bones ache and you feel tired without knowing why, it may be that a night-witch has made you hoe in his garden all night or beaten you all over your body with sticks. Sometimes he even makes you ride a bicycle all night. Besides killing, night-witches are fond of causing barrenness in their enemies. They are great destroyers of crops. After you have ploughed, they go into your field and pick up all the seeds so that nothing grows, or they rob your field of its fertility to increase that of their own fields. They also send their familiars at night to milk your cows or let them out of their kraal to cause damage that may bring you to court. Night-witches form a sort of fraternity: they all know one another and meet at night to drum and dance for amusement. They also fight one another: those of an area in which the crops have failed will send wind to break mealies and trees in another area or worms to destroy the crop. The destructiveness of such contests is a reality to some, for in one district in which many worms appeared in the mealies, so we heard, a public meeting was held and one man accused Shangana-Tonga witches, whom he said he had seen the previous night. Often a real battle against foreign witches takes place in which wounds are received that the witch does his best to hide during the day. Witches have even been known to die from wounds received in battle at night, as sometimes admitted by themselves.

Night-witches employ familiars (*dithomya*) such as the hyena, the snake, 759
the *muishond* (*Pœcilogale albinucha*), and, to a lesser extent, owls and 825
the striped *muishond* (*Ictonyx capensis*): both kinds of *muishond* are polecats or skunks. How the witch tames these animals is not known, but they become so intimate that they come at night to ask for food and call the witch their mother, but there is no sex relationship between witch and familiar as is reported for the Pondo. Two actual cases were reported to the queen while we were in the field in which 'sent' snakes had been killed; one of these had been found to contain porridge and relish, certain proof of its association with a witch. The difference between an ordinary snake which also bites and a 'sent' snake appears from the circumstances: if, for example, others walk along a path before you and escape, but you get bitten, then the snake must be 'sent'. For 'sent' snakes are real snakes; the Zulu practice of smearing medicine on sticks to turn them into snakes when your enemy passes is not known to the Lovedu. The most fearful of all familiars is, however, the *khiḓuḓwane*, a 754

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to kill us by poisoning and starving us, because they dislike hearing the 177
groaning of a sick man. They will not allow us to go into the sun when 146
we are getting well. The nurses ill-treat us if we do what we think is 182
right. We get no filling food and our only enjoyment, conversation with one another, is repressed by the command to "shut up".' So profound is the suspicion, that one of our good friends died rather than go to hospital, while another, who had sustained a compound fracture, was persuaded to accept our advice to be taken to a European doctor only at the very last moment.

Yet let us not forget that in 1939 a tribal 'Cabinet' was set up and one 177
of its 'ministers' was the guardian of health. His last message to us was 825
that, in accordance with a decision of the 'Cabinet', he 'was watching the diet of the capital and had decided upon strictly prohibiting the running about of fowls'. By old and still persisting custom, it should be mentioned, fowls are not allowed in the capital, because, it is said, they are dirty animals.

Western culture hardly undermines magic and witchcraft: police 177
boys use magic to ward off 'the spears of their enemies', guns are 'doc- 754
tored' to make them shoot straight and even the inadequacies of European 578
justice are compensated by magic (*hu niclcla*). In this respect the culture has met the challenge, however inappropriately from our point of view. But it has failed to handle successfully the spirit of modern inquiry found among those who have been to school or have been stimulated by their experiences in the towns. Young men do not understand the long process of growing into a culture and ask questions which the old men cannot or will not answer. These young men, who judge by the standards of the little learning which is a dangerous thing, tend to despise what is not made intelligible to them. In their eyes, for instance, the mysteries of the *digɔma* and the *zwiḍajani* are shams, and the fact that no knowledge is imparted in the circumcision 'schools' condemns them as nonsense. This attitude and the inadequate response to it lead to lack of respect both for traditional values and old people. But the total effect is minimized by the reassertion of the old values as the young men grow older and begin to become part of and have a stake in the culture. Moreover, inquisitiveness is stamped as the immaturity, almost imbecility, of youth, and the insinuation that the doubts are due to the white man's insidious influence goes far to repress them as unworthy and disloyal.

In this book we have described Lovedu culture as it is to-day, touching 177
but cursorily in the present chapter upon the changes that have occurred or the trends that are apparent in some groups of people. We have seen that the interpenetration in the pre-European period has effected far greater institutional changes than in the European period. Even the incorporation of the cult of spirit possession, which came twenty years after the European, represents a far greater direct evolution than the changes in forms brought about by the Christian religion. The feature of pre-European merging has been incorporation, with modifications, of culture elements and the reciprocal effect upon existing institutions and culture elements. The feature of European penetration, except in material

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An omen or bane (*lesola*) presages death or disaster, but it may itself be the cause of the evil that follows. An owl hooting outside a hut, cats crying plaintively (not caterwauling) at night, presage disaster, for cats have uncanny insight; a mountain snake can be a *lesola*, and so can a *leshega*, i.e. a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order. A person will *ʋola* another, i.e. cause misfortune or death to descend upon a member of the latter's family, by swearing badly at him, especially if the words are out of all proportion to the offence or provocation. 787 825

These concepts of natural luck, accident, and omens are thus also linked with human relationships. Good relations with near relatives may bring you good luck, bad relations, especially with your father or father's sister, bad luck or illness to your children. In fact any man who despises the great, particularly his father, will, it is said, see him in the bones as the cause of his misfortune, especially if the old man dies before a reconciliation has been effected. An old man's scolding or curse is an omen (*vusola*) which portends and causes misfortune to a near relative of the person scolded, and the grievance of one's sister or father's sister, even if it is unconscious, generates a force (*mahava*) which brings illness upon one's children and which can be neutralized only by a religious rite. The exact relation between *mahava* and the ancestors is not very clear. The Lovedu conceive *mahava* as following automatically from the bad relationship between important kin. Yet reconciliation, which removes the source of the *mahava*, is not enough for putting matters right. It is the ancestors that must remove the illness at the request of the aggrieved party. 777 602 [753] [769]

Witchcraft and Sorcery (*Vulɔi*)

The evils that have so far been mentioned are either inherent in nature or only vaguely brought into relation with the conduct and relationships between men. Their effects except in a few cases are mild, rarely ending in death. In a completely different category is the greatest and most devastating source of evil *vulɔi* (witchcraft and sorcery), brought about directly by man. *Vulɔi* is, by Lovedu conceptions, always due to the conscious, evil practices of man and is directed at persons he has reason to hate.[1] *Vulɔi* is morally reprehensible, and witches and sorcerers are the arch enemies of society. The concept of *vulɔi* explains evil in terms of the malicious wickedness in men's hearts; it is criminality incarnate in man. The term *vulɔi* covers both witchcraft and sorcery; nevertheless the Lovedu make a clear distinction between witchcraft (*vulɔi vya vusiu*—night witchcraft) and sorcery (*vulɔi vya matsiare*—day witchcraft). The night-witch uses sinister inherited powers which extend beyond the ordinary course of nature. The sorcerer uses the natural, known powers of medicine for anti-social ends. Witchcraft implies possession of power to do evil transcending the under- 754 [577]

[1] Neighbouring Venda and Tsonga conceive the witch as constrained to evil by heredity but unconscious of his own evil acts.

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of the district head would have been unnecessary; but very frequently he acts as *mukhumedi* in these cases. 627 691

Hu khumelwa is the only proper initial procedure in cases of damage to crops. The owner of the cattle is called to see the damage, begs pardon with a goat, and is told to strengthen his cattle kraal. If depredations continue, he may be taken to the *khɔrɔ*. To omit the preliminary procedure of *hu khumelwa* is not necessarily fatal, but is regarded as being revengeful and nothing is abhorred more than revenge. If the man whose crops are damaged refuses reconciliation and makes the owner of the cattle 'pay' instead of allowing *hu khumelwa*, the owner will, it is said, seek an opportunity to revenge himself, and the saying that applies is: 'It is the blow that follows, not the first blow, that hurts.' The saying is, however, of general application and is invoked in regard to any injury or wrong. Practice differs in the various districts as regards *hu khumelwa* for damage to crops, and when a man is resident in one district and has his fields in another, very interesting conflicts of jurisdiction and law sometimes occur, but we cannot stop to consider them.

After formal complaint—that is, after a case is 'in the *khɔrɔ*'—*hu khumelwa* may, according to the circumstances, either end the matter or be treated as a confession of guilt (*duma muladu*) by plaintiff or *khɔrɔ*. *Duma muladu* is a term used also outside the *khɔrɔ*. If the owner of cattle continues to be careless after several warnings, he may find that his goat of reconciliation will be regarded, not as a goat of begging pardon, but as a confession of guilt, and the victim will exact what he considers to be the real damage. To accept pardon stops *khɔrɔ* proceedings, and if after *duma muladu* the culprit makes good what the victim demands there also can be no *khɔrɔ* trial; but if he does not, the offer of pardon is a confession, not conceived as having been made without prejudice, but admissible in evidence. More often *duma muladu* refers to a goat which the defendant offers in the *khɔrɔ* in settlement and apology. The circumstances, especially the attitude of the plaintiff and the previous history of the case, will then determine whether the matter ends there. The *khɔrɔ* may say, 'This is your *duma muladu*; now pay the ox which in our [or the plaintiff's] opinion fits the offence.'

Examples of *duma muladu* are difficult to give as a long history is involved and, to understand them, we should have to refer to details of the culture which are not dealt with in this book. But it may be possible to simplify for presentation here the case of *Mabula* v. *Magɔsha*, though it lasted six months in the *khɔrɔ* of the capital alone. These two women were co-wives of Khidai and were entangled in one of those polygons of jealousies arising in polygyny which are the counterpart of the eternal triangles of our monogamy. The co-wives quarrelled and fought about their extra-marital lovers, and Magɔsha bit Mabula on the lip. When the wound refused to yield to treatment it was said to be due to the 'bad teeth' of Magɔsha, who, it was suspected, must be a *leshɔga*, a person who had been allowed to live though her upper teeth had appeared before the lower. Having vainly appealed to her husband to order Magɔsha's teeth to be scraped for medicine, Mabula complained to her parents. After much manœuvring in order to avoid being drawn into the conflict, 847 826

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[827] internal snake believed to be intimately bound up with fecundity and
842 childbirth. Every one is said to have a snake in his stomach. It is not a real snake, yet it is conceived of as having a head and of being able to
753 crawl up to a man's neck (causing what we call indigestion) and running back again when he coughs. When a person has stomach-ache it is often said, 'The snake is biting,' while dysentery is referred to as 'red' or 'white snake', according to the stage of the disease. The most important function of this snake, and one that forms a common subject of conversa-
842 tion in connection with barrenness, is, however, its reproductive one. It is believed that semen comes from a man's snake; if his snake is 'no good', a child will not be born. The snake of a woman is sometimes identified with the womb and for conception it is necessary that this snake should accept the semen. There are two possibilities which prevent conception: either the snake's head may be wrongly oriented or it may catch up the semen, but spit it out again. In the first case the remedy is to 'turn round' its head by medical treatment, in which very often the womb of a scapegoat is used. In the second case, since the snake rejects the semen unless the bloods of husband and wife agree and the snake of the man may be as much at fault as that of the woman, it is usual to include both husband and wife in treatment for barrenness. If six to nine months elapse after marriage without conception having taken place, steps are at once taken to set the matter right.

826 Though the Lovedu have no knowledge of the circulation of the blood,
753 they assign to it properties which lie at the basis of their medical theory. Blood is so generally believed to be the root of most ills that a Native describing his symptoms always says, 'I am pierced by blood.' Rheumatism, stiffness after exercise, a pain or swelling in any part of the body, is attributed to blood that has collected there or blood which is 'boiling', making the body hot and feverish. Swellings of all kinds, including goitre, are therefore always cupped to get rid of surplus blood, and blood-letting as a cure for headache and other ills is as popular with the Lovedu as it was in Europe not so long ago. The beating of the heart is not
827 believed to be continuous: it is associated with sudden fright and with illness; but, though it is known that often the heart beats loudly when one is not ill, they have no idea why it should do so. Veins contain blood, but go by the same name as sinews and muscles, all of which are believed to give strength to the body. Occasionally, though infrequently, individuals are to be found who have other ideas. Thus David, a Christian who has often worked in towns and has a mind of his own, has his own theory as to the function of the heart, a deduction from his observations on dying fowls. He believes that the heart beats, not to circulate, but to exclude the blood, and the moment the heart stops beating the blood enters it, causing death to the fowl or person.

753 A considerable list of terms for different diseases indicates that distinctions are recognized, but it is easy to be misled into believing that the Natives' knowledge is greater than it really is. Some terms are peculiarly Native without any corresponding category among us, but many, like smallpox, measles, mumps, fever, consumption, migraine, syphilis, epilepsy, show appreciation of causes or symptoms which fit into our scheme of

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753 constitute an exhaustive list, and their application extends over a wide field, which we might call the magico-religious.

Murudi (shadow) is conceived of as an evil power, but of its many properties the most emphasized is the property of aggravating disease. It is as if certain real evils cast a shadow which may infect those upon which it falls. If they are normal, healthy people, generally speaking they suffer no discomfort themselves, but they may act as carriers of the shadow, and by contact with others, especially those who are ill, they may transmit the evil as if they were intermediary hosts, weakening the patient and aggravating his illness. The host may transmit the shadow to both persons and things. A person who has attended a funeral or who has lost a close relative is infected by the shadow of death. Twins have [845] such great shadow that if they come near a sick person he will die: hence twins must be killed and are still generally killed, despite European law and the example of Christians to whose grown-up twins no specific evil can be attributed. A woman who has had a miscarriage has *muridi*. [843] Pregnancy up to but not after the end of the third month infects a woman with *muridi*, for a clear distinction is drawn between the two stages of pregnancy: before the end of the third month the foetus is amorphous, not a human being; after it, the foetus takes human form, the woman 'has grown', and a miscarriage is regarded as a death, so that people come to condole and there is a mourning period ended by the [removal of] 'dirt' rite (*khitshila*), just as for the most important adult. After childbirth a woman has *muridi*, but this is not the reason for her isolation. She remains in the hut till her child is strengthened, lest she bring to it shadows from outside. Girls over puberty and non-suckling, childbearing women, though having no definite *muridi*, are a potential source of danger to the sick, and men have not infrequently refused to allow us to wash their wounds with water drawn by such women. It is not at all clear, however, whether it is menstruation that is feared or the danger of possible early pregnancy. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife brings about a [832] mild form of *muridi*; hence, if a very young child is ill, husband and wife 843 sometimes abstain from intercourse. *Muridi* from sexual intercourse is believed to affect the meat of slaughtered cattle or goats unless certain precautions are taken, and causes stomach trouble to those who partake of it. Men who are sleeping with their wives are therefore not allowed to approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced or to help skin it without first smearing their hands with leaves of *thccbc* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) or other medicine. Here again, so it seems, the danger is not the actual intercourse, but the possibility of an unformed foetus in the womb. Thus, in the early stages of his wife's pregnancy, Nagambi was forbidden to approach slaughtered animals, but later, when pregnancy was advanced, the restriction fell away, even though he was still cohabiting with his wife.

753 A person whose upper teeth appear before the lower or whose molars 826 appear first is full of *muridi* and should be killed. In the area surrounding the royal village every child is brought to the queen for examination on the appearance of its first teeth. The mother carries with her a small basket of eleusine and, if all is well, it is said that the child has 'danced

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with joy' (*u pebedi*); if not, there are no ululations of joy and, though to-day the child is allowed to live, it must be treated by a doctor. When several children have been brought, beer must be made by their mothers for the older women, the queen attends, and there is much joy. If a person whose teeth have appeared in the wrong order is not killed, he is called a *leshega*. He must be most careful never to bite any one, for the wound will not respond to healing treatment. But it is believed that matter taken from the teeth of the *leshega* may be applied as an antidote. It will be remembered that in the case of *Mabula* v. *Magosha*[1] the parents of a *leshega* who had bitten her co-wife were ordered to beg pardon and to allow the 'scraping' of the teeth of their daughter. They had denied that she was a *leshega*, but the court decided that, *leshega* or not, neither she nor they could refuse something that might help the wound.

Muridi is, on the whole, dangerous, not to its primary intermediary host, but to others. Its source is conceived to be usually a person, but it may also be places, such as cross-roads and large rivers which become infected owing to the number of people crossing them. Nor is all *muridi* equally dangerous. Precautions are taken to protect the sick against its influence; a sick person is smeared with medicine or a stick is placed to bar entrance to his hut, its warning against entering without permission being a function also of the stick barring the door of the hut of a new-born child. Allied to but not the same as *muridi* are *leridi* (monstrous shadow) and *leṭala* (sinister spoor, the word for an ordinary track being *muṭala*). A warrior who has killed an enemy has *leridi* and, unless purified, he stands in grave danger of becoming mad or extremely quarrelsome (one of the worst social sins). If two men have had sexual relations with the same woman and one of them is ill, the other must on no account come near lest his track (*leṭala*) cause him to die. Similarly, the husband's mistress should take care to remain away from the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth.

Makhuma, from *hu khuma*, to mix together, is a conception similar to *muridi*, but the evil, a kind of illness, infects the immediate host, who cannot transmit it to others. Critical changes especially constitute the source of the evil which mingles with or contaminates or infects the person who has just undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baleful emanations. In all the initiations strengthening medicine is given the novices as an antidote to the *makhuma* to which they are subject after the initiation: for instance, the initiates in the boys' circumcision lodge are given black medicine just before the change from west to east to protect them from being injured (*hu khuma*) after entering the ordinary world. One may *khuma* if, after an absence from home during which a death has occurred, one eats food without some precautionary measure, such as chewing a piece of ant heap (*khithoni*). The treatment given after a death is chiefly to prevent the onset of *hu khuma* among relatives. A woman who has lost a child will cause her next child to *khuma* if she allows it to drink before her breasts have been doctored. Cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if women enter the kraal, and measures to fortify them are always taken

[1] [See cat. 116, pp. 195-96 -- Analyst]

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753 after the funeral. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use their powdered medicine with the first-fruits.

Though usually associated with the stomach, the symptoms of *makhuma* are not very definite, diagnosis being chiefly *ex post facto*. If one child has died, any illness its successor might have, even beating of the fontanelle, is liable to be attributed to *makhuma*. After the miscarriage of Madume's wife, Dwagu, a non-related inmate of the same village, did not trouble to be purified when the doctor came; but when, shortly afterwards, his stomach became upset, he immediately attributed it to *makhuma* and hastened to take medicine for its removal.

The conception of *khuma* has been extended into other fields. Divining [787] bones *khuma* at the end of each month as well as when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the rain charms of the queen are liable to *khuma* (or *figchela*) [789] unless given the first-fruits and the first termites of the year to 'bite' (*luma*) before any one else in the royal area eats them, as also when certain people neglect certain observances, such as burial in wet soil of infants dying before their teeth have appeared. *Hu khuma* of the rain charms has serious consequences, causing drought throughout the country. That Christians do not observe these regulations has as little effect on the rain as when Europeans do not conform.

753 *Hu fesa*, or the state of being 'hot', is a conception far wider than *muridi* or *makhuma* and is the antithesis of the condition of coolness which 826 is conceived of as healthy, propitious, or right. The properties of this 'heat', which may be caused in a variety of ways, are not unlike physical heat. Bodily illness, even *muridi*, causes the blood to be 'hot' or to be 'boiling' and may be treated by 'cooling' the body: thus the *khitshila* ceremony, which removes the 'dirt' of death, also 'cools' people. The hair of near relatives is shaved with medicine and put in a wet place or in certain kinds of drought-resisting plants. But it is usually the source of the 'heat', not the 'heat' itself, the symptom of the disease, that is treated, though both may be dealt with. The blood of a woman in certain conditions—for example, after an abortion—is said to 'burn', she has (or is) *lesua* (great burning), and the man who has sexual intercourse with her also 'burns', but whether it is because the 'heat' is conducted to him or because of the disease, *ɖzre* (coughing illness) or urethritis, which he contracts, is by no means clear. The treatment is directed at the disease in him, not towards counteracting the 'heat'. Often after steaming a patient, a river stone is pressed against all joints of the body and then taken back to the river, a treatment in which we may discern an attempt to 'cool', though it also contains the conception of 'throwing out'.

821 Since heat withers the vegetation and causes drought, it is opposed to 766 rain. Precautions must therefore be taken against whatever is thought to cause the country to be hot and dry. A man succumbing to *ɖzre*, a person struck by lightning, a woman dying in childbirth, and the foetus of a miscarriage—all these must be buried in wet soil or with rain medicine if the country is to be kept 'cool' and the rains are to fall. Coolness connotes rightness. Charms protecting the village against witches are 754 sometimes called *mashɔthɔjɔ*, because they *rɔthɔja* (cause to be cool,

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783 not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and con-
753 tagious force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an invisible counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction, including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage (regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor. 'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

783 Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*.
758 A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to
834 warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi* affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhuma*) to those eating it.
[826] Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leskga*) are full of *muridi* and were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings from the teeth of the *leskga*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary
[893] sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hosts infects these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long journeys from home.

783 *Muridi* is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other
753 injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will

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CHAPTER XII

THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

Anatomical conceptions in relation to the science of drugs and of healing—cardinal categories of the causation of disease—training for the medical profession—divinatory dice as a method of diagnosis.

LOVEDU therapy is linked, on the one hand with law, and on the other 755
with medicine, magic, witchcraft, sorcery, and religion, but it is more closely interwoven with these last than with the first. If disease and death are the main objective of witchcraft and sorcery, disease is also the occasion of most religious rites, medicine the means of restoring the health of the human body and law the guarantee of the well-being of the social organism. Law and medicine are both largely concerned with the results of dissension between men. Open strife, which leads to social evils, is examined by the *khoro* and resolved under the guidance of its wisdom; secret malice, which causes death and disease, is diagnosed by the bones and treated by the doctor; but for the detection of the deeds of darkness the *khoro* calls in the aid of the doctor. The *khoro* relies upon public discussion and its genius effects contact and reconciliation between one litigant and another, while the doctor uses private divination and his art inspires the consultant with confidence against his secret enemy. The social psychology of the one is the counterpart of the psycho-therapy of the other. But we must not think of them as essentially different worlds, the one primarily natural and the other primarily supernatural. The medico-magico-religious is to the Lovedu rather a tangible world of mundane arrangements and subject to 'natural' forces than a cosmos, inscrutable in its configuration and governed by 'supernatural' destinies. In truth, Lovedu healing is based to some extent upon observed relations between cause and effect though more largely upon practices and beliefs which, though they will not stand the tests of our science, constitute the psychological therapy of the society. We are far too apt to discount the value of their empirical body of knowledge, instead of using it to construct a sound scientific approach to medicine. We can also do better than scorn as superstitious absurdities those indispensable techniques of medicine which, because our medical profession takes little account of them, enable the charlatan and quack to flourish among us.

To understand Lovedu conceptions of the causation of disease, we 827
must orientate ourselves from their knowledge of human anatomy. It is indeed very meagre. All they know has been gleaned indirectly from the slaughter of cattle and goats, for they practise neither embalming nor dissection of corpses. As a result, though they have names for all the more important organs of the body, they are not always sure of their correct location. Nor have they much idea of physiological function. They know that the stomach and intestines are digestive organs and that the bladder contains urine, but lungs and the diaphragm are vaguely connected with 827
breathing. The womb, ovaries, and testicles are definitely reproductive 842
organs, but in medical practice this function is obscured by the role of an

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842 tion in connection with barrenness, is, however, its reproductive one. It is believed that semen comes from a man's snake; if his snake is 'no good', a child will not be born. The snake of a woman is sometimes identified with the womb and for conception it is necessary that this snake should accept the semen. There are two possibilities which prevent conception: either the snake's head may be wrongly oriented or it may catch up the semen, but spit it out again. In the first case the remedy is to 'turn round' its head by medical treatment, in which very often the womb of a scapegoat is used. In the second case, since the snake rejects the semen unless the bloods of husband and wife agree and the snake of the man may be as much at fault as that of the woman, it is usual to include both husband and wife in treatment for barrenness. If six to nine months elapse after marriage without conception having taken place, steps are at once taken to set the matter right.

826 Though the Lovedu have no knowledge of the circulation of the blood,
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827 believed to be continuous: it is associated with sudden fright and with illness; but, though it is known that often the heart beats loudly when one is not ill, they have no idea why it should do so. Veins contain blood, but go by the same name as sinews and muscles, all of which are believed to give strength to the body. Occasionally, though infrequently, individuals are to be found who have other ideas. Thus David, a Christian who has often worked in towns and has a mind of his own, has his own theory as to the function of the heart, a deduction from his observations on dying fowls. He believes that the heart beats, not to circulate, but to exclude the blood, and the moment the heart stops beating the blood enters it, causing death to the fowl or person.

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for a really weak patient. Sprinkling and *hu hata*, combined very often 757
with other treatments, are also used alone. When there is an epidemic of coughing or dysentery, it is said 'a wind has come' and a doctor is called to sprinkle the people to ward it off. *Hu hata*, pressing a counter-irritant to the affected part, is used for toothache, when large pieces of heated bark are held to the cheek; for bruises, which are treated by the application of hot boiled leaves of certain trees; after childbirth, when hot porridge placed in a small flat basket is pressed daily to the stomach to ward off pains, and for many other purposes. But the hot poultice or emollient is not known.

Characteristically, the above-mentioned treatments are used both on 757
occasions where they might be of real therapeutic value and for purifica- 755
tions and strengthenings where they could not. The principle of inoculation, which immunises in diseases such as smallpox, is widely applied to effect cures and to further magical ends with which an empirical relation in our sense is wholly obscure. The relation must be sought, not in the objective link between cause and effect as we see it, but in the Lovedu conceptions of disease, their causes and symptoms, and in the cultural pattern of the methods by which evil may be cast out or symbolically laid upon a scapegoat. This is by no means as foreign to European thought as might at first be supposed, being used to this day among the more backward peasants both in Europe and in South Africa. A cure for headache among the Lovedu is to tie a piece of medicated string or sinew round the head for a day, after which it is cut and allowed to fall with the evil it has absorbed into a hole. To cure gout you scarify the leg to insert medicine, wiping off the blood with the leaves of a growing *mutagola* bush (*Euclea sp.*) to leave the disease on it. The frog is a common scapegoat. We once witnessed how, in the case of pulsating fontanelle of a baby, [827]
considered to be a grave danger, some of the medicine inserted into the scarifications, made around the throbbing spot and on other parts of the body, was placed on a green-and-white frog. The frog was stood on the fontanelle, where it puffed itself up by rhythmic inhalations not unlike the beating of the fontanelle and finally, as a scapefrog, to which the evil had been transmitted, it was taken back to the river. One method of curing convulsions is to shave the hair in two 'paths' which cross in the centre of the child's head and to make a bark cockroach, smeared with medicine, run along each path till it drops off. In curing barrenness and in initiation into the cult of possession, a goat, after being made to lie beside the patient or having its nostrils blown into, is killed and used in the treatment.

Lovedu medicines appear to us to be a jumble of science and magic. 278
Fully 80 per cent. are of vegetable origin. There is hardly a plant in that 757
rich lowveld vegetation which is not used in the pharmacopoeia of some 755
herbalist or doctor and it is significant that new plants are constantly tried out. The pattern of supposed relations that are believed to exist between symptoms and diseases, of the unscientific analogies which we call sympathetic magic, and the use of roots and barks more frequently than leaves or flowers and fruits, limits the value of this testing out of medicines. Nevertheless, many drugs have effects which either obscure or

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771 The form in which it is found is different from that among Shangana-
794 Tonga and lent itself to ready incorporation into Lovedu religion.
177 Among Shangana-Tonga, the possessing spirit is regarded as a foreign spirit from some outside tribe; among the Lovedu it is an ancestor who may, like any ancestor, demand the usual shrine or dedicated animal. The cult is not accepted by all and the royal family deprecate it as foreign and as detracting from their prestige. Its noisiness and showiness, though incongruous with the traditional reserve and lack of display, makes a popular appeal in these more insecure days.

794 A spirit entering a person causes illness and the first object of the cult
753 is directed at curing the illness, so that initiation is regarded as therapeutic. Long-continued illness of a patient, which will yield to no curative treatment, will be diagnosed as due to an ancestral spirit 'pressing him down', because it wants to manifest itself in him. The symptoms are never very definite: Mashishimali was 'ill all over the body' and suffered from swollen legs which five different doctors had tried unsuccessfully to cure; Mamolatela was weak and ailing after the birth of her first child. The symptoms are neither violent, like the running amuck which accompanies *ukuthwasa* among the Nguni, nor of a specifically nervous nature.
[828] Epilepsy, which is common, bears no relation to possession, and any peculiar behaviour is more liable to be attributed to witchcraft than to the spirits. It is believed that a possessed person after death likes in turn to manifest itself in some descendant and there is a tendency for possession to run in families. In one family three sisters and their mother were all possessed. Sometimes, especially where others in the family are possessed, a person does not even get ill; he just becomes possessed when people are singing or dancing in the manner of the cult. Contact with certain localities or people associated with possession is often sufficient. Thus it is said that, should one be among the Sekhwasha in Portuguese East Africa, who become possessed in a manner different from the Lovedu, one risks becoming possessed by merely picking up something dropped by a member of that tribe or eating the fruit of the fig, *mudomma* (*Diospyros mespiliformis*), or *munchchche* (*Cassia petersiana*).

794 Once it is known that a person is being 'pressed down' by some spirit
755 wishing to manifest itself, a *lelɔpo* doctor, himself possessed and skilled in dealing with the possessed, is called to cure the patient. This is done, not by exorcism, but by rites designed to enable the spirit to come and make known its wishes along legitimate channels, known in the cult. For the spirits that possess people are not evil spirits to be expelled; they are the ancestors whom one worships, and their desire occasionally to manifest themselves through some living relative is comparable to that impulse towards life that makes them desire shrines, dedicated animals, and the perpetuation of their names in their descendants. The method by which a spirit is enabled to 'come out' and disclose its identity and the possessed person to become the host (*ledala*) of the spirit without being ill consists largely of dancing; and on all subsequent occasions when the
794 spirits manifest themselves they signify their desire to dance.

755 Dancing is the central feature of the cult. The spirits are thought to
535 enjoy this dancing; when manifesting themselves at festivities of the

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754 in spite of one's own convictions. Moreover, it does not follow that
761 the witch has any evil designs upon one, though he has killed some
777 one else. Personal adjustments with the witch are more easily achieved than we might imagine; they are even imperative, partly because witchcraft is so universal a cause of death that in this respect the witch is almost part of the inevitable order of things, partly because, unless a confirmed witch, he is not regarded with horror by the whole society, and partly because he may be an influential and respected man.

Witchcraft serves also to explain the differential incidence of misfortune or death which we generally leave unexplained; but it is not often invoked in this respect. An old, dried-up tree stands in a field. People often rest beneath it at hoeing time. One day, while two children are sitting in its shade, it falls down and kills one of them. The Lovedu realize that dead trees are liable to fall down. But it has long been standing there. Why has it fallen just on that day and, moreover, at that particular time when the children were there? Further, what made it kill one, leaving the other unhurt? This combination of circumstances must, they feel, be due to some malignant controlling force directed against the child. Or, when people recover from a disease such as smallpox in one district, but succumb to it in another, the differential effect in the latter is ascribed to the work of a witch. The occasion for evoking witchcraft as an explanation in certain circumstances is an aspect of witchcraft, but it is not an explanation of its nature and psychological basis and only part of the explanation of its function.

754- Witchcraft is employed to account for unusual or anti-social behaviour.
● 828 Hysteria might be attributed either to witchcraft or possession. A girl ran away from her own puberty ceremony, an unheard-of and reprehensible action. Her relatives said she must have been bewitched into doing it, so, instead of being punished, she was given treatment to remove the baleful influence. Attributing certain types of anti-social action or the breaking of some customs to witchcraft makes it possible for the society to withstand successfully many blows; an issue is avoided and the transgressor made to feel himself incapable of such actions but for the witchcraft. We must also remember that abnormalities need not necessarily evoke comment. A person may be born an imbecile, but it may be considered quite normal. This is so because there is a place in the society for the weak-minded, sometimes even as jesters of the court. Personal defects or limitations do not, to the same extent as among us, disable a man from performance markedly below the standards required in spheres in which he can be useful; and thus there need not arise an intolerable situation from which escape is sought by psycho-pathological devices or the projection of one's misfortune as witchcraft upon others. Finally, to attribute death to witchcraft, and to set about taking steps to send it back to its owner, probably provides greater emotional satisfaction to the bereaved than the feeling of impotence in the face of an uncontrollable, natural force. The same kind of emotional need is answered when a man with a grievance feels that he can, in the last resort, employ medicine to gain his ends, and people not infrequently indirectly hint to their enemies the possibility of their doing so.

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moving her to pity and by 'cooling' the heat of the earth and the anger 181
of the ancestors. Frenzy and excess are outlawed, moderation and balance are honoured. They have little conception of the Buddhistic Nirvana or annihilation of human existence, of the fanaticism and fatalism of the soldiers of Allah, or even of Western concentration and intensive striving. From the point of view of our values, the Lovedu are Laodicean, 'lukewarm, neither hot nor cold', happy-go-lucky. They are always saying that they will 'try', never that they must succeed. But there is nothing intensive about their striving. A man faced with a difficulty is always advised to 'persevere', but that does not imply our grim determination, being more like the leisurely manner in which they set about all their tasks.

This theme permeates every aspect of the culture. In the boys' circumcision the object is to break the child of his wildness and lack of balance, and the purpose is achieved, not by excessive tortures and privations, but by the mature guidance of the old men. Neither strength nor stoicism are much made of, and the virtues inculcated are balance and self-sufficiency. The Lovedu tolerate ostentation only on occasions appropriate to exhilaration, quite unlike even such nearly related tribes as the Maḏala and Phalavorwa, who have institutionalized boasting displays by those famed as hunters or warriors. In the field of the [785] magico-religious, fastings and visions do not figure, except among the possessed and the smellers-out, the latter always foreigners, the former a recent introduction. Possession in its Lovedu context has been shorn of its paranoic elements, its exaggerated trances, and its inception in a mental cataclysm. Cataleptic seizures do not serve as inductions to the super- [828] natural as among the Nguni, for fits are due to witchcraft, and, unlike the smeller-out, who is a Shangana-Ṭonga and works by insight and exaggerated procedures, the Lovedu doctor divines by his craft and acquires power by learning and experience. Prayer is not an emotional 181
outpouring of the heart, but a communication as between man and man. 152
Dissension in her country upsets, and anger in her heart inhibits, the power of the queen. Spells are not characterized by intensity or malevolence; they are often merely directions to the medicine to bring about justice or to restore the balance. Even at a death or burial, there must be no display of distress, no undue weeping; both the dying and the survivors resign themselves with a calmness that is the admiration of Europeans who know the Lovedu well. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to injure her next child; Mputa, now thirty years of age, was born a cripple, it is said, because his mother, Makwada, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. We have never seen weeping at a funeral, and the property of the deceased is not so contaminated that it has to be destroyed, though in the midst of the Lovedu the Shangana-Ṭonga phrase death as a terror situation, even pulling down the hut of the deceased and removing from his village. Suicide is an escape, intelligible enough when a man is insane or (in the old days) has been condemned to death as a witch; but otherwise it is attributed to witchcraft, not to frustration.

In the method by which the themes of both sex and authority are 181
handled there is the same aversion from excess or ostentation. The Lovedu 831

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783 charms or *digɔma*. *Makhuma* which arises from critical transitions causes mainly stomach trouble and general debility in men and cattle; but it also causes weakening of the mystical powers concentrated in sacred objects. These ritual forces do not strike down the guilty person: it is, for example, not the husband who will be revenged if the adulterer approaches the hut of his wife; or when a woman has procured an abortion, it is not she but her innocent lover who will be affected with *ḍere*, the most dreaded disease among the Lovedu. The harmful effects of all these forms of impurity are not sanctions against the acts or events causing the impurity, but sanctions for taking the necessary precautions to remove the impurity and prevent it from spreading to others, or from causing some calamity not necessarily affecting the guilty person. And, as so often happens in Lovedu society, it is generally *ex post facto*, and as an explanation of some illness or evil that these conceptions are invoked and steps are taken to put things right.

784 The concatenations of actions and conditions that must be avoided lest they bring about misfortune and evil to men are wider than what is included in the conceptions of 'heat', *muridi*, and *makhuma*. Many things or natural objects brought into relation with men have evil consequences and must be avoided: they are taboo (*hu ila*). Burning a certain kind of wood in the village causes quarrels; working in the fields the day after the first rain is taboo, not sanctioned by a penalty but the breach of which is a bane (*lesola*) that may portend evil. The breach of these taboos is disapproved but leads to no organized reaction or public indignation even where it affects the welfare of all, as in the case of a wrong burial. A man who sleeps with his wife while she is still suckling a child may thereby cause the death of his child; but it is his own foolish and inconsiderate conduct that causes the mother's breast to *khuma* (become polluted and weakened), and it is not the concern of outsiders. He is a fool rather than criminal.

753 Many things in nature are recognized as directly affecting man adversely; various foods and drinks cause stomach troubles; poisonous weeds may kill cattle which, like men, occasionally die of old age; many minor illnesses are attributed to natural causes, e.g. one may contract malaria by walking in the dew in the early morning. Epidemics may be brought about naturally by the air or wind (*phɛfo*). 'Ward off from us these winds' is a constant plea [821] in prayers to the ancestors. Hot, dry winds which drive away rain-bearing clouds or dissolve them in thunderstorms or gales are thought to be specially detrimental to the rain, and it is the duty of the ancestors to keep away such winds. Even anxiety or worry wears a man down (*hu seḍa mutho a homehwa*, lit., scrapes a man thin). [828] A woman who is prone to break her pots is not bewitched; she has *khifyaisa*, a natural propensity for breaking, which can be cured by medicine.

777 The Lovedu also have the conception of natural accident (*gozi*) and of luck (*leshuto*), though bad luck is sometimes attributed to breach of obligations to kin, to malicious gossip, or to the misconduct in one's absence of one's wife.

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181 753 every step in a man's life. The infant is saturated with medicine: he is made to grow by means of medicine, he is steamed and strengthened, and every upset of the stomach, every sign of disorder, every major change in his life is treated as if it were a grave danger. The child is often inoculated against the 'poisoned shaft', the 'last, fatal arrow' that a malicious enemy might 'hurl' at him. Medicines by anticipation protect those who after their initiation ceremony might be weakened (*hu khuma*) when they resume contact with the world. Even adults in perfect health periodically consult their doctors to discover whether, unknown to them, some one is not planning an attack upon them.

To a European nothing is more amazing than the number of medicines that are tried, rejected, and changed when a man is or supposes that he is ill, unless indeed it is the contradiction that is implied in their preoccupation with their ailments as contrasted with their care-free attitude to life. The Lovedu are always telling of their illnesses, yet they seem to worry as little about them as the Englishman about the weather, although he can hardly converse without complaining about it. It must, therefore, not be imagined that life is weighed down by this interest in ailments; the Lovedu are seldom really depressed. They do not feel at the mercy of a capricious power, for their safety is ultimately in strong hands. They can use medicine to combat witchcraft and, though death is inevitable, their faith in the superiority of the good forces that they can invoke to control evil remains unshaken; for death is only the occasional triumph of evil, which time and again throughout life is defeated by the power of medicine. The outlook which supports security presupposes an ordered universe in which witchcraft is not merely outlawed, but can be overcome by employing well-recognized techniques.

829 177 In the face of the danger of the European, the position is entirely different. The white man is conceived to be part of a world which is antagonistic and incomprehensible; its forces are both disruptive, striking at the very significance of life, and capricious, not amenable to control by any known magical techniques. The projection of the danger upon the supernatural is but one aspect of a far wider conflict between European and Native, conqueror and conquered, perpetuated by divergent outlooks and different cultural configurations.

The conflict is an exceedingly complicated one. There is, firstly, the threat to the security of the Lovedu tribe, a threat that strikes particularly at the position of the queen and at the effectiveness of social mechanisms, causing criminals to multiply, encouraging disrespect for parents and for elders, and weakening the force of the reciprocities. Secondly, in the wider contact of Europeans and Natives attitudes have become vitiated by the antipathies that develop between the group of fellow men and the aliens outside it. The loyalties and trust between those within the group become transformed into hatred and suspicion towards those outside it; in the one case the human capacity for self-sacrifice, in the other case the capacity for selfishness, comes into play. Where the whole value system of the one group clashes with that of the other, antipathies are intensified. Moreover, the differences between the groups coincide with pronounced biological distinctions, such as

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colour, and with intense economic competition leading to poor-whiteism, and, as a result, an all-comprehensive theory of innate racial differences becomes a necessary philosophy to the European, while, to the Native, treachery and cunning towards the European become the ethical ideal and anything that he can get away with is thought to be legitimate.

These extremes are not always found, but even where a situation, such as that between farmer and labourer, is not vitiated by a sense of insecurity or the traditional antipathies, it may still give rise to misunderstandings. This is so because the Native is not trained in or conditioned to the European standards of concentration, industry, devotion to a single end, precision, and attention to detail, nor to the European conception of responsiveness to conscience. Many forms of Lovedu self-expression ill fit the contact situation, and often their behaviour is resented as the insolence of an inferior. Europeans may escape the feeling that they are treating the Native inhumanly by devising a theory of racial inferiority; the Natives, often accepting the reality, ascribe their status and misfortunes to the evil motives and systematic persecution of the European. It will not be possible to elaborate this theme, but a few of its aspects may be touched upon.

The vulnerability of the powers of the queen to European interference is one of the reasons for the all-pervading attitude of secrecy towards white men. There is a certain amount of untruthfulness and evasion towards fellow tribesmen: children are warned never to divulge the happenings in their homes or the possessions of their parents. But, as regards the European, deliberate lying is a positive virtue, for the inscrutability of the queen's powers is the essence of their preservation and of men's faith in them and in the queen, and secrecy is the only effective weapon against the European. Since disclosures to Europeans, even of the most commonplace activities or customs, might have unforeseen consequences, threatening the society, secrecy and its concomitants, hypocrisy and duplicity, have become ends in themselves. In our experience, despite our efforts to help people (which they often shamelessly exploited) and to justify the value to the tribe of our work (which made us only more distrusted), threats were often made against those who were our close associates and suspicion rested even on those whom we casually visited, unless, indeed, they could give an assurance that they had deceived us. At last, after incorporating ourselves as *khadi* (father's sister), foster father, and co-wife in various families, we became accepted, made some close friends, and overcame some of the suspicion. But, generally speaking, the good man is he who can circumvent the European and, conversely sometimes, the comprehensible European is he who has cheated the Native. In this context, it is not surprising that the European has an unflattering opinion of the Lovedu. And it is also intelligible that, to an essentially generous and easy-going people and in informal situations, the burden of secrecy imposes too great a strain and from time to time breaks down under cover of privileged confidences and the relaxation of drunkenness, or upon a sudden compulsive frankness. But in formal situations, such as in European courts, the Lovedu rely upon falsehood, and they believe that any lie is good enough to deceive a European.

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Legal relations with Europeans have been tragically misrepresented, for the procedures and sanctions of the European legal drama are not very intelligible. The villains of the piece are the solicitors, who, in their eyes, plot to put an end to reciprocal obligations, and safeguard criminals. These villains appear to be the main actors on the stage, and their victims, baffled by the awesomeness and incomprehensibility of the situation, see the solicitors in the role of conspirators laying schemes behind the scenes, where corruption arbitrarily decides the fate of the victims, or of impostors displaying deceitfully purchased loquacity before the footlights. They see the victim at the mercy of forces that inspire a dread not unlike the dread of being assailed by witchcraft, with this difference—that against witchcraft the sense of security can be regained by invoking magic, while nothing will avail against the awful incomprehensibility of European justice.

The purpose of the whole drama is inscrutable. Should the dock prove to be a trap to the innocent victim, all he can do is to resign himself to the inevitable. Should the offender be acquitted or inadequately punished, he becomes the luckless victim of a new tragedy; his enemies in the society by *hu niclela* magically render him subject to an obsessive compulsion to relapse into crime, so that he may once more re-enact his part as victim in the court and so eventually expiate his original offence. Not only recidivism, but also imbecility, may be the result, for the victim 'will remain laughing at the passing flies'. *Hu niclela* is some kind of answer to the feeling of insecurity before European law, but it is a very inadequate answer: it is not much invoked, it cannot prevent the multiplication of criminals and the growing aggressiveness of witches who escape the clutches of European justice, and it tries to reinstate confidence by relying upon a recidivism which undermines security. To the European, the Native offender is a difficult problem. He will not confide his defence and he wastes time with rambling statements; policemen regard him as insolent and as having gangster proclivities; and the only way to deal with him, it is thought, is by repressive regulations, pick-up vans, and punitive raids.

In the wide expanse of the employment situation there are other difficulties. The sanctions of the reciprocities of Lovedu society are lacking, and the appeal to these sentiments that the European values has little effect, except when the mutualities, the give and take, of Native society can be simulated and the group antipathy or negative identification can be converted into a measure of sympathy or positive identification. Historical factors, proximity, and many other considerations cause the degree of vicarious identification of the hostility with situations and localities to vary, and likewise the difficulties of overcoming the hostility vary. In a locality where, with the best intentions, farmers have ejected Lovedu squatters from their ancestral lands in order to re-employ them as wage-earners, the hostility is fierce and cannot be overcome in the first generation, whatever means are adopted. Of the Government, which they think is always deceiving them, they say, 'Sire of I-come-I-come, the child is already born and has begun to walk', to denote how readily promises are made to come and help, but how dilatory the fulfilment

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is; and as the result there is a profound distrust which vitiates relations. In the situation of a European-owned mission station, both because of the threat attributed to an iconoclastic creed and of the supposed capitalistic exploitation, the services and sacrifices of a missionary are liable to be rewarded with ingratitude and suspicion. 829 177

But however favourable the conditions, the difficulties must not be underestimated. It is the sensitive ego that is easily controlled; if a man cannot ordinarily be moved by an appeal to a sense of honour, conscience, or cupidity, moral pressure cannot easily be brought to bear upon him. Not only is the Lovedu ego not vulnerable, but the resort to kindness and the appeal to high motives are liable to be construed as cunning and an attempt to overreach. 'An ingratiating person', such as a European who comes with pleasant words, the Lovedu say, 'lacks not ulterior motive; if he lacks it, he is doomed' (for in any case he will be suspected). No wonder that the European so often believes that firmness and coercion are the only means of controlling the Native.

The different views held by the Lovedu and the European with regard to certainty and precision lead to many conflicts. The lack of Lovedu insistence upon these traits gives an appearance of irresponsibility and disregard of obligations against the background of European society; and the white man readily believes that Natives are innately like children and always need supervision. As employers, masters, and administrators, Europeans have, in the setting of a competitive, calculating society, no alternative but to stress punctuality and precise regulation; but they are wrong in supposing that the essence of every society must be its regulative aspect and that anarchy must follow if irregularities and disregard of rigid procedures are allowed. The meticulous fulfilment of obligations, upon which the Western commercial structure depends, is not necessary in the timeless Lovedu culture, with its reliance upon long-run reciprocities. The Lovedu would easily understand the parable in which the people who worked for an hour in the vineyard in the cool of the evening received as much reward as those who had toiled there all day long in the hot sun, for they have little patience with the dull, mechanical systems that measure merit, work, and time by a highly graduated yardstick. In the hierarchy of Lovedu interests and necessities, time and punctual fulfilment of promises are secondary; but this does not mean that in the setting of the culture people are irresponsible and unreliable. 177 [181]

The beer-drinking of Natives is the bugbear of the European employer; it is a real problem to the farmer. Even in the Reserve its social function is gradually giving way to its pathological one. There are many reasons for the change: the greater abundance of grain, the increasing monotony of life, the sense of frustration, and the recognition in the society that relief and excess may be displayed in states of exhilaration. Farmers legitimately complain of the demoralizing effect of beer. Beer can never be used in its full cultural context on the farms, and its prior claims to time and interest can never be harmonized with the requirements of labour service. The problem that is raised is apparently insoluble, for total prohibition of beer leads to the surreptitious drinking of injurious, rapidly maturing concoctions, to a sense of grievance on the part 177 273

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that befall men, whether sickness, barrenness, lightning that strikes men, huts, or cattle, failure of an individual's crops, or death of his children, are caused by the hatred and envy in men's hearts. 777

There is no greater fear than the fear that gnaws at the heart of a Lovedu who suspects he has been bewitched. Yet he is not impotent before its onslaught. By ascribing destructive forces, disease, and other evil to witchcraft and sorcery, and at the same time believing in the power of magic (*vuŋaga*) to counteract witchcraft, a Lovedu is able to feel that he is master of his own fate. Evil in the world on this theory becomes intelligible, not arbitrary and capricious. This is an ordered and just world in which evil, being held to express itself largely in witchcraft and sorcery, is outlawed and criminal, and in which good ultimately triumphs. And if this projective system affords a convenient theory of failure, it also stresses the virtue of goodwill for human welfare. 754 789

Relationships of Man to Man

That the greatest source of all evil should be the envy and jealousies in men's hearts is in keeping with the emphasis everywhere in Lovedu social life on the importance of good relationships between man and man. Bad relations and non-fulfilment of obligations between kin may, as we have seen, cause not only bad luck, through ancestral displeasure, but even illness, through the automatic force of *mahava*. The dissatisfaction in a mother's heart, whether conscious or not, in connexion with her daughter's marriage may cause her sterility, just as the complaints of a sister may be the cause, as seen in the bones, of the illness of her brother's children. The queen's emotions, too, affect the rain and it becomes important, therefore, for the welfare of all that she should not be sad or displeased. 829 777 753 [821]

Dominating relations between individuals and between groups is the whole pattern of mutuality, co-operation, and long-run reciprocities in the social structure. 'One leg cannot dance a *gɔsha*' say the Lovedu; co-operation is essential for the tasks of life. Security is bound up with the mutualities of kin, cognatic, agnatic, and affinal. In a society where wealth cannot be accumulated, it is not surprising that men's efforts should be directed towards building up and maintaining through generations links of marriage and kinship with all that these imply. These reciprocities in the society are motivated by unavoidable necessity but they are long-run ones. There is no weighing up of one service against another, nor any attempt to seek prestige by lavishness. Moreover, it is sharing and helpfulness not the display of one's generosity that is wanted. 181

Side by side with the emphasis on give and take, the society provides in such a manner for the place and achievement of individuals that competitiveness is limited and aggressive traits are outlawed. The immediate goals of individuals are divergent, and men are not conceived as striving against one another for the attainment of the same end. There is no special prestige

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occasions of importance. The boys are shown several sacred objects (*digoma*), each with its own meaning; and the proceedings end with the naming of the lodge and the new regiment that has been created. Next morning the boys remove the clay that 'disguised' them during their seclusion. They are given a loin cloth, which they wear back to front, their hair, except for a circular crown, is shaved and they are smeared with fat (not ochre among the royal Lovedu). They are 'people from the refuse heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), a name they discard only when, a week later, their heads are completely shaved. As they leave, the lodge, with all in it, is burnt down.

The *vudiga* is not at an end yet; it has merely entered a new stage in which the discipline is further relaxed. The novices leave the lodge with double-pointed sticks, covering with their hands the two ends, which are fashioned like the *glans penis*. In that manner they go about whenever they are in public; the action is said to impress upon them the necessity of concealing the object and meaning of circumcision. When they arrive at the village their mothers appear dancing with joy and choose out their sons, not always correctly, because their heads are bent down and their bodies have grown a good deal in the lodge. A goat is killed for them; it is the goat 'of vomiting the rats', for as men they must cast out the things of their childhood. Then for the next week they are in a state of semi-seclusion, but there are still many observances. They appear in public only in the bent, humble attitude, they carry their sticks, and they wear their loin cloths the wrong way round. Nevertheless, the 'gathering up' (*hu aluha*) into the society proceeds apace. They have a special enclosure made for them in the veld, the *khikhudɔ* (hiding place or secluded spot), in which they spend some time of the day. But they are scattered, as each group of villages has its own secluded spot; and their separateness and solidarity is further broken up by sleeping at home and herding for their own people. They do not speak, especially not to women, but at night at home they have contests of riddles (*nyebo*) with the old women who come to visit them, exactly as after a marriage ceremony. This stage ends with the 'seizing of the lion' (*hu tswara dau*). One night the shepherds go out with bullroarers, the whirling of which produces the roar of the lion. The boys give chase and he who catches the 'lion' is praised by the old men.

Finally come the last ritual acts. The boys are taken down to the river to lift the 'stomach of the cow', a log tied to a stone in a pool, and then to 'kindle a fire on the river' (done on a log in the water), for a man must be both strong and clever; he must be able even to make fire in the water. After these tests there is the final ordeal at the cave to which the boys are taken one by one, are beaten and given their last admonitions. At the cave the double-pointed stick is discarded, the fat removed from their heads and, if two brothers have attended the same lodge, the elder beats the younger on the way home to remove the presumption of belonging to the same regiment. At home the initiate's mother must *soso* him by a gift to 'open his mouth', and next day each of the boys, accompanied by a shepherd, goes to visit some relative, who will feast him with meat and beer.

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881 That in the briefest possible outline is the procedure followed in the *vudiga*. To recapture the whole atmosphere, to present the details of a four months' ceremonial full of incident and meaning, is not possible. All we can do is to single out one or two special features of the educational aspect. Let us first dispel the idea that the régime is a rigid one. How can it be when there are toddlers of six or seven years of age nestling up to the 'mother' of the lodge where he sleeps by the fire? The boys are beaten, it is true, and they have to undergo various kinds of punishment, but the old men are there to 'stand for them'; and when the novices are tired, one of these kindly old men or a visitor will *rula* them, take off the weight from their heads, so that they can go to bed early. The little ones do not go out to hunt, they play about in the lodge. If one of them cries, the 'mother' of the lodge will inquire the cause from the *washe* (the head of the initiates), and if the *washe* has been negligent, it is he who will be punished. The cold is never severe nor are the boys attacked by worms or ants (for the floor is covered with ash); there is no rule that they must sleep on their backs with head or feet toward the fire, so that they will suffer more from the cold. Boys do not talk as if the *vudiga* is a terrible ordeal; it is the shepherds as much as the initiates who are punished. The food is not nauseating, but what is mentioned as particularly trying is the stench issuing from the healing wounds. The stomach contents of [62] a buck killed in the hunt is sprinkled over their porridge, but they like it and it is used in ordinary life as food. They may not drink water, but the lodge is quite near the river and it is not difficult to steal a drink now and then. Meat is never wholly taboo. They can always trap mice and rats and sometimes they are given meat, though it must not be openly displayed. Sometimes, when they are out hunting, the command '*Zapi*' is given; it is a signal for the boys to make an onslaught upon a sweet sorghum field or on wild fruits. It is said that a clever boy is very seldom beaten. The silence that is enjoined upon them, for theoretically they may communicate only by whistling, is not absolute; they may whisper to one another and only loud speaking is punished. They are not driven into cold pools every day to remove the scab of their wounds. On the contrary, the old men examine the wounds every day; and the doctor who has operated badly may be disgraced, as one was during the 1919 school; he was ignominiously chased away from the lodge. In short, despite the trials and restrictions, the régime is on the whole a mild one.

881 Obscene language does not loom large; it plays its part, not as obscenity,
● 831 but as ritual, but it is not an imposing part. After the 'change', when women start bringing the food, it is the shepherds who may swear at them. 'Go and eat,' they say; 'your pubes are torn'; or 'The red inside of your private parts, oho'; but they add, 'Do not feel hurt, women. We are not swearing at you. We are praising you.' But wilful swearing is an offence, as we saw in the *vyali* (girls' initiation), when even one of the important officials of the school, the attendant of the Bird, swore at a girl who had made a mistake and was promptly fined a goat. When the boys sit eating by the tables, it is at the command 'Let them defecate' (*A vu-le nyo*) that they stop, but in the circumstances it means no more than 'Dismiss'. Indeed, the word *musadi* (women) and any word associated

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with women is not to be used within the lodge at all. There is a rounded ball of porridge set upon a stick which is stuck into the food brought to the boys and it is called *khigogomo* (clitoris); when the boys sit down by the tables or fire they are ordered to 'close the anus' and have to press one heel into the anus as they sit; and undoubtedly many of the formulae appear to have obscene references. But it would be a very great surprise to a Lovedu boy to learn that the *vudiga* teaches anything about sex or that there is anything obscene in it. Indeed, they know but disapprove of the delight in obscenity at the Shangana-Tonga lodges.

There is little direct teaching. One of the trials, that of hopping along with a stick, sharpened at both ends and pressed between the knees, is said to remind the boys that they must not defecate on the road, but should go into the bush. But note that little Mulati was too young to undergo it, Khiebe escaped it because his uncle 'stood for him', and Mudiva was sleeping in the hedge on the night it was undergone. The boys are all told they should avoid women since for a long time the wound will be liable to reopen and become bad. They are also warned not to divulge the secrets of the lodge. But that is practically the sum total of the direct admonitions. The laws and songs and formulae do not contain any precepts that the initiates understand or can bring into relation with virtues. And the same may be said of the punishments and ordeals. These things have nothing to do with moral standards or the inculcation of knowledge of facts. But they contribute to the general atmosphere, and their effect, in the context of the whole, is tremendous. The initiation is something different from ordinary life. Its genius lies, not in direct teaching, but in the manner in which the values of the society are emphasized. The final effect is to transform the boys into men; and certainly the situation is manipulated with consummate skill to attain this end. To us everything may appear meaningless. But we hardly realize how small is the life-adjustment value of mere verbal knowledge of facts and how important is the inculcation of a new set of standards. We know of these things from such religious experiences as conversion. The *vudiga* performs the same function; it is a turning away from the things of childhood and a turning towards the things of adulthood. Our pedagogical techniques might be tenfold more effective if they relied more upon the methods of the soap-box orator, of commercial advertising, and even of the yellow Press. Symbols and slogans, skilful manipulation of psychological situations, the play upon sentiments rooted in the cultural background—these are the methods of the *vudiga* as they are also the methods of our most skilful propaganda and our most effective advertisements. Who can deny that they contribute more to the moulding of our values and of our behaviour than do the science and history and mathematics in our schools? Perhaps it is fortunate that our pedagogical techniques are impotent, for the somewhat unrealistic world of our schools would otherwise wholly unfit us for life. But the technique of the lodge, though it teaches no verbal knowledge of facts, is effective and there is nothing in the *vudiga* which is out of harmony with the realities of life.

Consider for a moment the situation as the boys 'stab the elephant'.

881 Consider for a moment the situation as the boys [illegible] the [illegible]
523 As they do so, the old men, mature in their wisdom, kindly guardians of
867 the initiates, slowly and solemnly 'sing with signs' (*va rima zwega*). These *zwega* are often also an accompaniment of the songs of the boys, in themselves most exquisite poetry. Many of the 'signs' are unintelligible, e.g. 'You may bring me a skin cradle. I am carrying an infant, my little children'; or 'The guinea fowls are crying; they are scratching for food, my children.' The old men always greet the novices, *vana va ga* (my little ones), though to one another and to the shepherds they are *vabi* (witches). The old men also chant proverbs and sayings, warnings and advice, all manner of admonitions and encouragement, some stereotyped, some extempore. To enumerate them would be to enumerate the virtues that are esteemed and the vices that are condemned in the society. 'I told you, O novice, but you plugged your ears with plugs of wood' is a general admonition, reminding the boys that, when they were young, they often were disobedient and now their errors are being expiated. Young boys are often told that, when they go to the *vudiga*, their impudence and disobedience will make their trials harder. 'Beware', a man might say to a youngster who is unwilling to help him or an elder. 'The *vudiga* is not far off; you will find no one to lift the weight from your head.' The virtues that are inculcated in this way are merely those the boys have heard of a thousand times in their ordinary lives. Again, one must not imagine that the boys take more note of the words of the old men in the lodge than we do when we sing a hymn in church, but they know that those *zwega* and admonitions express the fundamental values and ideals in the society: generosity, respectfulness and obedience to the elders, helpfulness, and so on. 'Give your seat up to an old man, carry his bundle for him on the road, go with him further than he asks you, do not mock at the blind or cripple'—these are some of the things one old man may say, whereas another will condemn theft and adultery and extol mutuality and modesty, almost impersonally, it is true, but always beautifully, solemnly, and effectively. These things sink into the minds of the novices, not as so many individual precepts, but as part of the ritual of the lodge, all indivisibly united into one whole concretion of values and sentiments. A man will say that the *vudiga* is a wonderful thing, but he will be at a loss to tell you anything concrete that it teaches. For you cannot dissect out a precept here and an example there—it is all one, like life itself.

881 We may now, before proceeding to adult education, touch upon a few
● 931 aspects of the *vudiga* and the *khoba*. Besides breaking the girl's attachment to the things of her childhood, the *khoba* stresses the importance and dangers of sexual maturity. But it can hardly be said that the *vudiga* is much concerned with the sudden emergence of a capacity for true sexual experience. Both institutions help us to understand the meaning and methods of attaining social adulthood; but they belong to different cultural backgrounds and are derived from different cultural sources. They are not counterparts of one another. The *khoba* is indigenous, the *vudiga* is foreign. We cannot here study the manner in which these two institutions, as well as the *vyali* and *vuhwera* (two further initiations for boys and girls), have merged with the different cultures in neighbouring tribes though the varying acceptance or rejection or

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remoulding of culture elements provides important clues to understanding the Lovedu. The *vudiga*, despite its admirable integration into Lovedu culture, still overstresses national regimentation and military virtues; it makes too much of the repudiation of association with women (a tendency rectified in the *vyali*); and the conception in it of an ordeal or revenge inflicted by adults, who have suffered circumcision, upon novices whose turn to suffer has come is too pronounced for a culture that abhors vengeance. It is curious, also, that in a society in which mates are born for one another the problem of harmonising romantic love with the limited range of socially approved choices is not dealt with in the *khoba* or the *vudiga*. Pre-marital sexual experiment is excluded at least as a means of avoiding individual incompatibilities; but such incompatibilities are not phrased as a difficulty in marriage, the sexual aspect of which is one of the least important in Lovedu society, and the institution of *vuglaru* (of having lovers), with whom married much more than unmarried men or women form liaisons, gives an outlet to romanticism and supports the long suckling period. The chastity that is stressed in the *khoba* is the pre-marital chastity that leads to no complications in the social structure, such as would be caused by the birth of a child to an unmarried girl; it does not preclude those satisfactions the desire for which is inevitably aroused by the great value that is placed upon fertility.

The rites of the *vudiga* and *khoba* do not, as we have seen, change boys and girls from youth to full-fledged manhood. The transition is a gradual one. The *khoba* becomes a bride; the bride after the birth of her first child is a *mudzumu*; and she in turn, when her children marry, is a venerable old woman (*mukhegulu*). The bride is of small consequence even in her own home; for long she serves an apprenticeship under the control of her mother-in-law, who also takes her child out of her hands, baths it and feeds it. Only as an old woman does she reach the peak of her life. With a man the position is no different. After the *vudiga* he has a kind of legal status. After marriage he advances a further stage, but in his marital relations and as a father he is a child dependent upon advice from his elders. In public activities, such as in the courts, he still sits and listens, but the old men may entrust a case to him and his age-mates to teach them a sense of responsibility. His helplessness is strikingly in evidence when a child is born to him: he does not see it at first, knows little of its progress, is ordered by the old women to seek this or that root, for what purpose he cannot tell, and, when the child is taken out of the hut, he is merely called, given medicine and told what to do with it. Finally, he must seek the advice of the old women as to when he may resume sexual intercourse with his wife. In other spheres of life also, the education of the man or the woman gradually advances. Craftsmanship, for instance, is the province of the old. Young men and women may learn from their fathers or mothers, but more usually the leisure and inclination come in their old age. A bride, fully occupied with housework and cultivation under the eye of her mother-in-law, has no time for pottery and mat-making; a young man's life is too unsettled to allow him quietly to sit down to make a basket or a stamping-block. The Lovedu

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that they have a personal stake in the social investment; their desire for 583
recognition cannot be ignored; to maintain their interest at the requisite intensity, they must be significantly rewarded. And so the 'cow-and-calf of the women's place' is conceived to be a personal reward to the bride's mother; it is her special property, not, indeed, to be detached from the chain of exchanges, for *wanyuale* cattle must remain *wanyuale* cattle and can never become unencumbered property of an individual, but to be preserved by her, if she so desires, in order that she may help her [131]
youngest son, who succours her in her old age. Often in the old days when the bride's chastity was an honour to be displayed, but rarely to-day, because absence of chastity is a disgrace to be concealed, the 'cow-and-calf of the woman's place' was withheld or claimed back if the bride proved not to be a virgin. As things are to-day, this gift mainly recognizes, as it also did in the old days, the special contribution of the mother to the health and strength and virtues of her daughter, the bride. The 'beast for bartering' is a contribution to help the mother of the bride, but not so much in her personal capacity as in her capacity as food-provider of the home; owing to the aversion to killing cattle, this beast passes to-day only in times of shortage when the bride's mother is really in need of grain.

The 'cow-and-calf of the courtyard' recognises the special interest of the father and vicariously his male relatives; it is a gift that acknowledges their special services in bringing up the bride. The situation must be made acceptable also to the bride herself, for marriage is not an easy matter, involving new and heavy responsibilities and partially severing the bride from her home. In the old days the girl was usually given the *mundulu*, a cow, said to provide a change of clothing for her; to-day she is given £5 or £6 worth of clothes. But the rule that she forfeited this wedding outfit if she were found to be deflowered is in disuse to-day, since young men object to the public humiliation of their brides.

There are many other gifts which, apart from contributing to the main result, recognise particular aspects of the situation. The sending of the 'cradle', for instance, intimates that the sister lays her claim to the bride as her daughter-in-law and, when the goat is killed and members from both families partake of the meat, it is the tacit consent to the projected alliance to which the families, rather than the boy and girl, are the true parties. Or, again, the 'calabash of water', usually a goat, signifies that the boy is asking the girl to come and set up home with him, while the girl's people equally indicate with the 'goat of killing' their satisfaction that all they asked has been duly given and that, as far as they are concerned, the bride may now leave.

All too soon we must pass on to some other aspects of marriage cere- 584
monial. The absence of strained relations between the parties makes unnecessary the subterfuges and displays of hostility often found elsewhere in marriage negotiations. The go-between, whatever message he brings from the boy's family, is well received, for 'The messenger sent to swear at a king must fulfil his mission and cannot be harmed'. His first announcement is direct and to the point: 'I am sent by So-and-so to ask whether you will *tshe* them' (that is, carry the girl in the cradle). This

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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the *mudavu* institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of completely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the purposes of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suckling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried people who have their lovers (*vadavu*). Nevertheless, a European finds it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grandmothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our preferences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should as often as not be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the *syali*) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Tongs. The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men, but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy and was proudly worn by her younger sister; if not, the girl's people had to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. Girls are still examined, especially at the *khoba*, but the matter is private; and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sins of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*gere* or *sukutgi sya vanadi*). A man gets *gere* from intercourse with a woman who has had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death from *gere* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter.

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643 connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
588 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
634 District heads *loba* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
789 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
648 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Uulovedu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*hu lóba*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Tonga, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
588 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of
• [881] marriage and *munyualo*; the *munyualo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
588 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
837 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weaknesses of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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moving him to pity and by 'cooling' the heat of the earth and the anger 181
of the ancestors. Frenzy and excess are outlawed, moderation and balance are honoured. They have little conception of the Buddhistic Nirvana or annihilation of human existence, of the fanaticism and fatalism of the soldiers of Allah, or even of Western concentration and intensive striving. From the point of view of our values, the Lovedu are Laodicean, 'lukewarm, neither hot nor cold', happy-go-lucky. They are always saying that they will 'try', never that they must succeed. But there is nothing intensive about their striving. A man faced with a difficulty is always advised to 'persevere', but that does not imply our grim determination, being more like the leisurely manner in which they set about all their tasks.

This theme permeates every aspect of the culture. In the boys' circumcision the object is to break the child of his wildness and lack of balance, and the purpose is achieved, not by excessive tortures and privations, but by the mature guidance of the old men. Neither strength nor stoicism are much made of, and the virtues inculcated are balance and self-sufficiency. The Lovedu tolerate ostentation only on occasions appropriate to exhilaration, quite unlike even such nearly related tribes as the Madala and Phalaborwa, who have institutionalized boasting displays by those famed as hunters or warriors. In the field of the [785]
magico-religious, fastings and visions do not figure, except among the possessed and the smellers-out, the latter always foreigners, the former a recent introduction. Possession in its Lovedu context has been shorn of its paranoic elements, its exaggerated trances, and its inception in a mental cataclysm. Cataleptic seizures do not serve as inductions to the super- [828]
natural as among the Nguni, for fits are due to witchcraft, and, unlike the smeller-out, who is a Shangana-Tonga and works by insight and exaggerated procedures, the Lovedu doctor divines by his craft and acquires power by learning and experience. Prayer is not an emotional 181
outpouring of the heart, but a communication as between man and man. 152
Dissension in her country upsets, and anger in her heart inhibits, the power of the queen. Spells are not characterized by intensity or malevolence; they are often merely directions to the medicine to bring about justice or to restore the balance. Even at a death or burial, there must be no display of distress, no undue weeping; both the dying and the survivors resign themselves with a calmness that is the admiration of Europeans who know the Lovedu well. Too much weeping by a mother is believed to injure her next child; Mputa, now thirty years of age, was born a cripple, it is said, because his mother, Makwada, wept bitterly at the death of her first son. We have never seen weeping at a funeral, and the property of the deceased is not so contaminated that it has to be destroyed, though in the midst of the Lovedu the Shangana-Tonga phrase death as a terror situation, even pulling down the hut of the deceased and removing from his village. Suicide is an escape, intelligible enough when a man is insane or (in the old days) has been condemned to death as a witch; but otherwise it is attributed to witchcraft, not to frustration.

In the method by which the themes of both sex and authority are 181
handled there is the same aversion from excess or ostentation. The Lovedu 131

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181 are not sex-ridden; it is we who, by outlawing the impulses, which we
831 subtly stimulate in our romantic ideals, our literature, music, and art in general, create for ourselves neuroses and psychoses, maladjustments and perversions. The Lovedu have no problems of sexual adjustment or compatibility: their attitude is a matter-of-fact one. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of excessive promiscuity, they learn from their proverb that 'A woman's pubes may break up the family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are wholly undeveloped. In ritual, sex is symbolized to some extent, but only as an aspect of fertility, not as a sensual pleasure, while obscenity is inconspicuous and must sometimes be rationalized, as if it were questionable even under the auspices of the ritual. The fertility theme is itself pushed far back, so that it is unrecognizable in the symbolic background.

[838] The Lovedu are innocent of Lesbian practices. They are also revolted by what they believe the Shangana-Tonga in their midst tolerate—namely, the marriage of immature girls to old men, who they say sometimes manually enlarge the vagina of these girls; and they regard as disgusting that extreme measure of Shangana-Tonga women, who in impotent rage against a man may display their genitalia. Yet the Lovedu are not unsexed; modern conditions are making nubile girls breast-conscious, so that they are beginning to wear attenuated bodices; young men admit to being aroused by the sight of the inner, smooth surfaces of women's thighs; and significantly the common word for the female sexual organs is *vadimoni* (place of the gods) or, among old women, *khitugulɔ* (a charm or object made sacred by association with the gods), and for the penis, *boga ya mutse* (staff of the village). In the one case of exhibitionism we
[839] saw tried before the *khɔrɔ*, the culprit, a man, was dealt with tolerantly as if he were an irresponsible madman; masturbation among children is looked upon as 'playing with' the sexual organs, and among boys it is indulged in less for its sexual satisfaction than to prove to their mates that they have reached maturity. The Lovedu do not suffer from guilt complexes because sex is not a temptation to be resisted by painful effort of will.

181 Again, within the family there is little of that assertion of authority that among us leads to the development of an Oedipus complex. One finds neither stern paternal authority nor fierce resentments and compensatory day-dreaming among children. In the *khɔrɔ* authority is distributed, in the work party dominance is resented. There are no institutions that foster the development of strong personalities. Recognition is not given to supermen, and there are no great heroes in Lovedu history. The precocious child is a potential witch and the authoritative councillor is liable to be regarded as intoxicated. One day the great councillor of the queen conducted the proceedings of the *khɔrɔ* in what appeared to us to be an expeditious manner, taking command of them, silencing irrelevancies, and crisply announcing his decisions. We could not help remarking upon the masterful exhibition, the order and efficiency, but our remarks caused great surprise and we were told that only a drunken man could have been guilty of the ignominious display. Modesty, not arrogance, and dignity, not assertion, are great virtues.

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of twins, abortions, miscarriages, and women dying in childbirth, or by the cosmic chaos resulting from the death of the chief. 'Hot blood' is one of the commonest causes of illness. *Lemoa* (burning) is primarily a physiological condition of a woman resulting from abortion and it may be transmitted to the man who has intercourse with her, who then contracts the dreaded and fatal *ḱere*, a coughing disease considered to be quite different from consumption (*lefiha*). 'Heat' affects the physical potency of medicines and charms, the mental repose of the gods, the mysterious powers of *dithugula*, and the welfare of the whole country. It stirs (*dzusa*) the gods to anger and it activates the criminal propensities of witches. 753 772 811 821

'Heat' and 'cold', then, are all-important conceptual categories which are brought into relation with the functioning of the physical, mental, and emotional forces in man, in the ancestors, and in nature. Wherever 'heat' is considered to be generated, the proper antidote is the administration of 'cooling' medicines, i.e. substances which have the property of counteracting the heat or soothing the burning. The remedy is to put right what is wrong (*hu logisa*), to secure a return to normal conditions by cooling agencies. If the whole country is in an abnormal condition (*a e loge*, literally, is not right) all the fires must be sprinkled with *mafugo* medicine (*hu fuga* means to blow upon with a cool breeze). Sources of heat to the earth, e.g. twins, abortions, must be buried in wet soil; ancestor spirits aroused by 'heat' (anger) have to be calmed by squirting water (*hu phasa*) on objects once in their possession or over their graves. Cooling medicines likewise counteract that burning of the fingers which constrains witches to do evil, while charms protecting the village against witches are often called *makhthajo* (things causing coolness). In all these cases the active reagent in the medicines is some substance having 'cooling' properties, such as the river stones guarding the entrance to villages or built into shrines of ancestors, the succulent bulbs used in the rite for the removal of the 'dirt' (*khitshila*) of death, the great overhanging fig-trees shading shrines, the green undigested chyme from a sheep or goat's alimentary canal that figures prominently in ritual. Much medical ingenuity goes into the manufacture of powders and decoctions which, owing to their special cooling properties, will counteract heat; and it is not surprising that the Lovedu way of curing malaria is to seek drugs that will drive out the 'heat' by means of profuse perspiration. 'Heat' is most commonly caused by abnormalities associated with the procreation and the actual or threatened destruction of human life—hence the close association of 'heat' with sex, reproduction, and death. 772 789 811 821 [766] [757] [531]

Another malignant force, *muridi* (shadow), is conceived as evil cast by certain conditions. It infects those upon whom it falls, but if they are healthy, the effect upon them is invisible and harmless, though they become carriers who may transmit the contagion to others with whom they come into contact, especially those whose resistance is weak, such as new-born babies and sick people. 'Shadow' thus explains the spread of contagion, not by direct contact but through an intermediate unaffected carrier. *Muridi* is 783 753

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in the use of motor traffic. Are not people more important than speed? The need for even a chief to respect the wishes of his subjects upon whom he depends for a following is summed up in the saying, *Uuhosi gi vatho*, 'chieftainship is people'.

The qualities or virtues that are stressed, then, in the moral code of the Lovedu are moderation and temperance, compromise and agreement, humility, respect for the personality and rights of others. Courage is not rated very high in this non-military society. Perseverance is often enjoined and is especially necessary in the monotonous tasks of hoeing, carrying heavy loads of wood, walking up steep mountain slopes; but it is never carried out with the single-mindedness that a European might expect. Theft is condemned and there are ritual sanctions against it. If the object stolen has been magically treated, for example, a painful sore will develop on the finger which defies treatment until guilt has been confessed and restitution agreed to. 'Don't steal, always beg (*hobela*) for what you want', children are exhorted. But theft is not a problem in this economically undifferentiated society, though nowadays cases of theft, even if extremely rarely, do come before the tribal courts. Drunkenness is bad only if it leads to neglect of duties or fights and quarrels. To be drunk is in itself no disgrace, it is merely pleasant and perhaps exhilarating, not a condition to be ashamed of. Indeed everyone looks forward to the *murula* season when all become slightly intoxicated from the cider made out of the fruits.

Right conduct is relative always to the human situation and morality is oriented not from any absolute standards of honesty or truth but from the social good in each situation. Conduct that promotes smooth relationships, that upholds the social structure, is good; conduct that runs counter to smooth social relationships is bad. Courtesy and the respect due to age or seniority are thus of greater importance than truth. A son-in-law who, tired of always being imposed upon by his wife's father, truthfully signified his unwillingness to help him by providing a goat would be guilty, in view of the special mutualities between families related by marriage, of unpardonable behaviour which might jeopardise his marriage. The correct procedure is to agree to help but to be always 'still looking for it' when approached for the goat. It took us a long time to discover that the right way to deal with incessant begging was not to refuse however politely, but to say 'I have none' or 'It is not mine to give'. The polite lie even if palpable is better calculated to maintain smooth relationships than strict adherence to truth. Truth is not good in itself nor is a lie always evil. Lies are objected to when they are socially inconvenient. Yet not only is it expected that a man will lie to get out of difficulties but there are cases in which lying is prescribed, as when children are told to lie to strangers if asked about village affairs. To keep tribal secrets and the secrets of initiation schools is of far greater importance than to tell the truth.

The social orientation of morality is clear in Lovedu sex morality. Sex is not regarded as a temptation to be resisted by painful efforts of will.

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There is nothing morally wrong in sex or the sex act; not only is sex play among small children connived at, but premarital sex relations are institutionalized. It is only having a child before marriage that is immoral. For adultery restitution must be made, yet a husband who is jealous and watches his wife too closely is despised, and most men and women have extra-marital lovers (*vatavo*). The Lovedu attitude is less strict than that of the Tsonga living among them, for Tsonga married women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, and the compensation and fine for adultery are far higher than among the Lovedu. The Lovedu attitude to sex is matter-of-fact, and obscenity in ritual does not have a prominent role. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of promiscuity; they learn from their proverb that 'a woman's pubes may break up a family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are undeveloped.

To anyone brought up in the West European culture, where every breach of the moral code is also a sin in the eyes of a God who may punish the wrongdoer either in this life or the hereafter, an arresting aspect of Lovedu culture is that there is only a vague connexion between the ancestor-gods and morality. It has been said for the South Bantu in general, and by more than one authority, that the ancestors 'are the guardians of the moral code, it is they in the first instance who are thought of as visiting on their descendants punishments for some omission or commission'[1] There is among Lovedu a vague idea that failure to carry out one's kinship obligations may bring ancestral displeasure in the form of bad luck, and there may also be some connexion between such displeasure and *mahava*, the force generated by complaints of living kin, which causes illness. But a careful study of Lovedu religious practices over a period of years has brought to light no single instance in which ancestors have complained about anything not immediately concerning their own personal relations with their descendants—their right to tendance, remembrance, and propitiation; the manner of their burial; their desire to be told of major events in the lives of living kin. No ancestor has ever been known to concern himself with the theft, witchcraft, murder, or adultery of any descendant, nor do they trouble about the breaking of taboos which prevent rain and vitally affect the welfare of all. Lovedu ancestors are not upholders of custom in general; they are concerned only with those customs and taboos which affect their own welfare and that of their kin. Even royal ancestors do not concern themselves with the breaking of taboos that lead to drought. This is not a reflection of their carelessness or supineness, for they are quick to complain if, for example their graves are desecrated. On one occasion in 1938, when two men had cut firewood in the bush near the royal burial grounds at Maulwi, the *zwidajani* wailed all night to indicate their displeasure. Again when Molegwane, deceased chief councillor and brother of the queen, 'held her

[1] A. W. Hoernlé, 'Religion in Native Life', in *Thinking with Africa*, edited by Milton Sandler, 1928, p. 100. See also, W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, 1928, pp. 381–90.

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857 of *lejaje* (*Mariscus sp.*) or *lejektjekt* (*Cyperus immensus*), rush-grasses which the ants seize with their antennae. The girls who have been stamping now set out with some friends from a neighbouring village, all armed [561] with axes, to collect firewood. The girls of this company are age-mates; [832] they share their labours, confide their love affairs, bathe together, and, in the late afternoon, when they go to the bush, they sit together elongating their *labia minora* (*hu kwtva*). Meanwhile the village lies basking and dreaming in the afternoon sun; except for the pecking fowls there is hardly a stir. '*Vu gae*' ('Where is it—beer'), says Raselaka to his son Sekware, as he returns with some poles on his shoulder for repairing his 574 wife's granary. 'There is beer of *lejema* [work-party] over at Mudziri's,' 273 is the reply; and the men, accompanied by the visitors, set out for the beer drink, knowing they will be allowed to partake even though they have done no work.

The hum of voices as you near a certain kraal leaves you in no doubt that this must be Mudziri's village. A fair crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the woman who is holding the *lejema* and a typical beer-drinking scene meets the eye. The centre of the picture is a large pot of beer placed in a rounded depression made for it in the courtyard. Beside it stands a flat winnowing basket containing long-handled calabash cups from which the beer is drunk. Beside the pot sits a man who serves the beer, using a beer-cup as ladle; he gives each cup to a young man of about twenty, who hands it round. The guests have ranged themselves on either side of the beer pot, women on one side, men on the other. As each calabash is emptied, it is brought back by the young man who is doing the waiting, to be filled. There is no hurry. Each one drinks at his leisure and conversation flows freely. Every one knows he will be given in his turn and; if one man is handed a second cup, he will pass it on to any one who has not yet been served, till all have had four or five. It is a pleasant social gathering and all the latest gossip is discussed. Small children toddle about in between the drinkers and may even be given a 651 little of the beer. Ominously Pheduli remarks, 'Madume has seen police 625 near Medingen. There appear to be four of them. What can they be wanting?' 'Oh,' replies Dwagu, 'they are no doubt raiding for tax defaulters!' There is general uneasiness, for about a fifth of the gathering are in arrears. Muhale is six years in arrears and, as he never goes to town to work, he has not once been caught. 'They won't catch me napping in my home to-night,' volunteers Mathekha. 'I shall go into the bush again. Are they Shangana-Tonga or Sotho, those police Madume saw?' a very relevant question, because the Shangana-Tonga, more likely than not recruited from outside the reserve, will not know these hiding places in the forests and caves. Here Pikela describes how his friend Setimela, who had himself always been in default and knew all the best hiding places, had joined the police the previous year. Consequently, at the very next raid the police made a most successful scoop, catching ninety-six defaulters, whom they marched to Duivelskloof.

574 The beer-pot is almost empty and people are merely sitting talking 273 when the host calls Raselaka and his European guest aside into his reception hut, together with a few other intimates. A woman brings in a small

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food as often as not being brought to them there. Sometimes the women take with them cobs of mealies preserved by being cooked and dried in the summer months, which they have softened by boiling again before use. In stony places and along steep hillsides, where ploughing is impossible, hoeing is to-day still done by hand. Here one can generally see mealie meal spread out to dry near at hand, out of reach of the fowls and goats that would play havoc with it at home, where there is no one to watch it. For it is chiefly the women that hoe while the men plough. Bushes or branches that have grown out from tree stumps in the fields are cut in readiness for planting, and a typical feature of this time of the year is the small fires in the fields every day towards sunset, when dry mealie stalks that have been collected in heaps are burned. Relishes have been reduced to a minimum, blackjacks (*Bidens pilosa*), *thubo* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) and *mufye* (*Solanum nigrum*) being the mainstay, and cooking is done only once a day. There are no nuts or mealies to roast or eat casually, and in years of scarcity this is the time when the pinch of hunger is felt. At night people retire early to bed, tired from the hard work of planting and, later, weeding during the day. Dancing is rare; there is no time for social activities, all energy being directed towards getting the crops planted. Beer parties there are, chiefly work parties for weeding, but they are not as frequent now as in winter. As yet few cases of malaria will have come to light; it is rather the season of dysentery and of cuts and bruises received in hoeing. As the season advances, the first termites make their appearance to relieve the monotony of relish of blackjack leaves, the grass grows longer and weeding becomes imperative.

As a relief to the dullness of the planting season comes the *morula* season, which marks the first two months of 'summer' (February and March) and which from the point of view of seasonal activities can be looked upon as a distinctive period. Everything is green; the grass stands high and weeding is the order of the day, for rain is plentiful. Masses of golden *morula* fruits are falling to the ground. Green mealies from the first-planted fields are beginning to be eaten, spinach of male pumpkin flowers and, later, leaves, make porridge cakes more interesting; and there are sugar-cane and dishes of unripe monkey nuts. People have looked forward eagerly to this time. They are tired of their work and, though much weeding and mounding of *njugo* beans has still to be done, the exultation grows as the cider begins to appear. To those whose granaries are empty, the *morula* season brings a blessed relief from the pangs of hunger, and they drink it as if it were the elixir of life. Much of the day is spent in the fields where the cider is prepared, and from under the trees there is a mighty hubbub of voices. At nightfall, when they return as from a bacchanalian festival, there are opportunities for romantic intrigues, the result rather of exhilaration than of the reputed aphrodisiac effects of the cider. Soon the air is rent by songs and drumming of the possessed, who at this season receive medicine to eat with the *morula* and other green foods of summer. And as the *morula* season draws to a close, the green foods of summer become more plentiful and the beginning of reaping activities ushers in the rich abundance of late summer.

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to prevent promiscuity among young boys and girls are no longer in evidence, and complications are liable to arise where there is a *gosha*. The economic aspect of the *gosha*, except where it originates in a visit of condolence or is sent to supplicate for rain, is that the host, whether he himself originally invited the dancers or not, may send back a 'revenge' *gosha* to get back the beast he killed for the performers. He gets back very little, only the *musumo*, perhaps a leg of the beast, and the performers do not work for him to compensate him for what they have eaten. The *gosha* is not conceived of as a debt-collecting institution, it never originates in a debt, and once it is set into motion, its real function is to maintain reciprocal relations. A man may start the chain of reciprocity by inviting a *gosha* from elsewhere; on the other hand, a party of dancers out for merriment sometimes descend upon any one they like, but he may refuse the entertainment as too costly or for other reasons. To notify the host that a *gosha* is coming is usual; but a man whose *gosha* has been accepted by another may stop (*ku thiba*) the latter from returning the compliment (and getting back his beast) by sending *khirula* beer; he will do so, for instance, when he has no beast to kill or is reluctant to part with one.

The *gosha* may be a cumbrous instrument to effect exchanges of commodities, but it throws the social concomitants of these exchanges boldly into relief, magnifying them to such an extent that the gift exchange is completely obscured. This is in accordance with Lovedu conceptions, for they have a great dislike of anything that is clearly and primarily a commercial transaction. The *gosha* stresses the interchange of goodwill; the guests, drawn perhaps from three or four areas, come to display their skill for the delectation of their hosts; and the latter, hurriedly collecting their dancers, come forth with their drummers and *ensemble* of flute-players to challenge their guests. First the one party, then the next give their performances; it is a social gala occasion and the competition is carried on in the friendliest spirit. The spectators are the judges: an old man passing gives his verdict, perhaps after having heard only one set of performers; an old woman, after a dance of ecstasy (*ku pehela*), sets the crown, be it merely a leg-ring or necklace, upon the head of her favourite performer; and when the next party dances, the verdicts are reversed and the honours paid anew. In the end neither party is victor or vanquished. The object has been self-expression, without stress upon individual performance, and entertainment in which the competitive element is present merely to heighten the enjoyment. The boys and girls of the competing areas intermingle and there are many lovers' intrigues; the girls give their favourites cloths to wear as if they were knights; it is truly an occasion for the renewal of the ties of friendship, ties between relatives and ties between districts. The reciprocity is generally at long range, for distant districts are brought into relationship. Resting upon a relationship between two individuals, it draws into its sphere, through the dancing, food, and sleeping arrangements, whole territorial units.

The most impressive of all the gift exchanges, however, involves the two groups of people between whom, by reason of a marriage, brides are exchanged against cattle (*musumelo*). This exchange is so far

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582 his wife. The measure is a drastic means of getting back one's cattle, and negatives any conception of marrying the wife's brother's wife.

582 The *munywalo* configuration is, of course, incompatible with brother-
603 sister exchange; the cattle cannot both come from and go into the same direction. So also does it exclude marriage of ortho-cousins, though complications introduced by reckoning relationship though the queen as if she were a male and the stress upon maintaining the purity of the royal blood lead to arrangements that appear to be based on such marriages. The children of all the queen's wives are brothers and sisters, but unless their natural fathers are identical, the formal relationship recedes before the physiological, and these brothers and sisters can and do intermarry. Moreover, in the society generally and especially among royal kin, a man may be related to another man or to a woman in many ways; what they will call one another depends upon status or rank or arrangements agreed upon between the families, and is often determined by personal choices and adjustments. A man who wishes to 'play with' his classificatory sister (reckoning relationship through, say, the father) will call her cross-cousin (reckoning relationship through, perhaps, the mother). How such a situation can arise is at once clear when we remember that a man may have a woman as his legal father, even taking her lineage name; but it arises in many other ways, such as the tremendous entanglements in the *munywalo* system. Among many neighbouring tribes a special ritual of 'cutting the kin' sometimes makes possible the marriage of incestuously related mates; among the Lovedu such a device is unknown. Many tribes have a highly developed technique of love
[832] charms; the Lovedu regard love charms as illegal, akin to sorcery and witchcraft, though there is one interesting exception, a rite based upon a religious pattern. Resort to love charms, except in the service of the arrangements of the social structure, would obviously strike at the basis of the conception that spouses are 'born for' one another.

583 We may now turn very briefly to the marriage ceremonial which, in harmony with the leading part played by the institution it supports, is one of the most impressive features of Lovedu life. Apart from its function of transferring the cattle and laying the foundations of a structure within which the greater part of human interrelations are enacted, the ceremonial stresses many values unconnected with marriage. The general plan of the ceremonial is patterned to the needs of the ideal form of marriage, that with the cattle-linked cross-cousin. In some neighbouring tribes, a man must bespeak his cross-cousin by paying a special beast; in others he must hand over an additional beast for her; but among the Lovedu all marriages are arranged on the one model, as if there were no other competing forms of marriage. Because the girl is said 'to be
584 born' for the boy, his parents simply send the 'goat of the skin cradle' to intimate that he is coming. It is a most appropriate action for, as she is 'born for' him, his people must provide the wherewithal in which to carry her, the cradle symbolizing nursing, tender care, and upbringing. Marriages to strangers, nevertheless, are initiated in the same way, as if the conception of being 'born for' the boy and its implications were projected upon them. It is only in the case of cross-cousin marriage that

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753 constitute an exhaustive list, and their application extends over a wide field, which we might call the magico-religious.

Murudi (shadow) is conceived of as an evil power, but of its many properties the most emphasized is the property of aggravating disease. It is as if certain real evils cast a shadow which may infect those upon which it falls. If they are normal, healthy people, generally speaking they suffer no discomfort themselves, but they may act as carriers of the shadow, and by contact with others, especially those who are ill, they may transmit the evil as if they were intermediary hosts, weakening the patient and aggravating his illness. The host may transmit the shadow to both persons and things. A person who has attended a funeral or who has lost a close relative is infected by the shadow of death. Twins have [845] such great shadow that if they come near a sick person he will die: hence twins must be killed and are still generally killed, despite European law and the example of Christians to whose grown-up twins no specific evil can be attributed. A woman who has had a miscarriage has *muridi*. [843] Pregnancy up to but not after the end of the third month infects a woman with *muridi*, for a clear distinction is drawn between the two stages of pregnancy: before the end of the third month the foetus is amorphous, not a human being; after it, the foetus takes human form, the woman 'has grown', and a miscarriage is regarded as a death, so that people come to condole and there is a mourning period ended by the [removal of] 'dirt' rite (*khitshila*), just as for the most important adult. After childbirth a woman has *muridi*, but this is not the reason for her isolation. She remains in the hut till her child is strengthened, lest she bring to it shadows from outside. Girls over puberty and non-suckling, childbearing women, though having no definite *muridi*, are a potential source of danger to the sick, and men have not infrequently refused to allow us to wash their wounds with water drawn by such women. It is not at all clear, however, whether it is menstruation that is feared or the danger of possible early pregnancy. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife brings about a [832 843] mild form of *muridi*; hence, if a very young child is ill, husband and wife sometimes abstain from intercourse. *Muridi* from sexual intercourse is believed to affect the meat of slaughtered cattle or goats unless certain precautions are taken, and causes stomach trouble to those who partake of it. Men who are sleeping with their wives are therefore not allowed to approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced or to help skin it without first smearing their hands with leaves of *thcche* (*Amaranthus Thunbergii*) or other medicine. Here again, so it seems, the danger is not the actual intercourse, but the possibility of an unformed foetus in the womb. Thus, in the early stages of his wife's pregnancy, Nagambi was forbidden to approach slaughtered animals, but later, when pregnancy was advanced, the restriction fell away, even though he was still cohabiting with his wife.

753 826 A person whose upper teeth appear before the lower or whose molars appear first is full of *muridi* and should be killed. In the area surrounding the royal village every child is brought to the queen for examination on the appearance of its first teeth. The mother carries with her a small basket of eleusine and, if all is well, it is said that the child has 'danced

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754 There are many other specialized techniques, but for our purposes it
832 will suffice to refer briefly to love-magic. Love-medicine was not known
789 to the Lovedu, and its use is generally said by the older people to be witchcraft. Nevertheless, this magic, introduced from the towns, where, especially among Zulu and Xhosa, it is common, is used by many young men in Vulovedu to-day. One method, scarification of the forehead or use of medicine in your snuff, makes all the girls love you; blowing a medicated pipe of the *mukhure* shrub (*Ricinus sp.*) morning and evening, while calling the name of a certain girl, will make her come to you soon; and there are various other medicines. Love-magic to cause hysteria in girls is known as a Zulu practice, but is not used in Vulovedu. It would be looked upon as witchcraft.

754 These borderline methods, sometimes called witchcraft, sometimes
761 not, and often referred to as 'good' *vulɔi*, bring us to a consideration of what constitutes *vulɔi*. All witchcraft is socially disapproved, anti-social, but this criterion is not always sufficient to distinguish between witchcraft proper and practices bordering on witchcraft. Swearing at people, or scolding them violently, when the cause hardly justifies it, is liable to call down upon them forces which lead to death or misfortune to them or their family. It is called *lesola* and is reprehensible; but it is not *vulɔi*; nor is *mahava*, illness caused by the ill-feeling of a father's sister or other relative. The conduct of a woman who, having had an abortion, causes her husband's death through neglecting to give him the medicine necessary to ward off such disaster is strongly disapproved of, but it is not witchcraft, even though it causes death.

Since many borderline practices are judged by their result and become witchcraft when they cause death, it might be argued that this criterion must be distinctive. It is, however, not enough; causing death to a husband by abortion is, as we have seen, not considered to be witchcraft, nor is the murderous *khigevɛgwa* a witch, even though he secretly kills people at night and sells parts of their body to doctors. Furthermore, many accusations of witchcraft have arisen where there has been no death, but only sickness or loss by lightning. The only difference between the killing by a *khigevɛgwa* and that by a witch lies in the method employed. The killer uses ordinary weapons; the witch kills by means of medicine or some peculiar powers not known to ordinary people. The distinguishing feature of all cases of witchcraft is the use or supposed use of medicine or witch-power. Intent is another feature by which one judges an action. Where a woman causes the death of a husband through abortion, her conduct is anti-social and the act is done in secret, but it differs from witchcraft proper in the absence of intent to kill. Fear of the consequences of adultery is the main force deterring her from correct behaviour; and it is argued that, if she really wishes to kill she need not employ so roundabout a method.

754 The conclusion we may draw is that, for an action to be witchcraft, it must satisfy, not one, but all the following three requirements: it must be disapproved of, anti-social; there must be an intent to kill or to harm; and it must be thought that either medicine or the mysterious forces of night-witchcraft have been used. Secrecy is not peculiar to witchcraft; it is

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practice often of less importance than the wife married first, and there is 595
sometimes quite a conflict between the principles of age and legality.

Various factors, such as the household arrangements of the 595
polygynous system, tend to make the tie between a mother and her 593
own children, and more especially between mother and son, very strong and lasting. It is often possible to distinguish between the brothers in a polygynous household by the degree of resemblance in general nature and character to their mother. Children share any stigma that may be attached to their mother, and according as a man likes a wife so he likes her children. There is thus a high degree of solidarity between uterine brothers and sisters, who always like each other more than siblings by other wives. The attachment between Lovedu mother and child [853
rests upon the firm foundations of a suckling period of several years, 854
during which the child spends much of its time snugly strapped to her back. It is in many ways also an easier relationship than that among Europeans, with fewer prohibitions, fewer punishments and fewer of the petty grounds of conflict associated with such refinements as keeping hands or clothes clean.

The Lovedu girl is much with her mother, but she leaves home to get 593
married soon after puberty and it is the boy in whose later life the mother plays the greatest role. During his boyhood the mother is the champion of her son. If he has been bullied by another, it is she who will take up the cudgels for him, and many of the worst quarrels between women arise in defence of their children. A boy of fifteen was pulling about and beating a boy of ten because he had not gone out to herd. Two men, in passing, called on him to desist, but to no avail till one of them said to a child standing near, 'Run and tell his mother Dwagu is killing her child.' The mother arrived and harangued Dwagu, who left off, but stoutly defended himself against her scolding tongue, and there the matter ended. When a young man marries, his mother is the dominating figure in his household. She controls his relations with his wife, telling him how to conduct himself while she is pregnant or during the suckling period, giving permission (indirectly through other old women) for their [833] ●
first sexual intercourse. When Masilu, a young man from town, came home ill, it was his mother who took him to a doctor. Ramano, after eight years absence in town, came home because his mother called him back; and Madume, a married man with two children, succeeded in avoiding a dangerous ritual office largely because his mother did not want him to undertake it. Even though he may be head of the village with authority over all its inmates, a man will still be constantly appealing to his mother's greater age and experience for guidance in matters that fall outside his own experience, more especially if his father is dead. Yet the mother, who so greatly controls her son, will never dare to have dealings with a stranger in the absence of the men nor presume to show him over the village. The son is the natural guardian of his mother. Should it be decided that she should move away from her husband's village, even if the cause be witchcraft, her sons will accompany her. Upon the youngest son, more particularly, falls the duty of caring for his parents in their old age.

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sit down and cry, but, beyond a few sympathetic words from his friends 866
and the injunction to be quiet, nothing is done which may enhance his
sense of his own importance. In competition with the growing interests
of the toddler, who is able also to partake of the ordinary food of adults, 862
suckling becomes of less and less importance, indulged in only at night
or when he feels in need of being fondled. His companions, too, many
of them a little older than himself, begin to tell him there are worms in
his mother's breast and perhaps even tease him a little. If there is no
younger brother or sister, a child may continue drinking at his mother's
breast until about four or five years of age and it is not at all an unusual
sight to see a boy of five stealing a drink at his mother's breast before
running off in the morning to herd goats with the others. Most children
leave off drinking quite naturally; sometimes, however, the mother puts
some chili on her breast or a bitter herb to deter the child. It is said that
boys generally like to drink from the breast much longer than do girls, and
certainly it was little boys from three to seven years of age, not little girls,
who used to nestle up to and stealthily fondle one of us.

There is no necessary connexion between weaning and the resumption of 862
sexual intercourse by the parents, which may take place at any time after 833
teething and depends largely upon the number of wives there are. It is,
however, believed that normal sex relations should not be resumed till
after weaning. If they are resumed before the child is able to walk, the
old women who control such relations between husband and wife will
warn the parents to be careful: 'For who will carry both children?' Sex
intercourse on the part of its mother is believed to harm the suckling
child. That is why, when husband and wife resume such relations, some
of the semen of the husband must be smeared all over the child 'that it
may know its father' and not take ill. Often the semen is mixed with
powdered medicine as well as with the vaginal secretions of its mother.
A suckling woman is seldom accused of adultery; it is thought that she
would not wilfully do a thing that is harmful to her child. Christians
resume intercourse after the child is a few months old; such external
intercourse is said by them to 'make the child grow'. The sending of
children to the mother's mother for a few years is likewise not definitely
associated with the weaning, though naturally it cannot take place before.

Grown-ups try to teach children to greet (*bsha*) at an early age or they 868
clap their hands to make the toddlers dance, however unsteadily. When a 863
child is able to go on an errand to the next courtyard, this is considered
a great advance. It is then said, 'The child is able to hear.' Bodily
control is not expected of small children; but by the time a child is about
three years old its mother will take it outside the village near the ash heap
and smack it if it messes in the hut or courtyard. At five or six a child
will go out into the bush.

There are few restrictions in the life of a small child: no elders run after 861
him with injunctions not to touch this or that; if he chooses to roll in the [863]
ash heap, he may do so without getting into any greater trouble than a
mild rebuke from his mother, who will tell him she objects to suckling
so dirty a boy. One may see a child playing with a sharp knife without a
word of admonition from his parents. There are no regular hours. A

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593 If a wife refuses cohabitation, there is usually a good reason, but a reason that has nothing to do with sexual incompatibility. The husband concerned will perhaps solicit the aid of the old women; but never will he dare say that he can go elsewhere for his pleasure, for she has equal power to retaliate in that manner. The Lovedu know
● 833 of the belief of other tribes that continued sexual intercourse after
843 pregnancy builds up the child forming in the womb. They also continue intercourse, but they do not stress, and even deny, that semen builds up the foetus. It is worth noting that sexual intercourse at a late stage of pregnancy (after the seventh month) is considered not quite correct, and this ideal is reflected in the anger of the midwives, who may reprimand the husband if they find signs, as they think, of his semen on the new-born infant. Nor is the sexual act brought into relation with so many special occasions as elsewhere; it has not to any extent been institutionalized in connexion with dangerous or new enterprises, as is the case among the Shangana-Tonga in their midst. Full coitus is taboo while a mother suckles her child; the milk of the new pregnancy will poison the child, but a child is not sent away when sexual relations are
842 resumed. Even the theme of fertility is handled with moderation or submerged under a mass of ritual. A wife is not ochred on her first pregnancy and, in those ceremonies that are directed to fertility, this motive is kept far in the background. Likewise, barrenness in a woman is not regarded as entitling a man to nullify his marriage and, when a substitute is sent, the children are presumed to be, not the children of the barren wife, but of the substitute. The conception of 'buying a womb' is negatived by the fact that full *munyualo* is given for the substitute, who is not subservient to, but independent of, the barren wife. These arrangements also imply that barrenness is not a great humiliation.
837 A married woman is theoretically denied the right of having children if her husband is impotent or absents himself for years. In practice, 'picking up children in the veld' is realistically tolerated, but it must be done surreptitiously, for the custom in other tribes, whereby the husband appoints a 'bull', is not approved. A wife can never be lent to another, for, as the proverb runs, 'About clothes you may say, "Lend them to me," but never about a woman' (*gg'adimeni gi a gwe, mundu a na gg'adime*).

Marital fidelity is not a matter of great importance; a father will reprimand his adulterous son, but only because in his pursuit of other women, he fails in his duty to look after his wife—that is the main thing in marriage. Similarly a wife's adultery can never be the cause of divorce; but it must be judicious; it must not offend the proprieties. No doubt a man has greater opportunities than a woman and before marriage one may speak of a double standard of morality, but after marriage the differences are small. Both a husband and a wife can administer medicines to the other partner, making extra-marital irregularities very dangerous to health. A wife during pregnancy by a lover is also a grave danger to her husband. On the whole, the remarkable thing is, not that there is marital infidelity, but that there is so little of it. After all, a man may not 'mix' his wives; he cannot go from the one to the other; he cannot bring

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against 754
sorcery: when the doctor made Nagambi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *khileso* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*hu phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they 782
stand up (*na ene*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. 333
Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain 753
circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*lepoya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*hu gobo*). The *lepoya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *lepoya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Pheduli, whose wife's death was attributed to *lepoya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *lepoya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstruating woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafa*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafa*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *gire* or *vuhuzi* *eya vasadi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 50 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose 845
child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless 847
cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *gire*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Gire is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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833 753 *ḡive* if the circumstances of the personal relations of the patient justify such a diagnosis. People thought that Maḡaradani's cough was *ḡive*, but when he insisted that he had no lovers it was diagnosed as *Mbiloo*; Mulada's debility was probably due to chronic malaria, but his friends suspected that he had taken no precautionary measures before resuming co-habitation with his wife, who had miscarried after seven months. *Ḡive* is distinguished from *lefiha* (consumption) by its rapid course and the fact that *lefiha* (*ha fiha*, to breathe) is not caused by women. *Ḡive* [847] can be cured only in its earliest stages, an ingredient of the medicine being a portion of the abortion or, in the case of intercourse with a woman who has lost a child, can be prevented by steaming and mutual inoculation. The prevalence of *ḡive* suggests that abortions are common and that effective abortifacients are in general use. In reality, however, innocent women are accused as soon as a lover falls ill, and rather than be thought murderers, they often give him medicine purporting to be a portion of the abortion mixed with sand to be used as a cure.

753 769 Disease and healing are in the last resort connected with the guardianship of the ancestors. If they are annoyed and relax their vigilance, their descendants may be rendered susceptible to disease, or medicines used cannot have their full effect. Ancestors, however, do not merely ward off disease or assist cure; they also actively cause illness. The crying all day of a baby may be due to the spirit of a grandfather pinching it in order that it should be given his name; sore eyes in children are often, and in adults sometimes, attributed to ancestors; barrenness or difficult birth is laid at their door, and sometimes they seize the whole body of a person because they wish to 'possess' him. But ancestors never cause death: even if at first an illness is said to be due to them, should death supervene, it is attributed to witches. Complaints of living relatives, especially of the father's sister, may also cause illness.

754 By far the most important of all causes of ill-health, however, is the evil work of witches and sorcerers. Certain illnesses, such as *Mbiloo*, are characteristic of sorcery and can be contracted in no other manner. But any disease may be caused by witchcraft and witches may avail themselves of the opportunity offered by any minor illness to enter and aggravate it. Diagnosis depends on the course of the illness. Dysentery is regarded as due to natural causes; but should it not respond to treatment or should the patient suspect an enemy, a witch will be implicated. During the 1938 smallpox epidemic, the head of a district which was more hardly hit than its neighbours called a meeting of residents. Men declared, 'Smallpox kills people here; they merely get ill and recover elsewhere. There is a witch in our midst.' Money was collected, three men sent to a diviner, and, in the end, two women were accused. A specialized cause of illness is legitimate vengeance-magic used against theft and called *Mbidzhu*, which makes the finger of the thief swell up or the stolen goat blow in his belly.

753 It must not be imagined that the Lovedu do not recognize a large number of diseases as natural. Many illnesses 'just come'. Such are all minor ailments like coughs, colds, stomach disorders, and also other more serious diseases like dysentery and malaria. Too much beer is

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not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and contagious force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an invisible counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction, including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage (regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor. 'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*. A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi* affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhuma*) to those eating it. Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leshega*) are full of *muridi* and were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings from the teeth of the *leshega*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hosts infects these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long journeys from home.

Muridi is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will

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584 courting visits are paid by the boy without seeing the girl at all. He is
431 entertained by the bridesmaids. After a few such visits, the boy will give 10s. or £1 to 'see the girl', to remove this taboo. The bride and her sisters similarly avoid all brothers of the groom till they *ukuhlola* her by means of a small gift after the marriage. One often sees such boys teasing these girls to try to get an answer to some question, but they keep resolutely silent. Owing to the ramifications of the classificatory system, there are areas such as the queen's district, where most of the inhabitants are related in some way. Here many men and women cannot speak to each other because the men cannot afford to *ukuhlola* all the brides of the family. After some years the women will tire of the avoidance and begin to speak to these men.

585 On arrival at the village of the husband, a bride avoids every one (by
431 not speaking) till given a small gift. Her mother-in-law gives her a gift
606 during the first week while she is still secluded, but the father-in-law usually waits longer. On the arrival of any visitor, the bride will lie down on her side in respectful salutation till given some small gift. As soon as a boy begins to avoid his prospective bride, he avoids also her mother. They may not be together in the same hut, the mother may not serve food to the boy, and, should they happen to come near each other, the woman will avert or partially cover her head. But whereas avoidance between groom and bride ends before marriage, that between a man and his mother-in-law ends usually about a year after the marriage, when the woman is given 10s. or a blanket. Andreas gave 15s. after the birth of his first child. Nevertheless, a man will always take care never to talk loudly or angrily in the company of his mother-in-law. If he does, she will walk away and if a man were to have words with his mother-in-law or scold her in a bout of drunkenness, he would have to pay a pardon goat to her family.

607 The most lasting form of avoidance is that between a man and his wife's brother's wife, especially the one who has been obtained with the cattle he handed over for his wife and who will bear the future wife of his son. Frieda always covers her face when meeting her husband's sister's husband. If he is in a hut, she may not enter it. Beyond exchanging greetings, she does not sit with him or talk directly to him and she may
● [835] not herself serve him with food. The uterine sister of the husband of Madinji married Nagumbi and so, according to all the rules, she should avoid him; but in reality she is his lover. He, Madinji, is known to be the father of one of her, Nagumbi's, children, yet they are not socially ostracised nor have their actions been publicly condemned.

835 That this sort of breach of accepted standards is neither directly punished nor actively disapproved, unless forcibly brought before the public eye in a case, is in keeping with the haphazard nature of Lovedu social arrangements. Lejaxula, who, on the death of his parents, came to live with his grandfather (mother's mother's brother), has had four children by the wife of his mother's brother, the son of his grandfather, though he himself is a married man. We were at first inclined to attribute this state of affairs partly to culture contact conditions, which have kept the woman's husband in town, though not determining her choice of

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lovers. But we have revised our opinion, for many irregularities cannot be related to disturbances caused by culture contact and appear always to have existed. We came across other examples of intercourse with the wife's brother's wife, while a friend of ours, an important *induna*, was even publicly accused at a beer-drink of having had a child by incestuous relations with the wife of his father's younger brother, a woman much older than himself. But nothing further was done in the matter. Sometimes, however, such cases do appear before the courts. One of the most dramatic cases we ever heard was one in which a man was accused by the husband of his 'daughter' (the daughter of his own elder brother) of having a liaison with her. The affair was taken to a smeller-out, who decided he was guilty, but the case dragged on and we never saw the end of it. There has been, within the knowledge of informants, a case of incest between uterine brother and sister, and we were told also of a case in which a married man was brought to court by his own mother, who accused him of incest with her. He was tied in court, an unheard-of humiliation, and public indignation made his position so intolerable that on the pretext of wishing to go and relieve himself, he asked to be untethered and then tried to cut his throat. This put an end to the case. He did not die, but since that time 'his head has not been right'. He still lives in his mother's village.

The different social duties and obligations between relatives must be thought of more as group links than purely individual ties, important in social structure rather than in the purely personal relationship between people. They are not always translated into behaviour: important as are the social obligations that mark off a father's sister from, say, a mother's brother's wife, it would be impossible to detect any differences in individual behaviour towards these two relatives. Similarly, a man respects both his father's brothers and his mother's brothers and the fact that decides him to go to his mother's brother for advice may be no reflection of any intimacy in their personal relationships. The social obligations towards a father's sister would and should be carried out just the same whether she is a stern, formidable woman or whether she is soft-hearted and motherly in her attitude towards her brother's relatives. Nevertheless, character and personality do enter into personal relationships between different relatives, so much so that the socially enjoined relationship at times breaks down altogether. Sons do not always respect and care for their fathers in their old age, and in a district head's court we once saw a young man fined one head of cattle and a goat and severely reprimanded for having beaten his father in a quarrel. Nor do all grandmothers pet and spoil their daughters' children. Mukhadi, a selfish, quarrelsome woman, made no effort to adopt her deceased daughter's children, who, in spite of accepted social standards, had to remain on in their father's village in the care of their father's mother.

All the obligations and duties associated with different relatives are, in the Native mind, subject to the qualification, 'if we agree'. Normally, one should and does agree with one's father's sister or with one's wife's relatives; but if one does not, then obviously one will neither visit nor send beer, and sooner or later there will be an open quarrel. If a sister

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Even if blood flows, no case can be brought against a herdboy, for he is still uncircumcised, irresponsible. 854 857

Training for both boys and girls in home-making is embodied in the institution known as *mungwane*, which, while being little more than a game, is nevertheless accorded adult recognition. Utilization by the children of the harvest gleanings after reaping, which may be regarded as its practical economic aspect, is to-day not much in evidence, but while it lasts women whose sons are taking part are saved the trouble of cooking the evening meal. After the reaping, when the cattle graze in the mealie lands near home, *mungwane* is begun by the girls calling the boys to come and be chosen. They stand in a row while each girl chooses a 'husband' by kneeling before and greeting the boy of her choice. He signifies his consent by answering the greeting. After the parents have been told of their intention to hold *mungwane*, the boys begin to build rough huts in the fields, while the girls smear the floors and courtyards. Each couple may have its own establishment with very often also a small child chosen as their 'child', or one large house for all may be made. With pots, baskets, spoons, and other utensils borrowed from home, the girls stamp mealie meal and cook dishes of porridge, nuts, and pumpkin, while the boys, if they can, bring home birds as relish. The game begins about eleven o'clock in the morning and ends in dancing and singing after dark; this lasts for about ten days or more till, at the end, the miniature village is burnt. Each 'wife', in addition to serving food to her 'husband' in the proper manner, must also take food every evening to her 'mother-in-law' in the boy's home. This is eaten, not by the mother-in-law herself, but by children of the household who are not taking part in the game. Occasionally the elders walk over to watch activities in the play-village and give a word of advice. That the institution is taken seriously by adults is shown by the fact that, though *mungwane* partners never marry, the mother of the girl will very often after the *mungwane* take a gift of beer (usually five calabashes or so) to the parents of her small daughter's 'husband', who will slaughter a goat in recognition of the gift just as though the relationship were real. There is nothing to prevent relatives from being *mungwane* partners. To-day the 'husband' is usually much younger than the 'wife' and the game is confined to children under the age of puberty. Not more than a few years ago, however, boys and girls of marriageable age used to take part, the institution being considered as primarily for them. One of the reasons for the change is the absence of many of the older boys at work in town, while the failure of young men to keep the rules against impregnation in the play sexual intercourse that often forms part of the game makes mothers loath to allow older girls to join in. 854 868 [431] [883 836]

General behaviour, attitudes, and values are not taught by any formal training. These are inextricably bound up with life in the society and become unconsciously adopted by any one fully partaking in social life. Even a European, when speaking the language and trying to enter into their social activities, finds himself unconsciously taking for granted values that he never had before and which are certainly not to be found in European life. They seem to follow naturally from the social situation 867

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881 established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on eith
794 side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dzi*
or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, waili
manner.

794 An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tenden
for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools,
set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where th
are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they
a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Hig
veld have no *komana*; but a Narene man who has come to live in t
area has brought *komana* drums and holds schools to which ma
Dikxale go.

• 836 Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowve
tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa
837 having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved
by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adulter
which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in a
way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widow
especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even thoug
[684] they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attache
to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness
better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where the
is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act wi
[695] send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the ba
word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepte
[694] Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adulter
with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head o
cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more tha
a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in th
fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the partie
concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a bo
whose people they do not consider suitable.

582 Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution o
[71] preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu
Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully
40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with th

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There is nothing morally wrong in sex or the sex act; not only is sex play among small children connived at, but premarital sex relations are institutionalized. It is only having a child before marriage that is immoral. For adultery restitution must be made, yet a husband who is jealous and watches his wife too closely is despised, and most men and women have extramarital lovers (*ostare*). The Lovedu attitude is less strict than that of the Tsonga living among them, for Tsonga married women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, and the compensation and fine for adultery are far higher than among the Lovedu. The Lovedu attitude to sex is matter-of-fact, and obscenity in ritual does not have a prominent role. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of promiscuity; they learn from their proverb that 'a woman's pubes may break up a family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are undeveloped.

To anyone brought up in the West European culture, where every breach of the moral code is also a sin in the eyes of a God who may punish the wrongdoer either in this life or the hereafter, an arresting aspect of Lovedu culture is that there is only a vague connexion between the ancestor-gods and morality. It has been said for the South Bantu in general, and by more than one authority, that the ancestors 'are the guardians of the moral code, it is they in the first instance who are thought of as visiting on their descendants punishments for some omission or commission'[1] There is among Lovedu a vague idea that failure to carry out one's kinship obligations may bring ancestral displeasure in the form of bad luck, and there may also be some connexion between such displeasure and *mahosa*, the force generated by complaints of living kin, which causes illness. But a careful study of Lovedu religious practices over a period of years has brought to light no single instance in which ancestors have complained about anything not immediately concerning their own personal relations with their descendants—their right to tendance, remembrance, and propitiation; the manner of their burial; their desire to be told of major events in the lives of living kin. No ancestor has ever been known to concern himself with the theft, witchcraft, murder, or adultery of any descendant, nor do they trouble about the breaking of taboos which prevent rain and vitally affect the welfare of all. Lovedu ancestors are not upholders of custom in general; they are concerned only with those customs and taboos which affect their own welfare and that of their kin. Even royal ancestors do not concern themselves with the breaking of taboos that lead to drought. This is not a reflection of their carelessness or supineness, for they are quick to complain if, for example their graves are desecrated. On one occasion in 1938, when two men had cut firewood in the bush near the royal burial grounds at Maulwi, the *ensidjani* wailed all night to indicate their displeasure. Again when Molugwane, deceased chief councillor and brother of the queen, 'held her

[1] A. W. Hoernlé, 'Religion in Native Life', in *Thinking with Africa*, edited by Milton Sutcliffe, 1928, p. 100. See also, W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, 1928, pp. 380–90.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962) 1964
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642 units which, each under a headman, enjoy a considerable
631 degree of autonomy.[1] A large proportion of these districts into
634 which the country is divided are ruled by the descendants of
644 original sections of the nuclear group; a few have been allocated
562 to alien groups under their own headmen while some are held
643 by royal women, *batanani* or 'wives' of the queen. Many
559 districts now held by commoners originated from *batanani* but
588 since women do not succeed one another as heads of districts these have been inherited by their sons of husbands given to them by the queen. Royal wives (*batanani*) are of various kinds. Some are of royal blood, daughters of close relatives of the queen to whom they have been given as a token of homage (*ho loba*). Only these are set up by the queen as rulers over districts. (Women may also rule areas in their own right where there is no male heir, as we shall see). Other royal wives are
644 the daughters of district heads, while a number are daughters
643 of foreign chiefs who come, sometimes with cattle, sometimes
559 with money or a daughter to *loba* the queen for rain. Once a
538 woman from within the tribe has been accepted by the queen
[582] as a royal wife, the tie is renewed from generation to generation
[634] on the pattern of cross-cousin marriage. Men may offer a daughter to the queen also in return for, or in the expectation of, economic help or political favour (though these are not always accepted) and there is a tendency today for districts to be subdivided into smaller and smaller units to satisfy the political aspirations of ambitious subjects. Royal wives bind to the queen not only her closest relatives but most of the important people in the tribe. Some wives are given away in marriage to her councillors, relatives and district headmen.
[536] Some remain with her and have allocated lovers. Children of
[602] these latter call the queen 'father' and she is responsible for helping them to marry.

563 The Lobedu proper appear originally to have regarded
613 themselves as an aristocracy but today it is only the royal lineage (*ba Mokale*) and a number of important Lobedu district heads that are looked up to. Many non-Lobedu lineages have, by virtue of marriage links through royal wives, a higher status and are more closely related to the queen than sections of Lobedu themselves.

[1] For a general account of the Lobedu, see Krige, E. J. 1941, Krige, E. J. and J. D., 1943 and 1950, and Krige, J. D., 1939.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense 581
marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex
within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may
be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the 837
mafuwe institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of com-
pletely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the pur-
poses of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suck-
ling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried
people who have their lovers (*mafuwe*). Nevertheless, a European finds
it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons
with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their
adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grand-
mothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our prefer-
ences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should so often as not
be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient 831
of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their 848
spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the 684
other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the
ryuli) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards
what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have
illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer
is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet
only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Tsonga.
The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the
girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends
and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to
see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly
displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men,
but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is
a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl
is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity
entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is
even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to
take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy
and was proudly worn by her youngest sister; if not, the girl's people had
to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity 831
be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. 848
Girls are still examined, especially at the *khoba*, but the matter is private; 847
and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sin 753
of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a
thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only
evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*ghwi* or *vulung*
ryu sound). A man gets *ghwi* from intercourse with a woman who has
had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death
from *ghwi* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives
warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter 593

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593 If a wife refuses cohabitation, there is usually a good reason, but a reason that has nothing to do with sexual incompatibility. The husband concerned will perhaps solicit the aid of the old women; but never will he dare say that he can go elsewhere for his pleasure, for she has equal power to retaliate in that manner. The Lovedu know
833 of the belief of other tribes that continued sexual intercourse after
843 pregnancy builds up the child forming in the womb. They also continue intercourse, but they do not stress, and even deny, that semen builds up the foetus. It is worth noting that sexual intercourse at a late stage of pregnancy (after the seventh month) is considered not quite correct, and this ideal is reflected in the anger of the midwives, who may reprimand the husband if they find signs, as they think, of his semen on the new-born infant. Nor is the sexual act brought into relation with so many special occasions as elsewhere; it has not to any extent been institutionalized in connexion with dangerous or new enterprises, as is the case among the Shangana-Tonga in their midst. Full coitus is taboo while a mother suckles her child; the milk of the new pregnancy will poison the child, but a child is not sent away when sexual relations are
842 resumed. Even the theme of fertility is handled with moderation or submerged under a mass of ritual. A wife is not ochred on her first pregnancy and, in those ceremonies that are directed to fertility, this motive is kept far in the background. Likewise, barrenness in a woman is not regarded as entitling a man to nullify his marriage and, when a substitute is sent, the children are presumed to be, not the children of the barren wife, but of the substitute. The conception of 'buying a womb' is negatived by the fact that full *sungwalo* is given for the substitute, who is not subservient to, but independent of, the barren wife. These arrangements also imply that barrenness is not a great humiliation.
837 A married woman is theoretically denied the right of having children if her husband is impotent or absents himself for years. In practice, 'picking up children in the veld' is realistically tolerated, but it must be done surreptitiously, for the custom in other tribes, whereby the husband appoints a 'bull', is not approved. A wife can never be lent to another, for, as the proverb runs, 'About clothes you may say, "Lend them to me," but never about a woman' (*ng'adiwani gi a gwe, wundia a wa ng'adiwa*).

Marital fidelity is not a matter of great importance; a father will reprimand his adulterous son, but only because in his pursuit of other women he fails in his duty to look after his wife—that is the main thing in marriage. Similarly a wife's adultery can never be the cause of divorce; but it must be judicious; it must not offend the proprieties. No doubt a man has greater opportunities than a woman and before marriage one may speak of a double standard of morality, but after marriage the differences are small. Both a husband and a wife can administer medicines to the other partner, making extra-marital irregularities very dangerous to health. A wife during pregnancy by a lover is also a grave danger to her husband. On the whole, the remarkable thing is, not that there is marital infidelity, but that there is so little of it. After all, a man may not 'mix' his wives; he cannot go from the one to the other; he cannot bring

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home a second wife until his first has had a child or, more usually to-day, until she is pregnant; and he has to avoid his wife to some extent until the baby is weaned, a period of three years or even more. 837

If a wife is barren, a substitute may, as we have seen, be sent. The whole subject of substitution is too large for adequate treatment here, but some aspects of it may be mentioned. Among the Lovedu a man may marry two sisters in the ordinary course of events, quite irrespective of whether the first married has prematurely died or is barren, but the wife's sister is not specially reserved for the husband as if he had a prior right to her. The marriage is desirable, not enjoined by the society, when it is known that the sisters will co-operate and care for each other's children. In the case of barrenness, there is substitution, but the substitute wife is not a subservient wife. It is not a case of true substitution, but a strengthening of a weak link in the chain of bride and cattle exchanges. A barren wife cannot be discarded; on the contrary, the insistence upon treating her well, though it recognizes, also represses the tendency to regard her position with misgivings. Men make a great effort, by treating a barren wife well, to elicit the praise of others, especially the queen, whose continuous interest is a guarantee that the virtue will be idealized. There are other considerations that reinforce the great concern of a female ruler for peacefulness and good relations. A man who ill-treats his barren wife need expect no reciprocity from her parents, and he has no weapons against them. He cannot demand back his cattle, for failure to have children does not vitiate the cattle exchanges. He cannot even initiate the procedure whereby his parents-in-law will send him a substitute. On the contrary, he must await their pleasure and if they do decide to send a substitute, he must *nyusela* (give cattle), and he may be asked more *mayusela* than for her sister. But if he has been a good husband and is poor, less may be asked. A man realizes that the virtue of treating a barren wife well is richly rewarded. 842 595

Similarly, a husband whose wife has died prematurely without issue is in the same position: he has no right to demand a substitute or, in default, the return of the *mayusela*. When he is offered his wife's sister or other suitable substitute, he must hand over cattle for her. It is true that the substitute sets up the house that 'has fallen', but the really important point is that the relationship created by the cattle exchanges should be maintained. A husband must report the death of his wife with an ox; he must call her people to the ceremony ending the mourning period; he must continue his visits as son-in-law; he must always be prepared to help his parents-in-law. All this will not necessarily induce them to give him a substitute; and if he neglects these things, the potential right to such substitute is not effaced. On the other hand, his parents-in-law must continue to honour him when he visits, they must still send him beer, they must acknowledge relationship with him. If they do not do these things, if they spread tales that he has been the cause of the death of their daughter, the relationship may be broken; and consequently the claim to a substitute, non-existent before, now is given recognition. If they value the link broken by their conduct they must reforge it by sending a substitute; if they do not, their action has already caused it to snap 587 768

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643 connotation, including the conceptions of showing allegiance, doing
588 homage, paying tribute, honouring, but, above all, supplicating for rain.
634 District heads *lowa* in this way, it is said, in recognition of the land which
789 the queen has given them to rule; but what is really important is their
648 dependence, as holders of land of the queen, upon the protection and security of her rain-making powers. Uuloveduu, her country, is the land where persons (i.e. wives) and other possessions are utterly lost (*ha lowa*), because they are given in exchange for the rain that the queen makes. The queen has accepted wives even from the Shangana-Tongs, with whom marriage is not permitted, but in that case she hands them to her nobles, not as wives, but as daughters; and after a time they become sufficiently Loveduized to be given in marriage to commoners. These wives usually stay at the capital for a limited time; only a few of them, some six to nine to-day, remain permanently; the others are handed chiefly to district heads and nobles.

643 While the wives are at the capital they do the work that wives ordinarily
588 do: they hoe for their husband, the queen, who sometimes accompanies them to the fields, they attend to domestic duties, they stamp and brew beer, but only two or three of them are sufficiently noble and trusted to cook for the queen. The queen is bridegroom to their people and they are her relatives-in-law; and even the details of the marriage ceremony are maintained. There are variations upon the ordinary pattern of [281] marriage and *mwynwalo*; the *mwynwalo*, for instance, is less, but what is particularly stressed is the virginity of the bride. For a time she wears only a loin cloth as evidence that she is not pregnant and a substitute must be sent for a girl who has been 'spoilt' before marriage with the queen. The first daughter of the district head of Mulloni was 'engaged' to the queen, the second to her cross-cousin, a nobleman. The fiancée of the queen became pregnant and was rejected, the queen arranging an exchange with the nobleman. The same nobleman years ago had been 'given' a wife by the queen and recently in return, as is obligatory, he sent his daughter as wife to the queen. This daughter became pregnant, was allotted to another nobleman, whom she deserted, and now stays with her father nursing an infant of two years of age. Such complications merely throw into relief the ramifications of the system.

643 The queen does not accept 'spoilt' brides and she equally expects that
588 her wives shall remain chaste, at least for a time. Theoretical insistence
● 837 upon chastity co-exists with a realistic attitude to the weakness of
554 human nature. Seduction of a wife of the queen is penalized as if she were still unmarried and the daughter of the queen. Pregnant wives, unless the queen has authorized the liaison, are disgraced, sent home, and returned with beer to wipe out the disgrace, and sometimes an ox is slaughtered for the returned wife, the peritoneum being hung round her neck to indicate that she is the queen's wife. According to the standards of the society, the seducer, as in any ordinary case of seduction, may not marry the woman he has seduced; he may not even see his infant child. Few of the wives of the queen permanently remain chaste, though it is a great honour often very specially rewarded. The great wives, if they remain chaste, may be given areas to rule or special villages of their own.

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If favoured by one of the great councillors, they could be given their own hut (and in the old days a cow into the bargain) and be allowed to co-habit there with the councillor. This gains for them an honourable place in the capital, where they exercise great influence in the private councils of the queen, intercede for others with the queen and are her companions. *Ingomani* of high rank may, as mistresses of their own villages, aspire to the great circle of huts drawn by the establishments of their wives, and they may even attain the pinnacle of prestige where, as happens when the queen is barren, they are chosen to bear the heir to the throne. The lesser *ingomani*, who have remained chaste, may be released from their vows and allowed 'to go about in the bush', and eventually they may be handed out to nobles or district heads.

It is, however, contrary to the ideals expressed for a virgin *ingomani* to be given away, though the ideal recedes before other considerations, such as the poverty of a noble or sympathy in a loss he has sustained. Only some of the *ingomani* who have illicit children continue to remain at the capital—for instance, there is an old woman who has a married son about forty years old. She had her lapse when she went on a visit to her home, but no one knows who her lover was. The son still lives with his mother at the capital; as a son of the queen, he is not without influence, but his influence is resented. He and his mother are regarded as witches, and he has many enemies and for long periods has to escape to town to allow threatening storms to blow over. Councillors can hardly afford to allow wives of the queen who have sons to remain permanently: the honour is too great and the opportunities of exploiting their position too numerous. The institutional arrangement of sending *ingomani* with children away to be married to others avoids this danger. The children may, if they are proud, call themselves *Mujaji* and they are described as 'the heads of Mujaji', but legally they are no longer children of the queen and they lose their opportunities for intriguing.

Through her wives, the queen becomes 'son-in-law' to all her district heads, and by allocating these wives to other district heads and to noblemen she becomes parent-in-law to them. The system thus uses the mechanism of the social system to forge a great network of chains radiating from the queen like a web to all strategic points in the society. The link with the queen theoretically never breaks, as a wife handed out must, when she has a daughter, send her in turn to be married by the queen. An important wife, even after allocation, may still enter the queen's hut. The queen remains interested in the welfare of her erstwhile wives and takes them back if the husband ill-treats them or their children. A new link, that of marriage, is created between the people of the wife allocated and of the husband to whom she is given. A man pays no *marungulo* for such a wife, yet the link is a true *marungulo* link; for, if the wife deserts, the husband may, though he has given nothing, demand back *marungulo* from her people (that which the queen gave them). He may complain to the queen, who can, if she wishes, urge his case, but she usually says, 'I can freely give. I cannot return by force.'

How district heads become linked with the queen and with one another may be shown by an illustration which we have greatly simplified for

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14

881 established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on either
794 side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dzimu* or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, wailing manner.

794 An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tendency for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools, to set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where they are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they are a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Highveld have no *Aomana*; but a Narene man who has come to live in the area has brought *Aomana* drums and holds schools to which many Dikxale go.

836 Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowveld
837 tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa in having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved of by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adultery, which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in any way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widows, especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even though
[694] they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attached to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness is better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where there is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act will
[695] send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the bare word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepted.
[696] Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adultery, with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head of cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more than a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in the fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the parties concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a boy whose people they do not consider suitable.

582 Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution of
[77] preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu-Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully 40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with the

4: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1954
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There is nothing morally wrong in sex or the sex act; not only is sex play among small children connived at, but premarital sex relations are institutionalized. It is only having a child before marriage that is immoral. For adultery restitution must be made, yet a husband who is jealous and watches his wife too closely is despised, and most men and women have extra-marital lovers (*ratavo*). The Lovedu attitude is less strict than that of the Tsonga living among them, for Tsonga married women are expected to be faithful to their husbands, and the compensation and fine for adultery are far higher than among the Lovedu. The Lovedu attitude to sex is matter-of-fact, and obscenity in ritual does not have a prominent role. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of promiscuity; they learn from their proverb that 'a woman's pubes may break up a family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are undeveloped.

To anyone brought up in the West European culture, where every breach of the moral code is also a sin in the eyes of a God who may punish the wrongdoer either in this life or the hereafter, an arresting aspect of Lovedu culture is that there is only a vague connexion between the ancestor-gods and morality. It has been said for the South Bantu in general, and by more than one authority, that the ancestors 'are the guardians of the moral code, it is they in the first instance who are thought of as visiting on their descendants punishments for some omission or commission'[1] There is among Lovedu a vague idea that failure to carry out one's kinship obligations may bring ancestral displeasure in the form of bad luck, and there may also be some connexion between such displeasure and *mahara*, the force generated by complaints of living kin, which causes illness. But a careful study of Lovedu religious practices over a period of years has brought to light no single instance in which ancestors have complained about anything not immediately concerning their own personal relations with their descendants—their right to tendance, remembrance, and propitiation; the manner of their burial; their desire to be told of major events in the lives of living kin. No ancestor has ever been known to concern himself with the theft, witchcraft, murder, or adultery of any descendant, nor do they trouble about the breaking of taboos which prevent rain and vitally affect the welfare of all. Lovedu ancestors are not upholders of custom in general; they are concerned only with those customs and taboos which affect their own welfare and that of their kin. Even royal ancestors do not concern themselves with the breaking of taboos that lead to drought. This is not a reflection of their carelessness or supineness, for they are quick to complain if, for example their graves are desecrated. On one occasion in 1938, when two men had cut firewood in the bush near the royal burial grounds at Maulwi, the *mudzimu* wailed all night to indicate their displeasure. Again when Molugwane, deceased chief councillor and brother of the queen, 'held her

[1] A. W. Hoernlé, 'Religion in Native Life', in *Thinking with Africa*, edited by Milton Sangster, 1928, p. 100. See also, W. C. Willoughby, *The Soul of the Bantu*, 1928, pp. 382–90.

5:Krige E-5 (1936-1938,1961-1962)1964
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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a different mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*mutla mabe o beya le mete ea kae*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

[81] are not sex-ridden; it is we who, by outlawing the impulses, which we
[83] subtly stimulate in our romantic ideals, our literature, music, and art in general, create for ourselves neuroses and psychoses, maladjustments and perversions. The Lovedu have no problems of sexual adjustment or compatibility: their attitude is a matter-of-fact one. Sex is handled with moderation: men are warned against the dangers of excessive promiscuity, they learn from their proverb that 'A woman's pubes may break up the family', but passion is not esteemed and sex techniques are wholly undeveloped. In ritual, sex is symbolised to some extent, but only as an aspect of fertility, not as a sensual pleasure, while obscenity is inconspicuous and must sometimes be rationalised, as if it were questionable even under the auspices of the ritual. The fertility theme is itself pushed far back, so that it is unrecognisable in the symbolic background.

[38] The Lovedu are innocent of Lesbian practices. They are also revolted by what they believe the Shangana-Tonga in their midst tolerate—namely, the marriage of immature girls to old men, who they say sometimes manually enlarge the vagina of these girls; and they regard as disgusting that extreme measure of Shangana-Tonga women, who in impotent rage against a man may display their genitalia. Yet the Lovedu are not unversed; modern conditions are making nubile girls breast-conscious, so that they are beginning to wear attenuated bodices; young men admit to being aroused by the sight of the inner, smooth surfaces of women's thighs; and significantly the common word for the female sexual organs is *rudimoni* (place of the gods) or, among old women, *Mitsipuli* (a charm or object made sacred by association with the gods), and for the penis,
[39] *hoje ye motse* (staff of the village). In the one case of exhibitionism we saw tried before the *Mkwe*, the culprit, a man, was dealt with tolerantly as if he were an irresponsible madman; masturbation among children is looked upon as 'playing with' the sexual organs, and among boys it is indulged in less for its sexual satisfaction than to prove to their mates that they have reached maturity. The Lovedu do not suffer from guilt complexes because sex is not a temptation to be resisted by painful effort of will.

[81] Again, within the family there is little of that assertion of authority that among us leads to the development of an Oedipus complex. One finds neither stern paternal authority nor fierce resentments and compensatory day-dreaming among children. In the *Mkwe* authority is distributed, in the work party dominance is resented. There are no institutions that foster the development of strong personalities. Recognition is not given to superiors, and there are no great heroes in Lovedu history. The precocious child is a potential witch and the authoritative councillor is liable to be regarded as intoxicated. One day the great councillor of the queen conducted the proceedings of the *Mkwe* in what appeared to us to be an expeditious manner, taking command of them, silencing irrelevancies, and crisply announcing his decisions. We could not help remarking upon the masterful exhibition, the order and efficiency, but our remarks caused great surprise and we were told that only a drunken man could have been guilty of the ignominious display. Modesty, not arrogance, and dignity, not assertion, are great virtues.

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881 twice as much as would normally be consumed by the same number of people; and in addition they had large quantities of nuts, only exceptionally provided in ordinary life. For purposes of economy, the mother of the *initiate* usually makes porridge for her household of the bran of the stampings of the girls. Sometimes, in times of scarcity, a girl's puberty ceremony will be postponed, and it is noticeable that in the ploughing season, when the people are busy all day in the fields, there are few or no *initiation* ceremonies. Though in charge of the ceremony, the elder girls are subject to an old woman, 'mother of the *khobe*', who has been chosen by the initiate herself and who, ever after, will be called 'mother' by her. For her own mother may have nothing to do with the ceremony and, even though it is held in her courtyard, may not enter the hut of seclusion. The girl's mother feels very sympathetic towards her daughter and often grumbles that the girls are 'killing' her daughter when she hears them beating her. But she has no say. If a girl is unpopular, her parents sometimes arrange for the ceremony to be held at a relative's village in another area, lest she be too badly treated.

881 The Lovedu girl does not approach her own mother about such an
• 844 intimate and personal matter as her first menstruation, but confides in a friend, who will inform the mother by means of the metaphorical phrase, 'So-and-so has scolded the women.' The other girls of the area are thereupon called to come and the ceremonial opens with their carrying the novice on their backs from a spot outside the village, where they have forgathered, into the hut of seclusion, usually the cooking hut of the mother. Some girls keep the fact of their menstruation hidden for months before divulging the secret. Mabula waited for three months. It will not be possible here to do more than indicate the main incidents of a girl's puberty ceremony. It must, however, be borne in mind that there is considerable variation in detail between one ceremony and another and that no mere analysis can give the atmosphere prevailing in such ceremonies. On the arrival in her hut of seclusion the girl is 'strengthened' (*ku thusa*) by the old women. Ground herbs mixed with ochre and some of the girl's own menstrual blood are smeared on various parts of the body—in a circle round the wrist, on the head, nose, mouth, neck, arms, etc. The medicine is *ya ku ravha bidzi manala* (to give the zebra its stripes) and is said to prevent the girl from becoming ill (*ku khuma*) when entering the villages of other people. That night towards sunset the women of the area forgather at the village of the initiate, trilling and shouting, '*E a luma*' (it bites), on the way; they come to drum and dance, as they do almost every evening of the six days' seclusion.

881 While in seclusion the initiate and her companion sit to one side of the doorway of the hut without any covering except the loincloth. They talk in whispers only. When a stranger approaches the hut, she wails in a thin voice to warn him off (for she can see through the crevices of the doorway), and when the elder girls enter she must wail loudly lest she be beaten. When she wishes to relieve herself, she walks out completely covered in a blanket. Early each morning the initiate is taken to the river. She walks in a stooping attitude, covered in a blanket and surrounded by girls uttering a high-pitched wail as she goes. In the stream

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a hole is hollowed out so as to be deep enough for her to sit in (if possible 881
the water should reach the neck) while a fire is kindled for the other girls,
at whose pleasure she remains in the water, uttering her wail. If the girl
has a good friend among the old women, she may free the initiate from [431]
going to the river after the first morning by a gift of snuff to the elder
girls. This is called 'lifting the weight' from the girl (*ku rula*). They
return home about eleven o'clock in the morning, when they have their
meal. After this the elder girls return to their homes or do as they please,
while the novice and her friend remain in their hut. They sleep if they
can, for at night they get little chance to do so. During the initiation
the girl undergoes harsh treatment at the hands of the older girls. She
'pays', by being beaten, for going to sleep, for waking up and on the
slightest pretext. At night her blankets are taken away and used by the
older girls, while she lies exposed with no fire to warm her. Not only is
she allowed no relish with her porridge, but she may also be given filth
to eat. One girl's menstrual blood was put in her porridge, which she
immediately vomited up; sometimes a frog is given them to eat and one
of us has seen initiates made to eat sand as relish. If she asks for water,
the elder girls may clear the nose into it before it is given. All this harsh
treatment is looked upon as good discipline.

Initiation at puberty includes instruction in rules connected with 881
the new stage of life the girl is entering upon. She is warned that she 864
has reached maturity and must be careful, inter alia, to avoid
becoming pregnant. She is advised also not to have more than one lover
at a time, lest there be difficulty in establishing the paternity of her child
should she have one. In the old days she was at this stage given a
calabash doll which at her marriage was carried in a basket by the wedding
party. If she was not virgin, the calabash was pierced. This custom has,
however, fallen into disuse. The girl is taught the rules connected with
menstruation: not to enter a sick-room while menstruating, not to enter [841]
a cattle kraal, not to sleep with men during her menses. If she has not
enlarged her *labia minora* properly, she is severely scolded or punished
by having hot, roasted sesamum put on them. In one case the elder girls
inserted a mealie cob in an initiate to show her the dangers of intercourse,
hurting her so badly that she was unable to walk properly. Her parents
complained to the queen, who imposed a heavy fine on each of the older
girls responsible. There is no teaching connected with marriage. An
initiate must be respectful to her elders: she is told that if people older
than herself are in a hut she must greet (*buka*) on entering. She is taught
in a song to honour and obey her mother. Most of the teaching is in the
form of songs or mummeries. The dancing that takes place every night
when the women come consists largely of movements in a bent position 881
on the haunches, with arms held above the head for better balance. Some 535
of the dances are associated with the lessons of the initiation: two girls,
one with a cloth passed between the legs to represent the loin covering
of a man, dance facing each other; the 'man' dances with a lighted fire-
brand between the legs, the girl wears a cloth which makes her look
pregnant. Another dance consists of movements in which legs are held
close together, and sometimes crossed, symbolic of the manner in which

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is going.' It is, of course, an extempore prayer, not bound to any set words. After this rite there is no need to elope; it is *ha* rape, to marry with proper rites, not *ha pala*, to run away surreptitiously. Yet the secret elopement by night is so interesting that it frequently follows, and in any case the slow journey of the troop of girls, who must be persuaded at every step, is always part of the ceremony.

The final stage of the marriage ceremonial consists of several successive steps lasting a month or longer. Again a whole series of new gifts (*mamusa*) passes and new rites are enacted. From early morning until late at night the bride's companions are busy—cooking, stamping mealies, bringing water for the inmates of the village to wash in, and in other ways. At night there are contests of riddles between the visiting girls and the boys and girls of the village; they are ordinary riddles (*dishai*), not those curious *dinyoko* that end the initiations, but the pattern of the institution is the same. There is, for instance, the *ha mosa* of the girls at every turn and their exaggerated politeness. Then, after a week, having fetched wood and distributed among themselves the gifts received, the bride's companions go home, crawling out of the village and accompanied some way by the boys. The bride is now alone and, still in her finery, she begins to do the household work. When she menstruates for the first time, she secretly 'flows the moon' (*ha showa mezdi*), running to an old woman, who takes her back with beer of 'showering the moon' and a goat is killed for her. This showering of the moon is a minor detail in marriage ceremonial, with rules and observances, however, in which the virginity of the bride, the part played by the go-between, the division of the beer and meat, the reciprocal duties of the *nomakhale* and the *naghalale*, the one giving beer, the other returning a goat, are once more emphasised.

But all the rites and ceremonies are equally full of meaning, not only for the purpose in hand, but for the whole social structure. About three or four weeks after the marriage the bride goes to her home with the goat or 10s. of 'pouring out her bridehood' (*ha shalla swepji*), and thereafter, according to ideal standards, the bridegroom may exercise full marital rights. This 'pouring out', with its associated observances, is still universally carried out, though the couple may already have received permission to cohabit. If the bridegroom migrates to town, as sometimes happens, before the home-bringing of the bride, the breach of orthodox rules, implied by the premature permission, is avoided. After a while the bride returns and brings the beer to 'open the way' for her mother. In the old days the boy's people then sent the *ha hakela* goat, the goat '*of* asking permission' for the consummation of the marriage. At the stage when permission to cohabit is given, the couple are ritually mixed, the ceremony varying from mutual inoculation to common steaming under a blanket: it is a rite pregnant with meaning and with the associations it acquires as being a part of many other ritual occasions. The bride becomes an apprentice to her mother-in-law, there are avoidances and gifts (*mamusa*) to remove them and so, at every stage, the marriage ceremonial is cut to the configuration of the social structure, fitted into its foundations and walls, and made to merge into the smallest details of its ornamentation.

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513 If a wife refuses cohabitation, there is usually a good reason, but a reason that has nothing to do with sexual incompatibility. The husband concerned will perhaps solicit the aid of the old women; but never will he dare say that he can go elsewhere for his pleasure, for she has equal power to retaliate in that manner. The Lovedu know
533 of the belief of other tribes that continued sexual intercourse after
543 pregnancy builds up the child forming in the womb. They also continue intercourse, but they do not stress, and even deny, that semen builds up the foetus. It is worth noting that sexual intercourse at a late stage of pregnancy (after the seventh month) is considered not quite correct, and this ideal is reflected in the anger of the midwives, who may reprimand the husband if they find signs, as they think, of his semen on the new-born infant. Nor is the sexual act brought into relation with so many special occasions as elsewhere; it has not to any extent been institutionalized in connexion with dangerous or new enterprises, as is the case among the Shangana-Tonga in their midst. Full coitus is taboo while a mother suckles her child; the milk of the new pregnancy will poison the child, but a child is not sent away when sexual relations are
542 resumed. Even the theme of fertility is handled with moderation or submerged under a mass of ritual. A wife is not ochred on her first pregnancy and, in those ceremonies that are directed to fertility, this motive is kept far in the background. Likewise, barrenness in a woman is not regarded as entitling a man to nullify his marriage and, when a substitute is sent, the children are presumed to be, not the children of the barren wife, but of the substitute. The conception of 'buying a womb' is negatived by the fact that full *masyusalo* is given for the substitute, who is not subservient to, but independent of, the barren wife. These arrangements also imply that barrenness is not a great humiliation.
537 A married woman is theoretically denied the right of having children if her husband is impotent or absents himself for years. In practice, 'picking up children in the veld' is realistically tolerated, but it must be done surreptitiously, for the custom in other tribes, whereby the husband appoints a 'bull', is not approved. A wife can never be lent to another, for, as the proverb runs, 'About clothes you may say, "Lend them to me," but never about a woman' (*ng'adimeni gi a gwe, musadia a na ng'adime*).

Marital fidelity is not a matter of great importance; a father will reprimand his adulterous son, but only because in his pursuit of other women he fails in his duty to look after his wife—that is the main thing in marriage. Similarly a wife's adultery can never be the cause of divorce; but it must be judicious; it must not offend the proprieties. No doubt a man has greater opportunities than a woman and before marriage one may speak of a double standard of morality, but after marriage the differences are small. Both a husband and a wife can administer medicines to the other partner, making extra-marital irregularities very dangerous to health. A wife during pregnancy by a lover is also a grave danger to her husband. On the whole, the remarkable thing is, not that there is marital infidelity, but that there is so little of it. After all, a man may not 'mix' his wives; he cannot go from the one to the other; he cannot bring

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home a second wife until his first has had a child or, more usually to-day, until she is pregnant; and he has to avoid his wife to some extent until the baby is weaned, a period of three years or even more. 557

If a wife is barren, a substitute may, as we have seen, be sent. The whole subject of substitution is too large for adequate treatment here, but some aspects of it may be mentioned. Among the Lovedu a man may marry two sisters in the ordinary course of events, quite irrespective of whether the first married has prematurely died or is barren, but the wife's sister is not specially reserved for the husband as if he had a prior right to her. The marriage is desirable, not enjoined by the society, when it is known that the sisters will co-operate and care for each other's children. In the case of barrenness, there is substitution, but the substitute wife is not a subservient wife. It is not a case of true substitution, but a strengthening of a weak link in the chain of bride and cattle exchanges. A barren wife cannot be discarded; on the contrary, the insistence upon treating her well, though it recognizes, also represses the tendency to regard her position with misgivings. Men make a great effort, by treating a barren wife well, to elicit the praise of others, especially the queen, whose continuous interest is a guarantee that the virtue will be idealized. There are other considerations that reinforce the great concern of a female ruler for peacefulness and good relations. A man who ill-treats his barren wife need expect no reciprocity from her parents, and he has no weapons against them. He cannot demand back his cattle, for failure to have children does not vitiate the cattle exchanges. He cannot even initiate the procedure whereby his parents-in-law will send him a substitute. On the contrary, he must await their pleasure and if they do decide to send a substitute, he must *nyusela* (give cattle), and he may be asked more *manyusalo* than for her sister. But if he has been a good husband and is poor, less may be asked. A man realizes that the virtue of treating a barren wife well is richly rewarded. 542 595

Similarly, a husband whose wife has died prematurely without issue is in the same position: he has no right to demand a substitute or, in default, the return of the *manyusalo*. When he is offered his wife's sister or other suitable substitute, he must hand over cattle for her. It is true that the substitute sets up the house that 'has fallen', but the really important point is that the relationship created by the cattle exchanges should be maintained. A husband must report the death of his wife with an ox; he must call her people to the ceremony ending the mourning period; he must continue his visits as son-in-law; he must always be prepared to help his parents-in-law. All this will not necessarily induce them to give him a substitute; and if he neglects these things, the potential right to such substitute is not effaced. On the other hand, his parents-in-law must continue to honour him when he visits, they must still send him beer, they must acknowledge relationship with him. If they do not do these things, if they spread tales that he has been the cause of the death of their daughter, the relationship may be broken; and consequently the claim to a substitute, non-existent before, now is given recognition. If they value the link broken by their conduct they must reforge it by sending a substitute; if they do not, their action has already caused it to snap 587 768

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CHAPTER XII

THE PURSUIT OF HEALTH

Anatomical conceptions in relation to the science of drugs and of healing—cardinal categories of the causation of disease—training for the medical profession—divinatory dice as a method of diagnosis.

LOVEDU therapy is linked, on the one hand with law, and on the other with medicine, magic, witchcraft, sorcery, and religion. But it is more closely interwoven with these last than with the first. If disease and death are the main objective of witchcraft and sorcery, disease is also the occasion of most religious rites, medicine the means of restoring the health of the human body and law the guarantee of the well-being of the social organism. Law and medicine are both largely concerned with the results of dissension between men. Open strife, which leads to social evils, is examined by the *khwv* and resolved under the guidance of its wisdom; secret malice, which causes death and disease, is diagnosed by the bones and treated by the doctor; but for the detection of the deeds of darkness the *khwv* calls in the aid of the doctor. The *khwv* relies upon public discussion and its genius effects contact and reconciliation between one litigant and another, while the doctor uses private divination and his art inspires the consultant with confidence against his secret enemy. The social psychology of the one is the counterpart of the psycho-therapy of the other. But we must not think of them as essentially different worlds, the one primarily natural and the other primarily supernatural. The medico-magico-religious is to the Lovedu rather a tangible world of mundane arrangements and subject to 'natural' forces than a cosmos, inscrutable in its configuration and governed by 'supernatural' destinies. In truth, Lovedu healing is based to some extent upon observed relations between cause and effect though more largely upon practices and beliefs which, though they will not stand the tests of our science, constitute the psychological therapy of the society. We are far too apt to discount the value of their empirical body of knowledge, instead of using it to construct a sound scientific approach to medicine. We can also do better than scorn as superstitious absurdities those indispensable techniques of medicine which, because our medical profession takes little account of them, enable the charlatan and quack to flourish among us.

To understand Lovedu conceptions of the causation of disease, we must orientate ourselves from their knowledge of human anatomy. It is indeed very meagre. All they know has been gleaned indirectly from the slaughter of cattle and goats, for they practise neither embalming nor dissection of corpses. As a result, though they have names for all the more important organs of the body, they are not always sure of their correct location. Nor have they much idea of physiological function. They know that the stomach and intestines are digestive organs and that the bladder contains urine, but lungs and the diaphragm are vaguely connected with breathing. The womb, ovaries, and testicles are definitely reproductive organs, but in medical practice this function is obscured by the role of an

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[827] internal snake believed to be intimately bound up with fecundity and
842 childbirth. Every one is said to have a snake in his stomach. It is not a real snake, yet it is conceived of as having a head and of being able to
753 crawl up to a man's neck (causing what we call indigestion) and running back again when he coughs. When a person has stomach-ache it is often said, 'The snake is biting,' while dysentery is referred to as 'red' or 'white snake', according to the stage of the disease. The most important function of this snake, and one that forms a common subject of conversa-
842 tion in connection with barrenness, is, however, its reproductive one. It is believed that semen comes from a man's snake; if his snake is 'no good', a child will not be born. The snake of a woman is sometimes identified with the womb and for conception it is necessary that this snake should accept the semen. There are two possibilities which prevent conception: either the snake's head may be wrongly oriented or it may catch up the semen, but spit it out again. In the first case the remedy is to 'turn round' its head by medical treatment, in which very often the womb of a scapegoat is used. In the second case, since the snake rejects the semen unless the bloods of husband and wife agree and the snake of the man may be as much at fault as that of the woman, it is usual to include both husband and wife in treatment for barrenness. If six to nine months elapse after marriage without conception having taken place, steps are at once taken to set the matter right.

826 Though the Lovedu have no knowledge of the circulation of the blood,
753 they assign to it properties which lie at the basis of their medical theory. Blood is so generally believed to be the root of most ills that a Native describing his symptoms always says, 'I am pierced by blood.' Rheumatism, stiffness after exercise, a pain or swelling in any part of the body, is attributed to blood that has collected there or blood which is 'boiling', making the body hot and feverish. Swellings of all kinds, including goitre, are therefore always cupped to get rid of surplus blood, and blood-letting as a cure for headache and other ills is as popular with the Lovedu as it was in Europe not so long ago. The beating of the heart is not
827 believed to be continuous: it is associated with sudden fright and with illness; but, though it is known that often the heart beats loudly when one is not ill, they have no idea why it should do so. Veins contain blood, but go by the same name as sinews and muscles, all of which are believed to give strength to the body. Occasionally, though infrequently, individuals are to be found who have other ideas. Thus David, a Christian who has often worked in towns and has a mind of his own, has his own theory as to the function of the heart, a deduction from his observations on dying fowls. He believes that the heart beats, not to circulate, but to exclude the blood, and the moment the heart stops beating the blood enters it, causing death to the fowl or person.

753 A considerable list of terms for different diseases indicates that distinctions are recognized, but it is easy to be misled into believing that the Natives' knowledge is greater than it really is. Some terms are peculiarly Native without any corresponding category among us, but many, like smallpox, measles, mumps, fever, consumption, migraine, syphilis, epilepsy, show appreciation of causes or symptoms which fit into our scheme of

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821 has been reached), and we were told that in the old days men of import-
527 ance used to come and condole with (*ba cwala*) the chief on such a day, as though to sympathise with her in the frustration of her efforts. There are other holidays associated with rain. On the day after the first rain of the season has fallen no hoeing or fieldwork is to be done. Such a holiday is called *ka-nkki-ntsene* (do not cut me), as if the earth, believed still to be hot, children being broken up by the hoeing. Such a holiday is also observed after the rain charms have 'bitten' the new tassels and first-fruits of the year and when, any time during the summer, rain falls after two or three weeks drought, it is called *mmene* (guest or stranger) and the next day observed as a holiday, for one honours a guest.

766 Wrong burials which stop the rain are righted by the use of *mafugo*
821 medicine and the water obtained by squeezing the undigested stomach
789 contents (*mantsane*) of a sheep down a hole made in the grave with a stick
842 and reaching the body. This is thought to disperse the 'wind' and cool the grave. The flesh of the sheep is eaten without salt. The conception is thus of a grave agitated by ghostly heat and wind, which may be 'laid' by 'cooling', or, as we might say, calming, in the treble sense often of pacifying [the ghost], modifying [the heat], and causing [the wind] to subside. *Mafugo*, the medicine so important in the removal of impediments to rain, has to be obtained from the queen and a specially appointed person is responsible for doling it out in bottles when needed. The office is not conceived to be hereditary, but it has been held by a Mudiga family for some time, being handed down by father to son. When the last official in charge of *mafugo* died, his son was an unmarried man too young for the responsibility of office. Some five years later (1938), when the queen decided that he should assume charge, he pressented his youth, though he then had two children, fearing that after contact with the medicine he might forget to wash his hands before eating and thus be rendered impotent. In this he had the full support of his mother, who prevailed upon the queen to allow an older relative to undertake the work provisionally; but the present position is that, should this old man be away, the heir to the office will have to act. Whether *mafugo* is identical with the rain medicine of the rain-pots is not quite clear; but, whatever its ingredients may be, it is considered extremely dangerous, liable to rob men and women of their fertility, and great care is thus necessary when working with it.

789 Sometimes it is said that 'the country is not right' (*naba a e lage*) and
372 then there is a special ceremony in which all the fires in the country are put out with *mafugo*. No generally recognised set of circumstances lead up to such a line of action, nor is there any idea that the fires are defiled in any way. It is simply looked upon as a method of getting rain when there is drought, resorted to when the divining bones of the doctor declare it to be necessary. People sometimes say, 'Fires are put out to usher in a new year,' but this does not mean that putting out the fires is an annual ceremony, as it is, for instance, among the Pedi. The word 'year' must not be taken literally, just as it does not refer to an abstract period of time in the phrase, 'The year has been infected by *ba Mbuma*', when what is meant is that the rain charms have 'weakened' (*ba Mbuma*). In this ceremony

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girls below the age of puberty are sent to draw water for the *mufugo* which 789
the queen's rain-doctor prepares for the occasion, and after a day or two, 372
when the medicine froths up (*ha pukula*), boys are sent with a horn of *mufugo* and a brush of *bhudi* creeper (*Adenia gummifera*) to every village [344]
in the land. First they heat medicine on the fire of the men's courtyard and thereafter on the threshold and hearth of every hut. The ashes are cleared away by an old woman, for so dangerous is the medicine used [342]
that any man, woman, or child entering the hut before it has been smeared with dung will *khume* and be unable to have children. A new fire is kindled in the men's courtyard, whence each woman fetches a brand for her own hut, for it is taboo to kindle a fire from any other. In return for her firebrand, each woman gives the men stamped mealies or groundnuts, which they eat in the *khuvo*. Each married man in turn must give something to the boys who have brought *mufugo*, usually 1*s.* or a fowl (in the old days an arrow or mealies), but often also tobacco or other gifts for, as '*mufugo* does not choose' (*mufugo a u khethe*), anything may be given. Each boy must give 1*s.* or a fowl to the keeper of *mufugo*, keeping the rest as a reward for his labours. It is taboo to work in the fields on the day after *mufugo*. In 1927 some boys, too lazy to fetch the medicine, took matters into their own hands and made a mixture of ash and water, which they used in their rounds. They were discovered and made to pay five head of cattle each and the ceremony had to be performed again.

When the divining bones diagnose drought as due to ancestors, steps 821
have to be taken for a sacrifice at an ancestral grave. Any one of the 769
close relatives of the queen can cause drought: sometimes it is the 782
queen's mother Lenkhali, buried at Khada; sometimes it is Mugodo's sister, buried at Mudzinoni; in 1925–6 it was Mulogwane, the queen's brother, who complained that he was buried in the Christian cemetery, instead of in the shade of the forest. A sacrifice for rain will take place only after it has become clear that, in spite of steps taken to *lowa* the queen by means of money or dancing, she fails by her ordinary methods to cause the rain to fall.

January, 1938, was hot and dry. Several headmen had been to *lowa*, 787
but no rain fell. Important district heads and councillors thus began to 643
'travel about, having the bones thrown', to discover the cause, while the 789
queen herself also sent messengers to various well-known diviners. The reply came, 'Seek ye a black sheep. Go with it to show your care for the spirits and you shall see that it will rain nicely.' As is so often the case, no indication was given of the cause of their complaint; the suggestion as to the practical measures to be taken and the identity of the troublesome spirits were quite sufficient. The queen, however, remained inactive; it was not for her to take the initiative till her people humbly begged her to do so. On February 11th three of the most important men at the capital approached her, saying, 'People are crying. Help us.' Thereupon she impatiently replied, 'People tire me. The year was well established, but they have "weakened" (*ha fighela*) it. They want me to be troubled.' She implied that she had safeguarded the year, but that the people themselves, by breaking rain taboos and by their evil works and witchcraft, had undermined that safeguard. When the councillors continued

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say, equally divided between the ancestors and the rain queen. And it is the also who controls, in the interest of social well-being, that half of the cosmic order upon which men's life and happiness are conceived most vitally to depend. This dependence upon her and the moral imperatives of the kinship obligations between her and her subjects are the main factors conditioning the Lovedu outlook upon the world and upon society. Their ritual ideology, linking the queen's mystical powers to the welfare of society, expresses their most important conceptions of the ordering of the natural world; their kinship ideology, incorporated into the political system and converting political into moral obligations, provides the main principles governing men's relations to one another. Agreement and mutual adjustment between individuals become ultimate values which have an overriding validity in determining the rights and duties of man to man. The Lovedu political pattern follows that of the centralized states of the South Bantu; yet it is not force but reciprocity, not administrative machinery but ties of sentiment, not inflexible rules but agreement, that are the great principles of social and political obligation. 643 772 182 [542]

Myths and Origins

The Lovedu are not given to speculation about first beginnings or final causes. There is no world-dawn or far-off mythical event when the order of nature and of society was irrevocably instituted. There is not even a sky-god to account for lightning and thunder or to furnish men with an explanation of stellar phenomena, such as the movement of heavenly bodies. Some of the larger stars are named, for example the Pleiades which are associated with hoeing time, but the association seems to be a vestige diffused from another culture and has no real significance, whether pragmatic or mystical. A vague, hardly ever invoked myth attributes the creation of the world and man to *Khuzwane* who left his footprints on certain rocks in the north when they were still new and soft. But the act of creation, like *Khuzwane* himself, is too remote, too unrelated to present realities, to be of any concern to men; and they find no place in, nor do they in any way influence, the Lovedu philosophy of the cosmos or of society. The Lovedu apparently feel the need to posit a first or final cause, but such a cause has not continued to operate as a force. An inexplicable affliction such as sterility appears sometimes to be attributed to *Mudimo*, the creator-god of the Sotho, who, according to Lovedu thought, is identical with *Khuzwane*; but *Mudimo* in this context is to be equated with a conditional destiny, and thus does not imply belief in fatalism since the course of events can be deflected by man-made medicines. Nor is there any supplication of the creator, for the Lovedu do not conceive of any link between their ancestor spirits and the creator: *Khuzwane* cannot be approached through the ancestors. 773 [821] 773 776 [842]

Thus origins of the cosmic order and wonders of celestial phenomena do not exercise the Lovedu mind. When Simeon, a close relative of the queen, whom we had interested in these things, asked the old men about them, 772 821

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513 If a wife refuses cohabitation, there is usually a good reason, but a reason that has nothing to do with sexual incompatibility. The husband concerned will perhaps solicit the aid of the old women; but never will he dare say that he can go elsewhere for his pleasure, for she has equal power to retaliate in that manner. The Lovedu know
533 of the belief of other tribes that continued sexual intercourse after
543 pregnancy builds up the child forming in the womb. They also continue intercourse, but they do not stress, and even deny, that semen builds up the foetus. It is worth noting that sexual intercourse at a late stage of pregnancy (after the seventh month) is considered not quite correct, and this ideal is reflected in the anger of the midwives, who may reprimand the husband if they find signs, as they think, of his semen on the new-born infant. Nor is the sexual act brought into relation with so many special occasions as elsewhere; it has not to any extent been institutionalized in connexion with dangerous or new enterprises, as is the case among the Shangana-Tonga in their midst. Full coitus is taboo while a mother suckles her child; the milk of the new pregnancy will poison the child, but a child is not sent away when sexual relations are
542 resumed. Even the theme of fertility is handled with moderation or submerged under a mass of ritual. A wife is not echoed on her first pregnancy and, in those ceremonies that are directed to fertility, this motive is kept far in the background. Likewise, barrenness in a woman is not regarded as entitling a man to nullify his marriage and, when a substitute is sent, the children are presumed to be, not the children of the barren wife, but of the substitute. The conception of 'buying a womb' is negatived by the fact that full *emoyoolo* is given for the substitute, who is not subservient to, but independent of, the barren wife. These arrangements also imply that barrenness is not a great humiliation.
537 A married woman is theoretically denied the right of having children if her husband is impotent or absents himself for years. In practice, 'picking up children in the veld' is realistically tolerated, but it must be done surreptitiously, for the custom in other tribes, whereby the husband appoints a 'bull', is not approved. A wife can never be lent to another, for, as the proverb runs, 'About clothes you may say, "Lend them to me," but never about a woman' (*ng'ndiwani gi o gwe, wandile a wa ng'ndiwe*).

Marital fidelity is not a matter of great importance; a father will reprimand his adulterous son, but only because in his pursuit of other women, he fails in his duty to look after his wife—that is the main thing in marriage. Similarly a wife's adultery can never be the cause of divorce; but it must be judicious; it must not offend the proprieties. No doubt a man has greater opportunities than a woman and before marriage one may speak of a double standard of morality, but after marriage the differences are small. Both a husband and a wife can administer medicines to the other partner, making extra-marital irregularities very dangerous to health. A wife during pregnancy by a lover is also a grave danger to her husband. On the whole, the remarkable thing is, not that there is marital infidelity, but that there is so little of it. After all, a man may not 'mix' his wives; he cannot go from the one to the other; he cannot bring

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753 constitute an exhaustive list, and their application extends over a wide field, which we might call the magico-religious.

Mawali (shadow) is conceived of as an evil power, but of its many properties the most emphasized is the property of aggravating disease. It is as if certain real evils cast a shadow which may infect those upon which it falls. If they are normal, healthy people, generally speaking they suffer no discomfort themselves, but they may act as carriers of the shadow, and by contact with others, especially those who are ill, they may transmit the evil as if they were intermediary hosts, weakening the patient and aggravating his illness. The host may transmit the shadow to both persons and things. A person who has attended a funeral or who has lost a close relative is infected by the shadow of death. Twins have
[§45] such great shadow that if they come near a sick person he will die: hence twins must be killed and are still generally killed, despite European law and the example of Christians to whom grown-up twins no specific evil can be attributed. A woman who has had a miscarriage has *mawali*.
[§43] Pregnancy up to but not after the end of the third month infects a woman with *mawali*, for a clear distinction is drawn between the two stages of pregnancy: before the end of the third month the foetus is amorphous, not a human being; after it, the foetus takes human form, the woman 'has grown', and a miscarriage is regarded as a death, so that people come to condole and there is a mourning period ended by the [removal of] 'dirt' rite (*Ishizhila*), just as for the most important adult. After childbirth a woman has *mawali*, but this is not the reason for her isolation. She remains in the hut till her child is strengthened, lest she bring to it shadows from outside. Girls over puberty and non-suckling, childbearing women, though having no definite *mawali*, are a potential source of danger to the sick, and men have not infrequently refused to allow us to wash their wounds with water drawn by such women. It is not at all clear, however, whether it is menstruation that is feared or the danger of possible early pregnancy. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife brings about a
[§32 mild form of *mawali*; hence, if a very young child is ill, husband and wife
84] sometimes abstain from intercourse. *Mawali* from sexual intercourse is believed to affect the meat of slaughtered cattle or goats unless certain precautions are taken, and causes stomach trouble to those who partake of it. Men who are sleeping with their wives are therefore not allowed to approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced or to help skin it without first smearing their hands with leaves of *tlezhi* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) or other medicine. Here again, so it seems, the danger is not the actual intercourse, but the possibility of an unformed foetus in the womb. Thus, in the early stages of his wife's pregnancy, Nagambi was forbidden to approach slaughtered animals, but later, when pregnancy was advanced, the restriction fell away, even though he was still cohabiting with his wife.

753 A person whose upper teeth appear before the lower or whose molars
826 appear first is full of *mawali* and should be killed. In the area surrounding the royal village every child is brought to the queen for examination on the appearance of its first teeth. The mother carries with her a small basket of eleusine and, if all is well, it is said that the child has 'danced

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783 not a real or mystical shadow in our sense of the term, but an evil and con-
753 tagious force conceptualized, on the analogy of a shadow, as an invisible counterpart of certain conditions. The sources of 'shadow' are such conditions or events as death, activities connected with human reproduction, including sex intercourse, the early stages of pregnancy, birth of twins, miscarriage (regarded as death), women during confinement, irregular appearance of the teeth, e.g. upper incisor before lower or molar before incisor. 'Shadow' is accordingly connected with many of the same kind of irregularities as generate 'heat', but it appears to be differentiated as an independent concept for the purpose of dealing with its effects on the health of people who are peculiarly susceptible to defilement.

783 Precautions are taken to protect the sick against the influence of *muridi*.
758 A sick person is smeared with medicines or quarantined like a new-born child by means of a medicated stick placed across the entrance to his hut to
834 warn off carriers of 'shadow' and counteract the 'shadow' of anyone unaware of his condition. If there is an epidemic in a village and the general vitality and resistance consequently are lowered, people may be told to refrain from sex intercourse lest *muridi* make the illness worse. In the smallpox epidemic of 1938 people cohabiting were said to have the disease in a worse form than others. When a child is ill, its parents refrain from sex intercourse. A warrior who slept with his wife the night before battle would be easy prey to the enemy. A man sleeping with his wife may not approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced nor help skin it without first smearing his hands with (usually cooling) medicine, lest *muridi* affect the meat and cause stomach trouble (*makhuma*) to those eating it.
[826] Children whose teeth appear irregularly (*leskega*) are full of *muridi* and were killed in the old days. But today they are treated by a doctor and have to be careful never to bite others, for the wound will not heal and there is always difficulty in obtaining the necessary antidote, namely, scrapings from the teeth of the *leskega*. Cross-roads and river fords are secondary
[843] sources of *muridi* since the 'shadow' carried by unsuspecting hoets infects these places. For this reason pregnant women are not supposed to go on long journeys from home.

783 *Muridi* is a much more limited concept than 'heat'; it is invoked mainly
753 to account for the aggravation of illness or the susceptibility to illness or other injury of persons contacting defilement. It does not affect the country generally, and it furnishes an alternative to witchcraft as an explanation of the aggravation of ailments or the failure of illnesses to yield to ordinary remedies.

Muridi in a more virulent form is called *leridi* (ominous or menacing shadow), which infects a warrior who has killed an enemy and who is in grave danger of becoming mad or very quarrelsome unless purified. An allied concept is that of *letala* (sinister track) derived from the idea that, if a woman is cohabiting with two men one of whom gets ill, the track of the other, should he approach near or within earshot of the sick person, will

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757 end of the horn being closed by a piece of beeswax, in which a small hole can be made when the mouth is applied for suction. Vein-cutting, however, requires greater skill, though even this operation is outside the province of the diviner. A vein on the back of the hand or on the instep is lifted with an awl and cut with a piece of iron or a razor blade. When enough blood has run out, cold water is applied and the cut held tightly with the fingers to stop the bleeding. This is a common treatment for illness believed to be due to unwanted blood in the body.

304 Scarification, except in the mutual inoculation and blood mixing of
757 husband and wife prior to their first sexual intercourse after marriage and after the death or miscarriage of a child, is a treatment that is directed less at the evils of blood than towards a strengthening of the body or part of the body by the insertion of medicine. It is used in curing headache, for
[752] sprains and broken limbs, and for all 'strengthenings', such as that prior to taking a child out of the hut for the first time or the 'fixing' of one's body against witches. For general strengthenings, incisions are made on all the joints and on other parts of the body, such as head and neck depression, which are considered important. Scarification is, with the drinking of medicine or eating of powders, quite the most common form of medical treatment; it is used in the home as much as by diviners and forms part of many other treatments, such as the vapour bath. By far the most
751 interesting form of scarification is, however, '*ku thwala*' (vaccination) against smallpox in which matter from the pustules of affected persons, mixed with other medicines, is inoculated to introduce the disease in a mild form. It is done on the dorsal side of the wrist or on the forehead, a pattern which supports the claim that it was known prior to the advent of the European; moreover, the ingredients of the serum used by Euro-
[771] peans are not known. Possibly the treatment was borrowed from Arabs, who were the first to study smallpox and measles. The old method was
[144] still widely practised in the 1938 smallpox epidemic, for, though it was realized that it 'called' the disease instead of curing it, people noted that, despite European vaccination, there was still much illness.

757 Steaming and the vapour bath also form part of the practical elements in Lovedu medicine. There are various forms of steaming and smoking, all of which go by the same term. To 'loosen' a cough, chips of a certain
[783] root may be placed in a pipe with a live coal and smoked; to purify a person after a death, chips are charred on a potsherd and the smoke
[344] inhaled through a reed; before being taken out of the hut, a new-born child is held naked in the smoke of burning chips or root and bark; boils and other swellings are brought to a head by the application of the steam of boiling roots. To cure fever or general weakness of the body after an illness and for purification of husband and wife after the death of a child the procedure is more complicated. Red-hot stones are put into a large pot of medicated water and when it bubbles and boils the patient, naked except for a cloth passed between the legs, is covered with a blanket and steamed. After much spluttering and shouting, he is taken out, sprinkled or washed down with cold water and then either scarified on the joints or subjected to *ku kato*—that is, a river stone is pressed on the joints and is later taken back to the river. This treatment is considered too drastic

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753 constitute an exhaustive list, and their application extends over a wide field, which we might call the magico-religious.

Murudi (shadow) is conceived of as an evil power, but of its many properties the most emphasized is the property of aggravating disease. It is as if certain real evils cast a shadow which may infect those upon which it falls. If they are normal, healthy people, generally speaking they suffer no discomfort themselves, but they may act as carriers of the shadow, and by contact with others, especially those who are ill, they may transmit the evil as if they were intermediary hosts, weakening the patient and aggravating his illness. The host may transmit the shadow to both persons and things. A person who has attended a funeral or who has lost a close relative is infected by the shadow of death. Twins have [845] such great shadow that if they come near a sick person he will die; hence twins must be killed and are still generally killed, despite European law and the example of Christians to whose grown-up twins no specific evil can be attributed. A woman who has had a miscarriage has *muridi*. [843] Pregnancy up to but not after the end of the third month infects a woman with *muridi*, for a clear distinction is drawn between the two stages of pregnancy: before the end of the third month the foetus is amorphous, not a human being; after it, the foetus takes human form, the woman 'has grown', and a miscarriage is regarded as a death, so that people come to condole and there is a mourning period ended by the [removal of] 'dirt' rite (*khitshila*), just as for the most important adult. After childbirth a woman has *muridi*, but this is not the reason for her isolation. She remains in the hut till her child is strengthened, lest she bring to it shadows from outside. Girls over puberty and non-suckling, childbearing women, though having no definite *muridi*, are a potential source of danger to the sick, and men have not infrequently refused to allow us to wash their wounds with water drawn by such women. It is not at all clear, however, whether it is menstruation that is feared or the danger of possible early pregnancy. Sexual intercourse between husband and wife brings about a [832 843] mild form of *muridi*; hence, if a very young child is ill, husband and wife sometimes abstain from intercourse. *Muridi* from sexual intercourse is believed to affect the meat of slaughtered cattle or goats unless certain precautions are taken, and causes stomach trouble to those who partake of it. Men who are sleeping with their wives are therefore not allowed to approach a slaughtered animal before its stomach has been pierced or to help skin it without first smearing their hands with leaves of *thccbe* (*Amaranthus Thunbergi*) or other medicine. Here again, so it seems, the danger is not the actual intercourse, but the possibility of an unformed foetus in the womb. Thus, in the early stages of his wife's pregnancy, Nagambi was forbidden to approach slaughtered animals, but later, when pregnancy was advanced, the restriction fell away, even though he was still cohabiting with his wife.

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against 754
sorcery: when the doctor made Nagambi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *khiléso* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*hu phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they 782
stand up (*ɔa tmt*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. 833
Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain 753
circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*levoya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*hu gɔba*). The *levoya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *levoya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Pheduli, whose wife's death was attributed to *levoya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *levoya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstruating woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafa*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafa*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *ɖere* or *vulwɛdɛ vya vasadi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 30 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual [845 •
intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose 847
child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *ɖere*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Ɖere is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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754 *madabi*.[1] A woman ran away from her husband to live with another.
789 Whenever she was cooking or doing her household duties at her new home, monkeys and other animals appeared at the village till, frightened out of her wits, she ran back to her first husband. *Madabi* are often sent [845] in connexion with childbirth. Sometimes the sending of *madabi* is looked upon as witchcraft. Malaji changed the sex of Muhale's daughter so as to make the birth difficult each time she was about to bear a child, because the child was his, but the girl no longer loved him. We were not allowed into the hut, but the midwives, whom we knew well, testified to a real change, though probably because certain types of difficult birth are conventionally so explained. Eventually the birth took place, but shortly afterwards the baby was dead. This was considered to be witchcraft, the case was brought to court, and a large fine imposed. Only the doctor who used *madabi* can undo or reverse its power by *hu dabekulla*, but other doctors may, if there has been any injury, heal it with medicines.

789 A practice similar to *madabi*, but differing from it in object is *maḑilebɔ*. At the time of the Swazi raids, Raŋwagu, instead of hiding in the forests, put his faith in *maḑilebɔ* (marvel, wonder). When the enemy came, his village turned into water and they could not find his cattle, though they heard their lowing. Masia, who was wanted by the police during the whole period of our investigation, was able, when chased by them, to disappear even in the open; he would hang like a bat on a plough to look just like a spanner. When eventually he was arrested, he averred, and many people agreed, that it was because he was tired.

Khidɔba is a technique used against thieves and it is both public and legitimate. Some kinds of *khidɔba* are known as a home remedy; some are obtained from doctors. By means of medicine used on *ledzigcri* grass [824] (*Hyparrhenia Tamba*), one can cause a severe and painful itching in the finger of the thief which may compel him to confess. Likewise, by *hu dɔba*, a stolen goat may be made to cry out in the thief's belly, as happened in a recent case, probably of compulsion neurosis, in which bleating was taken as conclusive proof of his guilt. Another method of *hu dɔba* causes the eyes of the thief to protrude till they fall out on to his stomach; if his mother then cries on seeing him, he may die. *Khidɔba* strikes the thief even when he hides or sells the stolen goods. Besides these measures, taken to bring a thief to book after the theft, one may by anticipation pro- [824] tect one's property by means of a piece of *leṭaṭe* rush (*Mariscus sp.*) split at one end to resemble the mouth of a snake and smeared with coloured medicines. When placed at the hut entrance or on the border of your field, it turns into a snake and bars the entry or exit of a thief. A doctor we knew used to have serious talks with his son about the fortune he would make if he knew this medicine, especially in Johannesburg, where theft is common and victims pay high prices. The only recognized cure

[1] The word comes from *dalo* plus *inbi*; *dalo* (well being), is a noun from *hu lala* (to lie down, to be peaceful), and *inbi* means bad. *Dabi* should be calamity, but it is used only in the sense of excessive rain (causing evil). The plural, *madabi*, means misfortune or pain or disease legitimately 'sent'. The verb is *hu dabeha*, legitimately to send misfortune, and its converse, *hu dabekulla*, means to neutralise or remove the effects of *madabi*.

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cause the latter to die by aggravating his illness. Similarly a man's mistress must avoid coming near the hut of his wife when she is ill or in childbirth, lest the mistress's sinister track endanger the life of the wife. 783 753

Makhuma (from *ku khuma*, to mix) is a concept which uses the analogy of contamination by mixture or contact to account for physical weakening, wasting away or enfeeblement (*hu figchela*). The situations that constitute the chief source of *makhuma* are critical transitions in the life of the individual as well as serious crises such as severe illnesses. The evil contaminates or infects the person who has undergone the change or who, in the case of death, comes into contact with its baneful influence. He seems to suffer from loss of vitality, or to become dislocated because of the change in his condition.

The measures taken to combat *makhuma* are in the first instance preventive. Strengthening medicines are administered or inoculated to fortify the individual by anticipation; thereafter, under isolating conditions that are gradually relaxed, an adjustment is made to the new situation. Thus novices in the various initiations are medically treated in anticipation of their susceptibility to *khuma* on entering their new condition. Babies are fortified (*ku thuwa*, to be helped) by scarification and steaming before they leave the hut of confinement; kin and other inmates of the village must after a death be readjusted by means of medicines and other treatment to the change caused by the death lest they *khuma*. *Makhuma* also affects possessed people who fail to use medicine with the first-fruits. A man will *khuma* if he cohabits with a woman after the death of her child unless she has first been medically purified, and she must also be careful not to give food to other children before treatment lest they get ill and die. If one baby dies, any illness its successor may have is liable to be diagnosed as due to *makhuma*. Even cattle may *khuma* after a death in the village or if a woman enters the cattle fold. 751 783 [304 846] [768]

By logical extension and the invocation of a further series of presuppositions the concept is applied to the bones of a diviner, which are liable to *khuma* (lose their diagnostic powers) every month—they are said to 'see their moons'—or when used to divine about a death, and must be washed in medicine before being used again. Similarly the queen's rain-medicine will *khuma* unless given the first termites and first-fruits, or when people neglect observances connected with the burial of those who are 'hot'. 783 787 789

The evils differently conceptualized in the notions of 'heat', *makhuma* and 'shadow' have this in common: they are all instances of a ritual impurity, generated by certain states or conditions, not because of their morally reprehensible nature but because of their abnormality or their relation to reproductive processes or critical changes in life. 'Heat' and 'shadow' appear to be different aspects of the same kind of ritual impurity, but 'shadow' is dangerous only to someone whose resistance is low because of illness or immaturity, while 'heat' may have deleterious effects not only on healthy people but on natural phenomena, on ancestor spirits, and on 783

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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense 581
marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the 837
muḑavu institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of completely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the purposes of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suckling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried people who have their lovers (*vaḑavu*). Nevertheless, a European finds it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grandmothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our preferences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should as often as not be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient 831
of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their 848
spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the 684
other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the *vyali*) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Tonga. The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men, but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy and was proudly worn by her younger sister; if not, the girl's people had to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity 831
be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. 848
Girls are still examined, especially at the *khɔba*, but the matter is private; 847
and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sins 753
of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*ḑerc* or *vulweḑc vya vasadi*). A man gets *ḑerc* from intercourse with a woman who has had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death from *ḑerc* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter. 573

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said that his father treated him as an outcast in order to deceive the 643
people. Khashani was, however, given ritual precedence and in this as 578
well as in the fact that it was the line of Malegugu, great son of Mugɔdɔ, 173
which provided the 'husbands' of the last two queens, we may see perhaps an attempt to compensate the great son and retain his allegiance. The pattern of antagonism to the true heir continued to be followed by the queens. Mugɔdɔ was outcast from the capital, Mujaji I was born in despised Lekhwareni, and Mujaji II and III were expelled from the country.

The choice of the heir among the kings is represented as exercised by 643
them personally; he who must raise the heir to the queens is chosen by 644
an inner, secret 'council' of relatives. We cannot describe its membership by saying that one is a sister, the other a brother, and so on; each is related to the chief in a dozen ways and their pre-eminence in the royal 'councils' derives from complicated inter-relationships, prestige, sagacity, and loyalty as well as institutionalized arrangements.

The accession of queens has raised new problems of succession. The heir apparent is theoretically prohibited from having children before she ascends, and, when she ascends, her powers of bearing children may be exhausted. This is a simple statement of a much more complicated situation, but suffice it to add that, ideally, should the queen or, if she is barren, her wife who is chosen to bear the heir, have male issue, the child has either to be killed or to be excluded by a mechanism with strong [847]
social or ritual sanctions—namely, the opening of the door. Mujaji I's son was killed, so it is said; but the uterine brother of Mujaji III was allowed to live and become a great councillor. Another problem is the exclusion from power of the 'husband' of the queen. Queens may not marry, but the physiological father of their children may be a councillor, as he was in the reign of Mujaji III, and it is essential that he should be a close relative. To support such arrangements in a patrilineal society is one of the functions of the 'opening of the door'. It also confirms choices made by the inner 'council', visibly and publicly demonstrates the will of the ancestors, enforces loyalty to all relatives of the royal house any one of whom may become chief, and unmistakably points out to whose hands the rain secrets have been entrusted.

The quarrels and conflicts leading to the flight of the heir are much 643
stressed in tradition; they are nothing if not realistic, and one is often in 578
doubt whether they are genuine or merely staged conflicts. Leakhali and 687
her brother, together with Leakhali's daughter, Mujaji III, were genuinely 644
expelled. Leakhali had her own village and her own wives and was proud and independent; she and her brother objected to the influence of a doctor who had come to cure Mujaji II of her barrenness, but stayed to be her lover. After a public insult to this doctor in the presence of the queen at a beer-party at Leakhali's village, the queen sent her wife the calabash and firebrand. Leakhali and her brother fled, and in exile Mujaji III was taught by her mother's brother, thus fulfilling, it is said, the law that the heir must be taught by her maternal uncle. The situation appears to be re-enacted to-day, with this difference, that it is the queen's own daughter who, after her lover's quarrel with a great councillor, fled

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of the district head would have been unnecessary; but very frequently he acts as *mukhumedi* in these cases. 627 691

Hu khumclwa is the only proper initial procedure in cases of damage to crops. The owner of the cattle is called to see the damage, begs pardon with a goat, and is told to strengthen his cattle kraal. If depredations continue, he may be taken to the *khɔrɔ*. To omit the preliminary procedure of *hu khumclwa* is not necessarily fatal, but is regarded as being revengeful and nothing is abhorred more than revenge. If the man whose crops are damaged refuses reconciliation and makes the owner of the cattle 'pay' instead of allowing *hu khumclwa*, the owner will, it is said, seek an opportunity to revenge himself, and the saying that applies is: 'It is the blow that follows, not the first blow, that hurts.' The saying is, however, of general application and is invoked in regard to any injury or wrong. Practice differs in the various districts as regards *hu khumelwa* for damage to crops, and when a man is resident in one district and has his fields in another, very interesting conflicts of jurisdiction and law sometimes occur, but we cannot stop to consider them.

After formal complaint—that is, after a case is 'in the *khɔrɔ*'—*hu khumclwa* may, according to the circumstances, either end the matter or be treated as a confession of guilt (*duma muladu*) by plaintiff or *khɔrɔ*. *Duma muladu* is a term used also outside the *khɔrɔ*. If the owner of cattle continues to be careless after several warnings, he may find that his goat of reconciliation will be regarded, not as a goat of begging pardon, but as a confession of guilt, and the victim will exact what he considers to be the real damage. To accept pardon stops *khɔrɔ* proceedings, and if after *duma muladu* the culprit makes good what the victim demands there also can be no *khɔrɔ* trial; but if he does not, the offer of pardon is a confession, not conceived as having been made without prejudice, but admissible in evidence. More often *duma muladu* refers to a goat which the defendant offers in the *khɔrɔ* in settlement and apology. The circumstances, especially the attitude of the plaintiff and the previous history of the case, will then determine whether the matter ends there. The *khɔrɔ* may say, 'This is your *duma muladu*; now pay the ox which in our [or the plaintiff's] opinion fits the offence.'

Examples of *duma muladu* are difficult to give as a long history is involved and, to understand them, we should have to refer to details of the culture which are not dealt with in this book. But it may be possible to simplify for presentation here the case of *Mabula* v. *Magɔsha*, though it lasted six months in the *khɔrɔ* of the capital alone. These two women were co-wives of Khidai and were entangled in one of those polygons of jealousies arising in polygyny which are the counterpart of the eternal triangles of our monogamy. The co-wives quarrelled and fought about their extra-marital lovers, and Magɔsha bit Mabula on the lip. When the wound refused to yield to treatment it was said to be due to the 'bad teeth' of Magɔsha, who, it was suspected, must be a *leshɛga*, a person who had been allowed to live though her upper teeth had appeared before the lower. Having vainly appealed to her husband to order Magɔsha's teeth to be scraped for medicine, Mabula complained to her parents. After much manœuvring in order to avoid being drawn into the conflict, [847 826]

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against 754
sorcery: when the doctor made Nagambi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *khileso* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*hu phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they 782
stand up (*va ɛmɛ*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. 833
Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain 753
circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*levoya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*hu gɔba*). The *levoya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *levoya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Pheduli, whose wife's death was attributed to *levoya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *levoya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstruating woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafa*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafa*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *ɖɛre* or *vulwɛdɛ vya vasadi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 30 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose [845
child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless 847
cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *ɖɛre*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Ɖɛre is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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833 753 *ḍere* if the circumstances of the personal relations of the patient justify such a diagnosis. People thought that Maḍaradani's cough was *ḍere*, but when he insisted that he had no lovers it was diagnosed as *khileso*; Mulada's debility was probably due to chronic malaria, but his friends suspected that he had taken no precautionary measures before resuming co-habitation with his wife, who had miscarried after seven months. *Ḍere* is distinguished from *lefiha* (consumption) by its rapid course and the fact that *lefiha* (*hu fiha*, to breathe) is not caused by women. *Ḍere* [847] can be cured only in its earliest stages, an ingredient of the medicine being a portion of the abortion or, in the case of intercourse with a woman who has lost a child, can be prevented by steaming and mutual inoculation. The prevalence of *ḍere* suggests that abortions are common and that effective abortifacients are in general use. In reality, however, innocent women are accused as soon as a lover falls ill, and rather than be thought murderers, they often give him medicine purporting to be a portion of the abortion mixed with sand to be used as a cure.

753 769 Disease and healing are in the last resort connected with the guardianship of the ancestors. If they are annoyed and relax their vigilance, their descendants may be rendered susceptible to disease, or medicines used cannot have their full effect. Ancestors, however, do not merely ward off disease or assist cure; they also actively cause illness. The crying all day of a baby may be due to the spirit of a grandfather pinching it in order that it should be given his name; sore eyes in children are often, and in adults sometimes, attributed to ancestors; barrenness or difficult birth is laid at their door, and sometimes they seize the whole body of a person because they wish to 'possess' him. But ancestors never cause death: even if at first an illness is said to be due to them, should death supervene, it is attributed to witches. Complaints of living relatives, especially of the father's sister, may also cause illness.

754 By far the most important of all causes of ill-health, however, is the evil work of witches and sorcerers. Certain illnesses, such as *khileso*, are characteristic of sorcery and can be contracted in no other manner. But any disease may be caused by witchcraft and witches may avail themselves of the opportunity offered by any minor illness to enter and aggravate it. Diagnosis depends on the course of the illness. Dysentery is regarded as due to natural causes; but should it not respond to treatment or should the patient suspect an enemy, a witch will be implicated. During the 1938 smallpox epidemic, the head of a district which was more hardly hit than its neighbours called a meeting of residents. Men declared, 'Smallpox kills people here; they merely get ill and recover elsewhere. There is a witch in our midst.' Money was collected, three men sent to a diviner, and, in the end, two women were accused. A specialized cause of illness is legitimate vengeance-magic used against theft and called *khidɔba*, which makes the finger of the thief swell up or the stolen goat bleat in his belly.

753 It must not be imagined that the Lovedu do not recognize a large number of diseases as natural. Many illnesses 'just come'. Such are all minor ailments like coughs, colds, stomach disorders, and also other more serious diseases like dysentery and malaria. Too much beer is

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The repercussions of the Christian outlook in the tribe as a whole may be referred to briefly. The tendencies are changing because of the recent re-absorption of Christians into the tribe, but the main results to-day are still those coming from the segregated Christians. Christian holidays have to some extent become part of the life of the tribe. Sunday is, as far as agriculture and building operations are concerned, a day of rest, but, for this reason, it is set aside specially for public business, such as tribal gatherings and *khɔrɔ* trials; and one result is that Christians, even if their moralizing and attempts to improve law and procedure were better tolerated, are excluded from participation. People occasionally have 'beer of Christmas' or 'New Year'. Twin murders can no longer be reported to the queen, as there is danger of implicating her, and Christian women, more interested in the pregnancy, legitimate or otherwise, of their friends, threaten to take action if they suspect a murder. But the effect is unsuspectedly complicated: a pagan mother who under pressure allows her twins to live may be refused assistance by her husband's mother, and often reacts by underfeeding them in order to starve them to death; and much greater secrecy is maintained. In 1923, after a few convictions in the European courts, the queen forbade the killing of twins and ordered births to be reported to the mission station; but the rule became a dead letter as soon as it could be safely circumvented.

Real or pretended sensitiveness among pagans to Christian values has had some effects. Not only do pagans ascribe their misfortunes to disregard of duties fostered by the example of the Christians, but they advance Christian values as excuses for not fulfilling their own obligations. They may condemn the Christian intrusion as causing drought or disobedience, but they may justify their own doubtful behaviour upon principles of Christian ethics. In 1937, for instance, Mashishimali refused to accept a *gɔsha* dance on the ground that his wife's brother, who lived in the village, was a Christian, but the real reason was self-interest and unwillingness to kill a beast and to burden himself with feeding the dancers. For a similar reason, an old woman, nominally a Christian, refused to allow her son to accommodate the dancers, but the reason she advanced was the pagan associations of the drums. Slackness in obeying the queen is ascribed to the example of the Christians, who break taboos with impunity and escape their obligations as messengers of the *khɔrɔ* by declaring that the work is un-Christian.

At one time Christians could terrify pagans by predicting eclipses and locust invasions, visitations which they ascribed to the obstinacy of the pagans in refusing to accept the gospel; this weapon is useless to-day, but the Christian hell causes some uneasiness of conscience and repressed fear, especially evident in dreams and during illness. There are death-bed conversions, and the evangelist is sometimes anxiously called to interpret alarming dreams. Masilu, a budding doctor still learning the bones, which had been discarded by a Christian relative, suffered from a persistent illness. While bed-ridden he dreamt that he had ascended a great ladder half-way to heaven and came to a luxuriant country. There he saw two roads, but he was stopped by the guardian of the gate to which one of these roads led, and told to take the left-hand road going to the

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foundation of happy marriage. It is an attitude inculcated by the immense 581
marriage ceremonial, and it must be understood in its total complex within the social structure. Sexual adventures and compatibilities may be sought outside the marriage relationships. And so we have the 837
mudavu institution, a realistic concession to the impossibility of completely conditioning so primeval a force as sexual attraction to the purposes of the social structure; it also meets the difficulty of the long suckling period. As might be expected, it is married rather than unmarried people who have their lovers (*vadavu*). Nevertheless, a European finds it difficult to understand that old women so frequently have liaisons with young married men and that these men so frequently seek their adventures with women who might well be their mothers or grandmothers. But in the Lovedu system it is not unnatural that our preferences and our conceptions of sexual attraction should as often as not be completely reversed.

The ideal for girlhood is chastity, but the society is rather impatient 831
of both men and women who spy upon the love affairs of their 848
spouses. These affairs are not matters to be talked about; but, on the other hand, despite the mocking songs sung on special occasions (the 684
vyali) about deflowered girls, the society has a humane outlook towards what we call illegitimacy. Unmarried girls among pagans rarely have illegitimate children; this is more frequent among Christians. The seducer is fined twice as much as in the case of adultery with a married woman, yet only one-third the amount that is customary among Shangana-Tonga. The fine is certainly not the main deterrent; nor is the disgrace of the girl. She maintains her position in society; she is congratulated by friends and relatives; even the queen herself may, as we have seen, pay a visit to see and praise the infant. The girl has been 'spoilt', but she proudly displays her baby. She will not have offers of marriage from young men, but older men are wiser. Great blame falls upon the guilty man. It is a curious mixture of values, for there is no doubt that virginity in a girl is highly esteemed. In the marriage ceremonial, as we have seen, virginity entitles both the bride's mother and herself to special rewards. There is even a symbolical reference to it in the calabash that the bride used to take with her to her husband's home: if it was whole, it occasioned joy and was proudly worn by her younger sister; if not, the girl's people had to make amends with beer.

New values and sensitiveness to-day insist that the absence of chastity 831
be concealed, not that its presence be publicly applauded or rewarded. 848
Girls are still examined, especially at the *khoba*, but the matter is private; 847
and the public display of a calabash has fallen into disuse. Yet the sins 753
of the girl-mother are not visited on the innocent infant; it remains a thing of joy to every one. Abortions are said to be common, but the only evidence adduced is the high incidence of lung diseases (*dere* or *vulwede vya vasadi*). A man gets *dere* from intercourse with a woman who has had an abortion; it is not merely the most dreaded of all diseases, a death from *dere* may prevent rain, and men are again and again in their lives warned against promiscuously consorting with women.

Sexual compatibility between husband and wife is a minor matter. 593

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ships between the families involved but upon it rests the whole 581
character of the domestic group. Payment of bride-price trans- 581
fers the reproductive powers of the woman to the husband's 583
agnatic group. The husband has genetricial as well as uxorial 593
rights. Genetricial rights apply not only to any children born 851
after the marriage whoever their biological father might be, but also in retrospect, so that any child born before marriage automatically becomes the child of whoever pays the bride-price, with full rights of succession and inheritance from its sociological father. There is thus, in contrast to other tribes such as the Zulu, no way in which a Lobedu man can obtain the right to his biological child other than by marrying its mother. Emphasis on sociological as opposed to biological fatherhood among the Lobedu is very strong and this is an important factor in Lobedu social structure. The rights of a father to a child involve control over it; the right to the bride-price of a daughter (subject to the right of her brother to marry with his sister's cattle and of her mother to the services of the woman married with her daughter's bride-price); and corresponding to his right to his daughter's bride-price the duty to help his son to marry. A father may and often does marry an [595]
additional wife with his daughter's bride-price. A father also has the right to be cared for in his old age by his sons.

The levirate is practised, the junior levirate being more 587
common than the senior levirate. The brother raises seed to 851
the deceased and takes over the responsibility of a father and husband though the children he begets are counted as belonging to his deceased brother. Frequently the heir, eldest son of the chief 'house' inherits a young wife of his father. In this case, similarly, the children born of the union are looked upon as the deceased's, i.e., as brothers and sisters of the heir, not his children. The sororate also is practised in all its forms, sororal [595]
polygyny being very common. Where a sister is sent to 'awaken the house (*ho dsosa ndo*)' of a barren or deceased wife full bride-price is due for her although, since bride-price is never an absolutely fixed amount, less may be asked for than in the first marriage.

The marriage of a woman transfers to her husband's group 581
the right to her labour. Initially it is the husband's mother 602
even more than the husband himself that benefits, as we shall

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provide a bride, whether for a brother or other relative or even a stranger, has a moral right to a daughter-in-law from the 'house' established by her cattle. Even though it was her husband who provided the cattle and it is usually he who is said to be 'following the tracks of his cattle' when such a girl is obtained for his son, the wife's right to the services of the girl are such that even if the husband himself, instead of the son, were to marry this girl (which quite often is the case, i.e., wife's brother's daughter marriage) this bride would be attached to her house and would cook for her as though she were the mother-in-law.

So strong is a woman's moral right to her cattle-linked brother's daughter to come and cook for her in her old age that even if she has no son she can, especially if her husband is dead, 'marry' the girl herself, using a daughter's bride-price. The Lobedu themselves phrase it as marriage of a woman to a woman. In reality it is in this case the marriage of a girl to a fictitious son of the woman who is said to be marrying her. Such a bride is called *noeji* (daughter-in-law) by the woman, who is 'grandmother', to any children born to the girl. The children take the surname of the husband of the woman just as though her son had married the girl. A woman who practises as a doctor and earns money can marry a girl with her own cattle. Here too the children (whether by an allocated man or born 'in the bush') take the lineage name of the husband of the woman who 'married' their mother. They are of his lineage but belong essentially to the 'house' (*mosha*) of the woman who married their mother.

A woman may also 'marry' a girl on behalf of her own lineage —for a deceased or non-existent brother. This is done where an heir is needed or where a brother has died before marrying the girl who was 'born for' or engaged to him as in the case of Thepize in Figure 1.

It is the source of the cattle that pass which determines the lineage to which the children belong in woman-marriage. Should the cattle come from the 'house' of a married woman the children belong to the husband's lineage; if they come from the family of procreation of the woman the children take her father's surname. The queen and women who rule districts on behalf of a deceased or non-existent brother are called 'husband'

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daughter; (2) his father's mother's brother's daughter; (3) a 595
distant relative of his mother's; (4) his mother's fellow-wife's 602
brother's daughter; (5) a sister to his first wife by the same father but a different mother.

Divorce

The use of a woman's bride-price by her brother, and the 586
interest which his cattle-linked sister has in maintaining this 'house' in which her son will find a wife, made divorce difficult in the old days. Today, however, partly owing to migrant labour, divorce is more common and girls, especially in the case of arranged marriages with old men or cross-cousins, quite frequently run away to a lover either before or after the marriage knowing that they cannot any longer be forced to return. A return of the bride-price is not always insisted upon, as in the case of A who chased away his childless wife for being a thief. Her brother had used the cattle so A was satisfied to accept the arrangement that the brother should give his daughter in marriage to A's son by another wife. When there are complicated cattle claims a husband, especially if he is already old, may find it wiser not to press for a divorce if a wife absconds. P's third wife, who had been procured with the [537]
bride-price of the daughter of his first wife ran home with her three children and began to lead a promiscuous life during which a fourth child was born. Beyond trying to persuade her people to make her return, P did nothing. The children, two [551]
girls and two boys, were his and his first wife had a claim on the bride-price of one of the girls. Eventually, when the two [583]
daughters were married, P secured their bride-price; the two sons earned their own marriage-cattle by working; and when [428]
P died, the eldest son of that 'house' was called to come and receive his share of the inheritance.

The rule in Lobedu divorce was, in the old days, that the husband's family should receive back the full bride-price plus all increase, irrespective of where the blame lay, in accordance with the saying, '*mosila mobe o boya le noto ea hwe*—even the bad workman (husband) returns with his tools'. The children went [587]
with their mother to her people and when she remarried, the new husband had a right to all of them. With European

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from 252
two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in those earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner. While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves roast mealies or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen enters with a large gourd of water on her 576
head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Mukhadi wee*,' calls out her mother. '*Mulenyu*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase 563
by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Mukhadi goes into the huts and collects 415
five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used [273]
for making light beer (*mabudu*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes [264]
are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two- 853
months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by washing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth, she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and gurglings are of no avail till Granny has decided it has had enough. This novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held 854
over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap, special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that at any moment the child may slip out of the woman's hands; but she is skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward occurs. After being air-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline, an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys 306
arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neighbours could be seen; their own were nowhere to be found. Your hostess is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with legs tied together.

The woman of the *musha* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning 264
to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of slovenliness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food; porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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practice often of less importance than the wife married first, and there is 595
sometimes quite a conflict between the principles of age and legality.

Various factors, such as the household arrangements of the 595
polygynous system, tend to make the tie between a mother and her 593
own children, and more especially between mother and son, very strong and lasting. It is often possible to distinguish between the brothers in a polygynous household by the degree of resemblance in general nature and character to their mother. Children share any stigma that may be attached to their mother, and according as a man likes a wife so he likes her children. There is thus a high degree of solidarity between uterine brothers and sisters, who always like each other more than siblings by other wives. The attachment between Lovedu mother and child [853
rests upon the firm foundations of a suckling period of several years, 854]
during which the child spends much of its time snugly strapped to her back. It is in many ways also an easier relationship than that among Europeans, with fewer prohibitions, fewer punishments and fewer of the petty grounds of conflict associated with such refinements as keeping hands or clothes clean.

The Lovedu girl is much with her mother, but she leaves home to get 593
married soon after puberty and it is the boy in whose later life the mother plays the greatest role. During his boyhood the mother is the champion of her son. If he has been bullied by another, it is she who will take up the cudgels for him, and many of the worst quarrels between women arise in defence of their children. A boy of fifteen was pulling about and beating a boy of ten because he had not gone out to herd. Two men, in passing, called on him to desist, but to no avail till one of them said to a child standing near, 'Run and tell his mother Dwagu is killing her child.' The mother arrived and harangued Dwagu, who left off, but stoutly defended himself against her scolding tongue, and there the matter ended. When a young man marries, his mother is the dominating figure in his household. She controls his relations with his wife, telling him how to conduct himself while she is pregnant or during the suckling period, giving permission (indirectly through other old women) for their [833]
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CHAPTER VII

EARLY TRAINING

Nursing and growing up—herdboy gang life and the learning of veld-lore—an institutionalized play-school—'crossing' rites and the significance of ordeals and obscene language—opportunities and satisfactions of old age—the task of the modern school.

000 WE have not yet dealt with all the values and arrangements of Lovedu society to which the individual must be adjusted if he is to become a co-operating member. But it will not be premature to give a short review of the moulding process, as we shall thereby be led to consider some striking institutions of the tribe. The moulding of the individual is a lifelong process; yet some of the main characteristics appear early.

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854 or three years old and their inability to play amicably later on with other children, characteristics natural in a competitive, non-co-operative,
865 individualistic society like ours, are a source of surprise and often also amusement. 'European children are not like ours,' they say. 'They like very much to fight.' The Lovedu child is from early infancy treated with great lenience and kindness. 'Care for it,' they say even of an uterine child, 'for to-morrow it will care for you' (*khi lɛle, ga matso khi lɛla wɛna*). There are no struggles for food, no strict rules of feeding. Whenever an infant cries, it is put to the breast. If its mother is away, its grandmother or even the young girl nursing it may put it to their breast to comfort it; but it is strictly forbidden for a suckling mother to allow any but her own child to drink of her milk. A woman who allowed a baby to cry without attending to it and trying to hush it would be severely reprimanded by the older women of the village. A baby is never left alone. Indeed, it is almost an appendix of its mother, at night sleeping against her naked breast, by day being carried on her back in its skin cradle. A woman, it is said, may forget all manner of things, but never the skin cradle of her child. When a mother wants to go out, there is never any problem as to what to do with baby. He is simply strapped to her back to accompany her, and should she choose to dance at a ceremony, even the most violent jumping movements would leave him unperturbed. So accustomed does a Lovedu baby become to his position on his mother's back that, when picked up, he quite naturally stretches out his feet at right angles to his body. While his mother stamps or hoes, the baby will be nursed by his grandmother or a nurse girl a little older than himself. This mode of life and treatment gives the child a sense of security, safety, and warmth. His wants are immediately attended to and the absence of cloth spares him even such small discomforts as wet napkins.

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Cooking the morning meal is a long-drawn-out process, requiring from 252
two to three hours, for not only does water take a long time to boil in those earthen pots over a slow fire, but everything is done in a leisurely manner. While the meal is being cooked, the children and the women themselves roast mealies or monkey nuts, or sit about the courtyard eating sugar cane, for it is summer, the time when there is plenty. The old woman is now roasting some shelled monkey nuts on a potsherd; these she will stamp fine and add to the relish to give it additional flavouring.

A comely girl of about fourteen enters with a large gourd of water on her 576
head, which a friend helps her to put down. '*Mukhadi wee*,' calls out her mother. '*Mulemya*,' says the girl, a polite reply or formal answering phrase 563
by which you know at once that she belongs to the royal group, for each group has its own distinguishing answering praise-title. 'Get ready the plates. I shall be dishing up soon.' Mukhadi goes into the huts and collects 415
five dishes—three gourds and two wooden plates—in which are the remains of the previous meal. The remains are carefully set aside to be used [273]
for making light beer (*mabudu*), for food is never wasted; then the dishes [264]
are scoured by means of powdered sandstone and stood in a row in the sun to dry.

In a neighbouring courtyard a grandmother begins feeding a two- 853
months-old baby with thick gruel of sprouted corn. She begins by washing its face, then, cupping her left hand filled with gruel before its mouth, she pushes in the food with a finger of the right hand. Splutterings and gurglings are of no avail till Granny has decided it has had enough. This novel procedure is followed from the day of birth as a supplement to mother's milk. After its meal comes its daily bath. The baby is held 854
over a large potsherd of warm water and washed with a little soap, special care being taken to clean the head and eyes. The baby wriggles and cries; the sherd has jagged edges; the European onlooker fears that at any moment the child may slip out of the woman's hands; but she is skilled and experienced in the handling of infants, and nothing untoward occurs. After being air-dried, the baby's body is anointed with vaseline, an easy substitute for the butter fat of old. In the meantime two boys 000
arrive, one with a large cock under his arm. They are sorry to have taken so long, but, when they looked for a fowl, only the fowls of their neighbours could be seen; their own were nowhere to be found. Your hostess is about to have it killed, but you decide you would prefer to taste native relish, so you give instructions that it is to be left on the hut veranda with legs tied together.

The woman of the *musha* has lifted her pot off the fire and is beginning 264
to dish up. Smoothing down the porridge with her wooden spoon, she skilfully scoops out a spoonful, which she carefully lays on one of the platters. The result is a neat cake of porridge over which a smooth, outer skin very rapidly forms. A cake is placed in each of the dishes before a second is added, till there are four or five on each. A Lovedu housewife is very particular about the manner in which she dishes up food, for untidy-looking cakes with jagged edges give one the reputation of slovenliness. The Lovedu pride themselves on their cleanliness with food; porridge must be white, with no suspicion of a foreign object. When a

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to 512
fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe [784]
for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of 252
three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *hu thovola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for [231]
feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mábudu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the maize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *vuthithi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *vuswa*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*hu seḑa*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge [273]
of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for 871
their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seize hold 857
of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in [854] ●
no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mothers or to catch *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swaziae*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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practice often of less importance than the wife married first, and there is 595
sometimes quite a conflict between the principles of age and legality.

Various factors, such as the household arrangements of the 595
polygynous system, tend to make the tie between a mother and her 593
own children, and more especially between mother and son, very strong and lasting. It is often possible to distinguish between the brothers in a polygynous household by the degree of resemblance in general nature and character to their mother. Children share any stigma that may be attached to their mother, and according as a man likes a wife so he likes her children. There is thus a high degree of solidarity between uterine brothers and sisters, who always like each other more than siblings by other wives. The attachment between Lovedu mother and child [853
rests upon the firm foundations of a suckling period of several years, 854]
during which the child spends much of its time snugly strapped to her back. It is in many ways also an easier relationship than that among Europeans, with fewer prohibitions, fewer punishments and fewer of the petty grounds of conflict associated with such refinements as keeping hands or clothes clean.

The Lovedu girl is much with her mother, but she leaves home to get 593
married soon after puberty and it is the boy in whose later life the mother plays the greatest role. During his boyhood the mother is the champion of her son. If he has been bullied by another, it is she who will take up the cudgels for him, and many of the worst quarrels between women arise in defence of their children. A boy of fifteen was pulling about and beating a boy of ten because he had not gone out to herd. Two men, in passing, called on him to desist, but to no avail till one of them said to a child standing near, 'Run and tell his mother Dwagu is killing her child.' The mother arrived and harangued Dwagu, who left off, but stoutly defended himself against her scolding tongue, and there the matter ended. When a young man marries, his mother is the dominating figure in his household. She controls his relations with his wife, telling him how to conduct himself while she is pregnant or during the suckling period, giving permission (indirectly through other old women) for their [833]
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593 Within this general pattern, however, there can be infinite variations. Mulata beats his mother whenever he loses his temper and on one occasion severely wounded her with an axe. He is admittedly a bad lot and the talk of the neighbourhood, but such things do occur. Batamedi, who moved away from his brother's village and, as the youngest son, took his mother with him, did not provide her with blankets for the winter nor interfere when his wife shamefully neglected the old woman by visiting for months at her own home. So his mother betook herself back to her elder son, where she was accustomed to receiving better treatment.

603 The husband's mother, the grandmother of his children, is then an
●854 important person, an essential member of the individual household. She has much to do with the children; she it is who, for the first few months, feeds and baths the new baby. Having little to do, she tends the child while its mother is busy, and very often the young baby spends as much time strapped to its grandmother's back as to its mother's. Being old, the grandmother is mild in her treatment of the children, her policy being to pacify and placate rather than to force.

593 It is not easy to define the relationship between father and children. Because he spends most of his time with the men, there is little personal contact between father and young children, who in their turn are mostly in the company of those of their own age. A Lovedu child who lives in a large kraal may not see his father for days or speak to him for weeks. A girl has little to do with her father, but the boy finds that his father admonishes him or shows displeasure when he cries and on occasion inculcates manly values. The father keeps his distance, yet he becomes the personification of manly ideals, and a boy tries to be like his father. The father has authority, but his authority is never oppressive like that of European fathers, whose children live in much closer contact with them. If a boy has done wrong or let the cattle stray, he will avoid his father by not making an appearance at home till after dark. Dumedi spent two nights curled up in a sledge, afraid to appear at home lest his father should beat him for letting the goats stray. Fathers who wish to punish their sons are very often forced to resort to the plan of appearing at the entrance of the boys' sleeping hut long before dawn, there to round them up and beat them soundly before they have a chance of disappearing for
595 the day! The father represents the polygynous family. Through him brothers by different mothers are linked and, not more than a few years back, fathers used sometimes to call their sons to sit with them at night. Then they would exhort the sons not to quarrel among themselves, to live together in peace, to be mutually helpful, and to behave as men. To-day, however, with the long absence of men in towns, this active education on the part of the father is rapidly disappearing.

Brothers by the same father, though not as closely linked as uterine brothers, nevertheless have certain responsibilities towards one another. They stand by each other in disputes and act in unison against outsiders. In claiming back bride-price for a deserting wife, a man will never act alone; he and his brothers will go together, showing a united front. If a man has to pay a fine and has no goat, his brothers will be expected to help him. When he dies, it is his brothers who will care for his widow

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fruits, such as *ditshidi*, may be squeezed to cause curds, eaten by means of 868
a certain kinds of grass or leaves. At this stage the boy goes out with 262
his protector to herd or stays at home with his nurse just as he pleases. Soon, however, he must begin seriously to herd goats and donkeys near home with other boys of his age. He finds this irksome at first and whenever he can he tries to remain at home with the girls. But his father will tell him that always being in women's company will make him grow up to be a coward; visitors coming to the village will ask, 'Are you herding yet?' and boys older than himself may begin to beat him if he does not accompany them, so that in the end he finds himself going out day after day to herd, whether his own father has goats and cattle or not. In the old days, when cattle raids were feared, full-grown men herded cattle; to-day this is not seen, except sometimes when on a rainy day an adult will go out with the cattle to prevent his children from getting coughs and colds. On wet days rough shelters are made, in which the herdboys sit round a fire. Just as the work of girls in the home as nursemaids and helpers forms an integral part of the whole economic structure of society, so herding is an important and essential activity. This the herdboy knows and feels.

Herding is a form of gang life in which a boy and his age-mates are 868
very strictly controlled by those just older than themselves. It is the only 854
discipline to which he is subjected outside the circumcision lodge, and 857
it is characteristic of the society, that boys and girls both in and out of the formal initiation 'schools' are disciplined, not by adults, but by the group just older than themselves. It is the adults, more especially old people, who sometimes intervene on their behalf, lightening their burden. Much of what they are taught in the 'schools' likewise comes from the next age-set. As an educational principle, this is of considerable value: children learn more easily and more willingly from other children than from adults, and every boy knows that soon he too will enjoy the privilege of authority over those younger than he is. In herding, the smaller boys are made to do most of the unpleasant work. They are left to herd on hot afternoons while those older than themselves indulge in games and amusements; they have to fetch and carry for older boys and are often bullied into fighting one another. Constant fear of being made to fight decided a boy of eight to run away to his mother's brother's place. But there he had also to herd and, instead of escaping the fights he found so distasteful, he was again pitted against and worsted by boys stronger than himself. Every group of herdboys has its leader (*shɔlwɔ*), usually the strongest of the group. He and the other elder boys have many privileges. The younger boys have to do the fagging and, if they find a tree with ripe fruit, they may neither climb it nor pick fruit till they have called the older boys, who, after eating their fill, will allow them to have their turn. One branch must, however, be left untouched for the leader of the group. When cattle have strayed, the men beat only the bigger boys, knowing that the smaller ones will already have been punished by their seniors. Herdboys have their own standards, not always in accord with that of the rest of society. They steal sugar-cane, nuts, mealies from other people's fields; sometimes they collect honey from hives in the bush

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868 surrounding graves, a practice that is strictly taboo; they may even steal
854 fowls to kill and eat, but in this they are invariably discovered and severely
857 beaten. Among girls the emphasis upon the rights of seniority is in abeyance until initiation at puberty.

Herding and its concomitant activities afford an excellent education to the growing boy, one designed to fit him for the sort of life led by adults in the old days and which, even in the changed circumstances of to-day, gives him much of value that it would be impossible to get in any school. A good deal of time is spent in hunting and trapping birds, cane-rats, squirrels, rabbits, and, near the forests, domestic cats that have become wild. Boys become experts in the use of the bow and bulb-headed arrow and in hunting learn much that is useful about the habits of animals. But this is of small importance beside other aspects of their training while herding. Everything a boy uses in hunting or in play he has to make himself. He fashions his own bow and arrows, his own traps. If boys wish to play a game of *khərərə*, which somewhat resembles hockey, they must cut out and shape their own clubs. They have no toys but those they have made themselves, and toy-making gives them a wonderful training in handicrafts. Herdboys mould clay oxen and manufacture toy wagons, motor cars, guns, sleds in a number of different mediums—wood, clay, mealie pith, prickly pear leaves. One day the herdboys near us would all make watches (one boy even had a locust inside his to move the hands!); on another they all came home wearing spectacles made of mealie pith, exact replicas, cleverly constructed, of those they had seen us wear. In February and March, when the grass is long, they weave grass arm bands and hats and caps of various shapes and sizes. They make a humming top of a hard-shelled fruit, *muṭuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) and ropes to put through the nostrils of riding oxen for reins; they make their own musical instruments and cut reed pipes for their own play-dances. In this manner herdboys learn to know a vast number of useful things about their environment—the uses and quality of the wood of various trees, which are hard and strong and which soft or pliable, those useful for carving platters, and those used in basketry, the kinds of trees that yield bird-lime, the kinds of bark that can be used for making string. In their constant quest for food, they learn to know every edible fruit, berry, and root in the veld. A herdboy walking along with you will give you the name and uses of almost every tree or shrub you pass in that rich bushveld environment, and once a boy of fifteen astonished us by being able to name over 200 specimens of plants from that area.

854 Besides riding oxen and donkeys, boys play games, some of which
857 resemble European games, such as hide-and-seek, cat-and-mouse, twos-and-threes. One game, that of hurling at a rolling tuber a stick furnished with a circle of points at one end, is recognized as a training in hunting and exactness of aim. Bands of herdboys from neighbouring districts are keen rivals, but sometimes the rivalry is between pagans and Christians. Frequently fights take place. The winners will then milk the goats and ride the oxen of the vanquished, who may be made to undergo the disgrace of driving home the cattle of their conquerors.

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Even if blood flows, no case can be brought against a herdboy, for he is still uncircumcised, irresponsible.

Training for both boys and girls in home-making is embodied in the institution known as *mandwane*, which, while being little more than a game, is nevertheless accorded adult recognition. Utilization by the children of the harvest gleanings after reaping, which may be regarded as its practical economic aspect, is to-day not much in evidence, but while it lasts women whose sons are taking part are saved the trouble of cooking the evening meal. After the reaping, when the cattle graze in the mealie lands near home, *mandwane* is begun by the girls calling the boys to come and be chosen. They stand in a row while each girl chooses a 'husband' by kneeling before and greeting the boy of her choice. He signifies his consent by answering the greeting. After the parents have been told of their intention to hold *mandwane*, the boys begin to build rough huts in the fields, while the girls smear the floors and courtyards. Each couple may have its own establishment with very often also a small child chosen as their 'child', or one large house for all may be made. With pots, baskets, spoons, and other utensils borrowed from home, the girls stamp mealie meal and cook dishes of porridge, nuts, and pumpkin, while the boys, if they can, bring home birds as relish. The game begins about eleven o'clock in the morning and ends in dancing and singing after dark; this lasts for about ten days or more till, at the end, the miniature village is burnt. Each 'wife', in addition to serving food to her 'husband' in the proper manner, must also take food every evening to her 'mother-in-law' in the boy's home. This is eaten, not by the mother-in-law herself, but by children of the household who are not taking part in the game. Occasionally the elders walk over to watch activities in the play-village and give a word of advice. That the institution is taken seriously by adults is shown by the fact that, though *mandwane* partners never marry, the mother of the girl will very often after the *mandwane* take a gift of beer (usually five calabashes or so) to the parents of her small daughter's 'husband', who will slaughter a goat in recognition of the gift just as though the relationship were real. There is nothing to prevent relatives from being *mandwane* partners. To-day the 'husband' is usually much younger than the 'wife' and the game is confined to children under the age of puberty. Not more than a few years ago, however, boys and girls of marriageable age used to take part, the institution being considered as primarily for them. One of the reasons for the change is the absence of many of the older boys at work in town, while the failure of young men to keep the rules against impregnation in the play sexual intercourse that often forms part of the game makes mothers loath to allow elder girls to join in.

General behaviour, attitudes, and values are not taught by any formal training. These are inextricably bound up with life in the society and become unconsciously adopted by any one fully partaking in social life. Even a European, when speaking the language and trying to enter into their social activities, finds himself unconsciously taking for granted values that he never had before and which are certainly not to be found in European life. They seem to follow naturally from the social situation

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guardian rather than the servant of a master. He is, like a member of the 357
family, fed and clothed, but never remunerated; his position is not a 736
derogatory one. He owns his own property, but his taxes may be paid for him, and he receives cattle as *munywalo* (bride-price). His services are essentially voluntary; he participates in all social activities and has no political disabilities.

Rather like the *mulada* was the *muruiwa* (*hu rua*, to rear cattle or other 735
animals). He was a poor man taken in by the family as a hanger-on, was 78
given land, and was helped just as if he were a member of the family. If he was an orphan bachelor, related to the family, he usually married one of its daughters; but he was not bound to the family and could leave whenever he wished. This institution is practically extinct to-day, as is also *hu ʃuda* (or *hu sigela*), to work for food. In the old days, a man or 437
woman, short of maize towards the end of the year, would hire out his services; but the work was considered irksome and the worker 'a fool who feeds himself by his labours'. The work is difficult for, 'tired though he be, he must work until the owner of the field is also tired'. *Hu sigela* is spoken of especially when a bachelor, with no sister from whose marriage he could expect the cattle for his marriage, sold his services for hoes and cattle; usually his mother assisted him; and often he carried iron ore from the north to the local smiths, so that it used to be said 'the great road helps bachelors (who have no sisters) to marry the sisters of young men'.

Hu hira (from the Afrikaans *huur*, hire), the hiring out of one's services 464
or implements, is practically confined to Christians; it is a new conception. 426
But pagans who have money or dislike the unreliability of a *khilcbc* arrangement sometimes engage the services or hire the implements or cattle of others. The standard payment is 10s. per acre ploughed. The [465]
advantages are that one can insist upon a certain degree of thoroughness in the work and dictate the time of ploughing. In the old days implements were borrowed (*hu adima*); but even *hu adima*, if it is of things falling definitely within the European pattern, nowadays involves the passing of some consideration, especially among Christians. The typical instance is the loan of a boar, which must be returned with one of the litter. But the loan of animals or implements of the traditional economy, such as cattle, goats, or pots, is always gratuitous; even when a herdboy is lent, one must expect only 'thanks', which is generally sent with some beer. Only the utmost care of the thing, not payment, is expected of the borrower, for 'when I, who am a borrower, turn round (to face the lender), I fear to be caught in the thorn tree'. There is an ill-defined 855 ●
custom whereby, when a relative, usually the mother's mother or the 431
mother's brother, cares for (*hu lcla*) a child for many years, he is given a head of cattle, called the *maledi*. This is hardly a reward for services; it is a gesture of goodwill, is entirely voluntary, and is rarely paid.

When cattle are placed in the care of another (*hu fisa*) no consideration 231
passes; the person to whom the cattle are entrusted, the *mufiswa*, uses the 465
cattle and their milk; but his use is precarious, for 'he scans the road even as he milks' since the owner may at any moment come to take back his cattle. Occasionally when goats are cared for, the herdboy is given a

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Highveld. When, after many private consultations with diviners, a man decides to make an accusation of witchcraft, he and the accused will *betcha* or lay a wager of money or cattle on the matter, after which, accompanied by a witness, the 'ears of the chief', supplied by the Head Kraal, they set out to consult a far-away smeller-out, nearly always a Shangana–Tonga who lives too far to know anything of the people concerned. Unless the smeller-out is able to give the totems of all members of the party and successfully find an object that has been hidden beforehand, they will pass on to another until some one suitable is found. The verdict of the smeller-out is taken to court where it is always accepted and the guilty party told to pay his wager, the modern counterpart of the death penalty of old. A distinction between murder and accidental homicide is everywhere found in the Lowveld, punishment for the latter being the handing over of a girl to the injured family. She never returns home, nor does any bride-price pass.

Bantu etiquette, which makes it impossible for a case to be reported to the chief except through a third party, generally among other Sotho tribes one or two specially appointed men, has in the Lowveld given rise to a rather more complicated system whereby each district has its 'mother' at the Head Kraal, through whom reports are made and actions brought. Where a person in one district has a case at the Head Kraal against some one in another district, the 'mother' of the complainant's district will approach the 'mother' of defendant's district to call his 'children' to the court, and various payments are connected with the system. Most of the important men living at or near the Head Kraal are such 'mothers', many having more than one district in their charge.

FAMILY AND CLAN. There is among Lowveld Sotho no term distinguishing the father's from the mother's side of the family, the word *moloko* being used to denote all relatives whether on the father's side or the mother's; and in practice, whether at weddings or at working parties, both sets of relatives play an equally important, if sometimes different, part. A man inherits his totem and family name from his father, but in his education and social life his mother's people have great influence. Most children spend some years of their life with the

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855 mother's mother, especially in cases where the next baby has arrived before three or four years have elapsed; and a young motherless child is often sent by his father to his mother's brother's people (where his mother's mother will be) in preference to being handed over to a fellow wife of the mother, for it is generally considered that the mother's people are best able to rear (*hodisa*) a child.

593 A very special relationship exists between a man and his sister, especially his eldest sister, who is or will become the priestess of the family. She is the person who has greatest influence over him, who will be called to reason with him when even his parents are unable to persuade him. The sister whose cattle he used to obtain a wife also has a special interest in his household affairs. This house is the place where she will 'put her things' and make herself at home when visiting her old home; his daughter will one day marry her son; his wife may run to her or her elder sister if he ill-treats her, whereupon she will remonstrate with her brother or even in extreme cases arrange for permanent protection of such a woman away from her husband. The sister's rights are supported by a powerful sanction, for if she [753] 'feels dissatisfied in her heart' owing to bad treatment at the hands of her brother, the ancestors are liable to make his children ill. When this happens, the brother will have to approach his sister humbly to come and end matters, after openly airing her grievances, by interceding with the ancestors on behalf of his children. Not all sisters are, however, in practice able to control and influence their brothers: here, as in all human relationships, much depends on the character and good sense of the parties concerned; and I have seen a 'bad lot' just back from town slap the face of a sister who had been called to remonstrate with him about a loose woman he had brought to his wife's house from town.

613 The clan, if it can be said to exist at all, does so only in a vague way, and there are no functions or usages associated with it. Relatives belong to no clearly marked group but can be traced in ever-widening circles from the individual family just as we trace relationships in our own society. There is no term for clan: *moloko* refers to relatives on both father's and mother's side, while *khoro*, a word most commonly used to denote that portion of any village where the men sit, but also meaning court, clan, or tribe, is too vague in its connota-

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to 512
fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe [784]
for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of 252
three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *hu thovola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for [231]
feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mabudu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the maize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *vuthithi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *vurwa*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*hu sefa*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge [173]
of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for 871
their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seize hold 857
of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in [854]
no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mothers or to catch *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Swazise*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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V. THE LOVEDU BABY

(a) FEEDING BABY (b) BATHING BABY

[facing p.96]

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854

(b) BATHING BABY

V. THE LOVEDU BABY

853

(a) FEEDING BABY

[facing p.96]

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857 of *lefaje* (*Mariscus sp.*) or *lejchtjchi* (*Cyperus immensus*), rush-grasses which the ants seize with their antennae. The girls who have been stamping now set out with some friends from a neighbouring village, all armed
[561] with axes, to collect firewood. The girls of this company are age-mates; they share their labours, confide their love affairs, bathe together, and, in
[832] the late afternoon, when they go to the bush, they sit together elongating their *labia minora* (*hu kwova*). Meanwhile the village lies basking and dreaming in the afternoon sun; except for the pecking fowls there is hardly a stir. '*Ùu gae*' ('Where is it—beer'), says Raselaka to his son Sekware, as he returns with some poles on his shoulder for repairing his
574 wife's granary. 'There is beer of *lejema* [work-party] over at Mudziri's,'
273 is the reply; and the men, accompanied by the visitors, set out for the beer drink, knowing they will be allowed to partake even though they have done no work.

The hum of voices as you near a certain kraal leaves you in no doubt that this must be Mudziri's village. A fair crowd has gathered in the courtyard of the woman who is holding the *lejema* and a typical beer-drinking scene meets the eye. The centre of the picture is a large pot of beer placed in a rounded depression made for it in the courtyard. Beside it stands a flat winnowing basket containing long-handled calabash cups from which the beer is drunk. Beside the pot sits a man who serves the beer, using a beer-cup as ladle; he gives each cup to a young man of about twenty, who hands it round. The guests have ranged themselves on either side of the beer pot, women on one side, men on the other. As each calabash is emptied, it is brought back by the young man who is doing the waiting, to be filled. There is no hurry. Each one drinks at his leisure and conversation flows freely. Every one knows he will be given in his turn and, if one man is handed a second cup, he will pass it on to any one who has not yet been served, till all have had four or five. It is a pleasant social gathering and all the latest gossip is discussed. Small children toddle about in between the drinkers and may even be given a
651 little of the beer. Ominously Pheduli remarks, 'Madume has seen police
625 near Medingen. There appear to be four of them. What can they be wanting?' 'Oh,' replies Dwagu, 'they are no doubt raiding for tax defaulters!' There is general uneasiness, for about a fifth of the gathering are in arrears. Muhale is six years in arrears and, as he never goes to town to work, he has not once been caught. 'They won't catch me napping in my home to-night,' volunteers Mathakha. 'I shall go into the bush again. Are they Shangana-Tonga or Sotho, those police Madume saw?' a very relevant question, because the Shangana-Tonga, more likely than not recruited from outside the reserve, will not know these hiding places in the forests and caves. Here Pekela describes how his friend Setimela, who had himself always been in default and knew all the best hiding places, had joined the police the previous year. Consequently, at the very next raid the police made a most successful scoop, catching ninety-six defaulters, whom they marched to Duivelskloof.

574 The beer-pot is almost empty and people are merely sitting talking
273 when the host calls Raselaka and his European guest aside into his reception hut, together with a few other intimates. A woman brings in a small

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pot of beer, decorated in a red chevron pattern, brimming with shining white bubbles at the mouth. A well-scoured basket with four beer-cups is placed beside it. The woman crawls on her knees in the presence of the guests, as is the custom. Turning to his neighbour, the host says, 'Here is a little water in honour of my good friend, headman Raselaka, and his visitor.' The man, turning to his neighbour, says, 'You heard the words of your host?' and he in turn repeats the message to Raselaka himself, who returns thanks for the honour. His thanks are similarly repeated (*hu suma*) till they reach the host, and the dishing-up begins. The host is given the first cup to drink, in accordance with Native etiquette, then Raselaka and his friend are served, the European, as an honour, being given a rounded calabash placed in a small flat basket. The group in the hut is small, so no waiter is needed. Two women form part of the select company. When the beer has sunk to the last dregs, the server says, 'The beer is finished,' whereupon all present *lɔsha* (greet) with a long-drawn-out '*Ndaaaaaaaau*.' The pot is turned upside down and emptied of the dregs, which are drunk by some one in the company. Such are the formalities of beer-drinking.

The sun has sunk low in the western horizon when you wend your way back to the village. The herdboys, with whistles and cries, are bringing home the cattle, goats, and donkeys. Two of them, one on an ox, one on a donkey, are having a race on the last level piece of ground near home. Others carry bundles of wood under their arms for the *khɔrɔ* fire. Suddenly you hear the ululations of beer carriers as a party of ten women carrying calabashes, resting in baskets half-filled with grain, comes towards you. What beer is this? Are these not the in-laws of Pɛkɛla, who lives in the village next to yours? True enough, they are bringing *khirula* beer to their *tsɛzi* (bridegroom), who married their daughter. When the women in the village see them, they, too, begin their cries of joy, accompanied by a few dancing steps (*hu pɛbɛla*); one of them even relieves a carrier of her burden and carries it for her to the hut of the son-in-law. Having set down their pots, the carriers begin dancing about, singing, '*Mushiji khi le; gi y'ɔ sheva ga nama*' (I don't eat blackjacks; I'm going to have relish of meat), in anticipation of the goat that the receiver is by custom bound to kill for them on such an occasion. He has in addition to give them a goat and 10*s*. to take back in recognition of their gift. If he has no goat, he may give them £1 in all instead. Hence the beer which the relatives of a woman send to their son-in-law each year or every few years, when they are short of corn, is really an exchange of gifts to maintain good relations. In addition, when the in-laws need anything, such as cattle or food, they may make beer and ask their *tsɛzi*, who cannot easily refuse. Immediately after their arrival, the carriers are given a pot of beer from that which they have brought. But, since your capacity for beer is more limited than that of your host, you decide you must go back to the village, as it is getting late.

Every one is converging homewards. Some women are coming with paraffin tins or pots of water on their heads; these four-gallon tins are much liked for their lightness, but the dampness of the climate soon rusts holes into them. Those coming from the fields bring with them baskets

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164 Men have begun to suffer the penalty of reckless exposure to mosquitoes, especially after nightfall in the valleys where *morula* cider was drunk. Leaky huts and damp clothes have brought coughs, rheumatism and perhaps pneumonia. There is disease even among the cattle, which
221 are attacked by the ticks that abound in the high grass. But these things
[262] cannot outweigh the pleasures of abundant relishes and summer fruits. April (*Thudumtoli*—the month when women ask you to help them lift (*ku vula*) the load from their heads) is indeed worthy of its name. Each afternoon the women come home with basketfuls of pumpkins, green
[251] mealies, nuts and relish. Careful housewives are drying relishes for winter while those whose weeding or mounding is up to date make tasty
[252] cakes of ground corn, monkey nuts, or the date-like fruits of the *mmukhoma* tree (*Berchemia discolor*). The receptacles for storing have to be renewed for the reception of the new harvest, storage enclosures strengthened and
241 sledges repaired. Men are to be seen daily going out to cut poles or grass,
221 which the women carry home in enormous bundles on their heads. Soon reaping begins. The sesamum is first pulled up, then the groundnuts. Millet and kaffir corn are reaped next, lest the birds create too much havoc in the ripening fields; and, before this has ended, the mealies are garnered, stripped of their sheaths in the fields and carried home in baskets or on sledges. By the end of May, reaping and the threshing of kaffir corn and eleusine, usually done in prepared places in the fields, are in full swing. But in summer people do not, as in the planting season, work much in the mornings, except in working parties. Cooking is first
461 finished and only after about eleven o'clock do the people go out to their fields. The men, especially those lucky enough to have no huts to renew or
[273] repair, have more leisure now, and there are daily orgies of beer-drinking. The abundance and variety of food make people forget that there might be a shortage later in the year, coming as a climax to reckless consumption
535 and social activity. This is the time that people begin to compete in great friendly *gotha*-dancing displays and carry beer to relatives-in-law.
231 Towards the end of July, when the herdboys turn the cattle to graze on
857 the mealie stalks, there are echoing calls of joy, for soon they will not be herding at all. Grazing near home marks the beginning of the play-housekeeping of boys and girls in the reaped fields at the end of the season.

221 In contrast to the planting season, when the problem is to put in one's
461 seeds betimes, reaping-time allows of a variety of other activities. From May, therefore, there are not only dances and much beer-drinking, but there is time for the plying of crafts, such as pottery, mat-making, basket-making. For the specialist in any craft is always primarily an agriculturalist who plies his craft only when he has time, and it is in vain that anyone approaches even the most skilled craftsman for an object during the planting or weeding season. Once the summer rains have stopped, courtyard walls are re-plastered and hut-building is possible. The period from August to the end of October when the fields are bare and the grass has dried is *madulahae* ('the time of sitting at home'), three months of leisure so dear to the Lovedu. Though many people are still winding up the work of the year, building and thatching, threshing and

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868 greens' (*hu bɛ ba hasi hu ha murɔhɔ*), meaning that children are always of value, unlike relish, which can be used once only.

It is not so much technical skill as usefulness and willingness to help that are the great virtues. There is great tolerance of mediocre achievement and no one is made to suffer humiliation on account of it. Whenever she gets the chance, a small girl will, when her mother is stamping, try to follow suit, often with a play stamper specially made for her, and it is surprising how quickly a child will learn to winnow. Girls of from eight to ten are able to do almost every kind of housework, including the preparation of a meal. Beer-making, which requires considerable skill, is, however, not learnt till after puberty, and heavy work, such as carrying wood, is not done by young children. At the age of ten or eleven, a girl may be given a small portion of her grandmother's field to cultivate for herself. She will plant the crops she likes—lots of sugar-cane and also mealies and groundnuts—and in the disposal of these she acts as she pleases. Girls also learn the art of collecting leaves for relish: which plants can be used, which leaves are the most tasty and at what time of the year they should be picked.

●857 Most children are pleased to help a little in the household tasks, for there are not very many outside diversions. They have, however, plenty of time also for play and are gloriously free to romp on moonlight nights long after their parents have retired to bed. As with us, play among the Lovedu is largely directed to the learning of skills useful in later life. A popular pastime of children is dancing, usually among small girls, to the accompaniment of drumming on paraffin tins. At adult dances young girls seize every opportunity in between dances to practise on the drums and, when the dance is in full swing and the men in a ring round the drums are bursting their cheeks as they blow their reed pipes, it is not unusual to see five or six small boys of from three to six years old going round on the outside, reed in mouth, imitating every movement of the adults. In the games of girls (those of boys will be discussed later), imitation of adult activities, such as a game resembling initiation mummeries and play-cooking, loom large. Sometimes they build miniature villages, mould small clay pots, and pretend to cook, but often their play takes a more real form. We have seen a group of small girls collect ripe morula fruits to make their own cider in pots borrowed from home. Next day, when it was ready, they all sat down solemnly to drink it, passing round the clay dish with great dignity, as they had seen grown-ups do. A group of small boys hung around in the hope of being invited to join in and they were not disappointed. The cider was perhaps a little dirty (small girls are not particular about washing hands before pressing out the juice), but the boys found it wonderfully good.

868 The education of a boy is received largely through the institution of
262 herding. His first introduction to herding is pleasant enough. At the age of four or five he sets out with one of the bigger boys, who carries food for him, since he is as yet too young to remain long without a meal. Now he has his first taste of goat's milk, the food of herdboys, who do not notice the smell that nauseates adults. The goats are milked into hollows scooped out in rocks, into which juice of various kinds of acid

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fruits, such as *ditshidi*, may be squeezed to cause curds, eaten by means of 868
a certain kinds of grass or leaves. At this stage the boy goes out with 262
his protector to herd or stays at home with his nurse just as he pleases. Soon, however, he must begin seriously to herd goats and donkeys near home with other boys of his age. He finds this irksome at first and whenever he can he tries to remain at home with the girls. But his father will tell him that always being in women's company will make him grow up to be a coward; visitors coming to the village will ask, 'Are you herding yet?' and boys older than himself may begin to beat him if he does not accompany them, so that in the end he finds himself going out day after day to herd, whether his own father has goats and cattle or not. In the old days, when cattle raids were feared, full-grown men herded cattle; to-day this is not seen, except sometimes when on a rainy day an adult will go out with the cattle to prevent his children from getting coughs and colds. On wet days rough shelters are made, in which the herdboys sit round a fire. Just as the work of girls in the home as nursemaids and helpers forms an integral part of the whole economic structure of society, so herding is an important and essential activity. This the herdboy knows and feels.

Herding is a form of gang life in which a boy and his age-mates are 868
very strictly controlled by those just older than themselves. It is the only 854
discipline to which he is subjected outside the circumcision lodge, and 857
it is characteristic of the society, that boys and girls both in and out of the formal initiation 'schools' are disciplined, not by adults, but by the group just older than themselves. It is the adults, more especially old people, who sometimes intervene on their behalf, lightening their burden. Much of what they are taught in the 'schools' likewise comes from the next age-set. As an educational principle, this is of considerable value: children learn more easily and more willingly from other children than from adults, and every boy knows that soon he too will enjoy the privilege of authority over those younger than he is. In herding, the smaller boys are made to do most of the unpleasant work. They are left to herd on hot afternoons while those older than themselves indulge in games and amusements; they have to fetch and carry for older boys and are often bullied into fighting one another. Constant fear of being made to fight decided a boy of eight to run away to his mother's brother's place. But there he had also to herd and, instead of escaping the fights he found so distasteful, he was again pitted against and worsted by boys stronger than himself. Every group of herdboys has its leader (*shɔlwɛ*), usually the strongest of the group. He and the other elder boys have many privileges. The younger boys have to do the fagging and, if they find a tree with ripe fruit, they may neither climb it nor pick fruit till they have called the older boys, who, after eating their fill, will allow them to have their turn. One branch must, however, be left untouched for the leader of the group. When cattle have strayed, the men beat only the bigger boys, knowing that the smaller ones will already have been punished by their seniors. Herdboys have their own standards, not always in accord with that of the rest of society. They steal sugar-cane, nuts, mealies from other people's fields; sometimes they collect honey from hives in the bush

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868 surrounding graves, a practice that is strictly taboo; they may even steal
854 fowls to kill and eat, but in this they are invariably discovered and severely
857 beaten. Among girls the emphasis upon the rights of seniority is in abeyance until initiation at puberty.

Herding and its concomitant activities afford an excellent education to the growing boy, one designed to fit him for the sort of life led by adults in the old days and which, even in the changed circumstances of to-day, gives him much of value that it would be impossible to get in any school. A good deal of time is spent in hunting and trapping birds, cane-rats, squirrels, rabbits, and, near the forests, domestic cats that have become wild. Boys become experts in the use of the bow and bulb-headed arrow and in hunting learn much that is useful about the habits of animals. But this is of small importance beside other aspects of their training while herding. Everything a boy uses in hunting or in play he has to make himself. He fashions his own bow and arrows, his own traps. If boys wish to play a game of *khorərə*, which somewhat resembles hockey, they must cut out and shape their own clubs. They have no toys but those they have made themselves, and toy-making gives them a wonderful training in handicrafts. Herdboys mould clay oxen and manufacture toy wagons, motor cars, guns, sleds in a number of different mediums—wood, clay, mealie pith, prickly pear leaves. One day the herdboys near us would all make watches (one boy even had a locust inside his to move the hands!); on another they all came home wearing spectacles made of mealie pith, exact replicas, cleverly constructed, of those they had seen us wear. In February and March, when the grass is long, they weave grass arm bands and hats and caps of various shapes and sizes. They make a humming top of a hard-shelled fruit, *muʃuzi* (*Oncoba spinosa*) and ropes to put through the nostrils of riding oxen for reins; they make their own musical instruments and cut reed pipes for their own play-dances. In this manner herdboys learn to know a vast number of useful things about their environment—the uses and quality of the wood of various trees, which are hard and strong and which soft or pliable, those useful for carving platters, and those used in basketry, the kinds of trees that yield bird-lime, the kinds of bark that can be used for making string. In their constant quest for food, they learn to know every edible fruit, berry, and root in the veld. A herdboy walking along with you will give you the name and uses of almost every tree or shrub you pass in that rich bushveld environment, and once a boy of fifteen astonished us by being able to name over 200 specimens of plants from that area.

854 Besides riding oxen and donkeys, boys play games, some of which
857 resemble European games, such as hide-and-seek, cat-and-mouse, twos-and-threes. One game, that of hurling at a rolling tuber a stick furnished with a circle of points at one end, is recognized as a training in hunting and exactness of aim. Bands of herdboys from neighbouring districts are keen rivals, but sometimes the rivalry is between pagans and Christians. Frequently fights take place. The winners will then milk the goats and ride the oxen of the vanquished, who may be made to undergo the disgrace of driving home the cattle of their conquerors.

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Even if blood flows, no case can be brought against a herdboy, for he is still uncircumcised, irresponsible. 854 857

Training for both boys and girls in home-making is embodied in the institution known as *mandwane*, which, while being little more than a game, is nevertheless accorded adult recognition. Utilization by the children of the harvest gleanings after reaping, which may be regarded as its practical economic aspect, is to-day not much in evidence, but while it lasts women whose sons are taking part are saved the trouble of cooking the evening meal. After the reaping, when the cattle graze in the mealie lands near home, *mandwane* is begun by the girls calling the boys to come and be chosen. They stand in a row while each girl chooses a 'husband' by kneeling before and greeting the boy of her choice. He signifies his consent by answering the greeting. After the parents have been told of their intention to hold *mandwane*, the boys begin to build rough huts in the fields, while the girls smear the floors and courtyards. Each couple may have its own establishment with very often also a small child chosen as their 'child', or one large house for all may be made. With pots, baskets, spoons, and other utensils borrowed from home, the girls stamp mealie meal and cook dishes of porridge, nuts, and pumpkin, while the boys, if they can, bring home birds as relish. The game begins about eleven o'clock in the morning and ends in dancing and singing after dark; this lasts for about ten days or more till, at the end, the miniature village is burnt. Each 'wife', in addition to serving food to her 'husband' in the proper manner, must also take food every evening to her 'mother-in-law' in the boy's home. This is eaten, not by the mother-in-law herself, but by children of the household who are not taking part in the game. Occasionally the elders walk over to watch activities in the play-village and give a word of advice. That the institution is taken seriously by adults is shown by the fact that, though *mandwane* partners never marry, the mother of the girl will very often after the *mandwane* take a gift of beer (usually five calabashes or so) to the parents of her small daughter's 'husband', who will slaughter a goat in recognition of the gift just as though the relationship were real. There is nothing to prevent relatives from being *mandwane* partners. To-day the 'husband' is usually much younger than the 'wife' and the game is confined to children under the age of puberty. Not more than a few years ago, however, boys and girls of marriageable age used to take part, the institution being considered as primarily for them. One of the reasons for the change is the absence of many of the older boys at work in town, while the failure of young men to keep the rules against impregnation in the play sexual intercourse that often forms part of the game makes mothers loath to allow elder girls to join in. 854 868 [431] [883 836]

General behaviour, attitudes, and values are not taught by any formal training. These are inextricably bound up with life in the society and become unconsciously adopted by any one fully partaking in social life. Even a European, when speaking the language and trying to enter into their social activities, finds himself unconsciously taking for granted values that he never had before and which are certainly not to be found in European life. They seem to follow naturally from the social situation 867

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VII. ADOLESCENCE

(*a*) REALISTIC PLAY-COOKING IN THE MANDWANE

(*b*) A TROUPE OF YOUTHFUL DANCERS

[facing p. 112]

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264 woman has finished dishing up, she very often wipes out the pot with her fingers before setting it aside, for utensils are washed just before they are needed—not after use. To prepare the relish a little water is placed in
252 a wide-mouthed cooking dish, the pumpkin leaves and flowers are added and then put on the fire. Within a few minutes the spinach is sufficiently cooked. A handful of salt is put in, the ground monkey nuts are added, the mixture stirred once or twice, when it is ready to be dished up into small black earthen basins.

264 Serving food to guests is a ceremonious affair. The sleeping or reception hut is carefully swept out; the food is placed in it, often before the dust has properly settled, a mat is unrolled and the guests are called to eat. To your surprise, you discover that the host does not dine with honoured guests. A wooden dish of food has been placed in a double basket with a lid. Beside it stands the relish. Mukhadi approaches on her knees with a white enamel basin of water for the guests to wash their hands, then crawls away again, leaving the water to be used again after the meal. Before beginning to eat, the youngest of the visitors claps his hands saying, '*Ndau*.' The rest reply, '*Morena*,' and the meal is begun. Each one, using his fingers, breaks a piece of a mealie meal cake, dips it in the dish of relish and eats it. There is no salt in the porridge, to make up for which the relish is very salt indeed. All eat from one bowl but there is nothing unhygienic in this. When finished you again wash your hands. Light beer, if there is any, may round off the meal.

There is no communal meal and no proper mealtime. Each wife places food for the husband in the reception hut of his chief wife and here he comes to eat any time he wishes. Later the remains will be fetched back to the hut whence it came. Food is not sent from one hut to another, except when special luxury dishes are made, known in general as *madzaga* and usually prepared outside of cooking hours. These are always shared. The younger children sit down to eat with the mother in the courtyard, but the herdboys, in a hurry to take out the cattle, seize several cakes, place some relish on them, and walk off. Metiane, aged four, does not want vegetable relish. He has seen meat prepared in the courtyard of his
861 friend Nagambi and so he refuses spinach. When his mother tries to coax him, he merely sets up a dismal howl; but he is neither severely scolded nor beaten as a European child in such a situation might be. Instead they try to pacify him, till at last the mother of Nagambi, seeing the fuss, brings him a small piece of meat, telling him to be quiet.

512 The cooking done, a general migration takes place, and the village, a hive of industry in the morning, becomes almost if not quite deserted. During the agricultural season one seldom finds people at home in the afternoons. They are all out in the fields. One woman, securing the reed door of her kitchen by means of a wooden stamper balanced against it on the outside, takes a hoe and is off to mound her *njugo* beans. Another is still busy with her weeding. A third, taking a calabash of food with her, goes to join her daughter, who left shortly after sunrise, to make *morula* cider under the trees in their field. It is a process involving considerable labour. Mamadomi is not going to the fields to-day. She wants to smear a fresh coating of dung over her courtyard and to go on with a basket she

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it down and cry, but, beyond a few sympathetic words from his friends 866
and the injunction to be quiet, nothing is done which may enhance his
sense of his own importance. In competition with the growing interests
of the toddler, who is able also to partake of the ordinary food of adults, 862
suckling becomes of less and less importance, indulged in only at night
or when he feels in need of being fondled. His companions, too, many
of them a little older than himself, begin to tell him there are worms in
his mother's breast and perhaps even tease him a little. If there is no
younger brother or sister, a child may continue drinking at his mother's
breast until about four or five years of age and it is not at all an unusual
sight to see a boy of five stealing a drink at his mother's breast before
running off in the morning to herd goats with the others. Most children
leave off drinking quite naturally; sometimes, however, the mother puts
some chili on her breast or a bitter herb to deter the child. It is said that
boys generally like to drink from the breast much longer than do girls, and
certainly it was little boys from three to seven years of age, not little girls,
who used to nestle up to and stealthily fondle one of us.

There is no necessary connexion between weaning and the resumption of 862
sexual intercourse by the parents, which may take place at any time after 833
teething and depends largely upon the number of wives there are. It is,
however, believed that normal sex relations should not be resumed till
after weaning. If they are resumed before the child is able to walk, the
old women who control such relations between husband and wife will
warn the parents to be careful: 'For who will carry both children?' Sex
intercourse on the part of its mother is believed to harm the suckling
child. That is why, when husband and wife resume such relations, some
of the semen of the husband must be smeared all over the child 'that it
may know its father' and not take ill. Often the semen is mixed with
powdered medicine as well as with the vaginal secretions of its mother.
A suckling woman is seldom accused of adultery; it is thought that she
would not wilfully do a thing that is harmful to her child. Christians
resume intercourse after the child is a few months old; such external
intercourse is said by them to 'make the child grow'. The sending of
children to the mother's mother for a few years is likewise not definitely
associated with the weaning, though naturally it cannot take place before.

Grown-ups try to teach children to greet (*lɔsha*) at an early age or they 868
clap their hands to make the toddlers dance, however unsteadily. When a 863
child is able to go on an errand to the next courtyard, this is considered
a great advance. It is then said, 'The child is able to hear.' Bodily
control is not expected of small children; but by the time a child is about
three years old its mother will take it outside the village near the ash heap
and smack it if it messes in the hut or courtyard. At five or six a child
will go out into the bush.

There are few restrictions in the life of a small child: no elders run after 861 ●
him with injunctions not to touch this or that; if he chooses to roll in the [863]
ash heap, he may do so without getting into any greater trouble than a
mild rebuke from his mother, who will tell him she objects to suckling
so dirty a boy. One may see a child playing with a sharp knife without a
word of admonition from his parents. There are no regular hours. A

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●861 child will sleep when it feels sleepy or run about when it is not. Up to the age of about six it will be called to bed by its mother at night, but older children go to bed when they feel inclined, often long after their parents have retired. The only form of washing that may be insisted upon is that of the child's face before eating. In comparison with the life of a European child, constantly under the vigilant eye of a grown-up parent or nurse, surrounded by dangerous or valuable objects which he must not touch, dressed in clothes which he is expected to keep clean, and forced to keep regular hours, Bantu childhood is a wonderfully care-free existence with plenty of good companionship. Constant comradeship with those of his own age tends to make a Lovedu child shy in the presence of grown-ups, especially after the age of about six. But independence of its parents and of adults in general is developed to a marked degree. Small boys of seven will disappear from home to go and visit some relative miles away. Their parents will be unperturbed, though, if they do not return within a few days, they will set out to look for them. Boys of ten or eleven may run away to work with European farmers (though this is infrequent) and prove themselves well able to withstand the unsympathetic treatment they sometimes receive.

The attitude of parents to children is one of indulgence, but there is little spoiling, because parents are busy and a child spends most of his time with those of his own age-group. Punishment of children is infrequent, though threats are common. A child who is disobedient to his father 'will be eaten by the vultures'; and a situation which one sees enacted over and over again is an adult, stick in hand and with many imprecations, chasing away a group of toddlers and young children from the courtyard where a case is being held. The children, screaming and laughing, run away, only to return again within ten minutes, when the same performance has to be repeated. Beatings are relatively infrequent and children are never dealt with by stinting them as regards food or clothes. Small children may be smacked if they steal monkey nuts from their mother's stores; we have seen a child of four beaten on the legs with its mother's string necklace because it was crying for a second mealie when it had already been given one, and herdboys are beaten if they let the cattle stray into the gardens. On the whole, however, beatings are seldom administered, praising of children for their good actions being far more common. Discipline in a Lovedu child's life comes, not from parents, but from children older than himself. When a child gets into tantrums the attitude of adults and older children is one of forbearance; disciplinary action is never thought necessary. Madarabani, in a fit of temper because his sister had upset his tin of grasshopper stew, ran amok, hitting out at his elder brother and treading in the mealie meal put out to dry in the courtyard. Instead of punishing him, as he might have been in a European household, those around him merely tried to calm him: his elder brother humoured him and tried to distract his attention by showing him a double-bladed knife, while his sister tried to make amends by offering him a sweet potato. His mother, busy with her cooking, took no notice.

The personality of a child, his likes and dislikes, are respected by adults,

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as are also any rights of ownership he may have. A child, who has been given a piece of land of his own to cultivate, will dispose of its produce as he pleases, and he may sell it for clothes or allow it to be used by the household. If he has been given fowls and the father wishes to kill one, he will mention it to the child and promise him another. Among parents one does not find the competitive jealousies that are apt to arise between European mothers about the relative size, weight, or health of their children, and there is little or no comparison of babies or boasting of their ability or cleverness. But a very precocious child is not liked; people may suspect that he is being taught to be a witch; and 'he outwits you obliquely [by way of witchcraft]'. Frightening of children by adults is of common occurrence. Not only are children told when naughty that a Shangana-Tonga or European will come and catch them or that a big elephant stalks about the village at night killing small children who will not go to bed, but mothers take pleasure in frightening them even when they are not naughty. Often a mother would try to force her child to come near us when she saw it was afraid or would tell it that we were about to carry it away in our suitcase. When it ran away crying, she would laugh with great merriment. If a small child refuses to greet a relative in the correct manner, his mother might take a knife and threaten to cut him or take hold of a pot and threaten to cook him unless he obeys. But fear of bogies is not excessive and fear is certainly not the only or most effective means of control.

Children learn the tasks required of adults simply by doing them. They are anxious to imitate their elders, and there is never any compulsory element in the teaching of these skills. Moreover, in their education they have this advantage, that it is not carried on in an institution divorced from everyday adult activities. The child feels that he is an essential part of society; all he does is a direct contribution to the domestic economy. If a small girl of five accompanies her mother to the fountain and returns solemnly carrying a diminutive calabash of water on her head, she feels she is doing important work, for her contribution will be used with that of her mother. 'The stick even of a child helps the adult across' and, in fact, a girl of six is able to fill quite a large pot of water for a busy mother by going to and fro with small quantities at a time from the fountain. One night, while sitting in a hut, we watched a girl of seven learning to cook. Fermented porridge was needed for the baby and this the girl set out to make in a small pot in the presence of her mother and several other girls somewhat older than herself who happened to be there. When the water boiled, she put in some ground grain, twirling the porridge twirler between the palms as she had seen her mother do. She took the comments and criticisms of the company with good grace, even when they smiled at her awkwardness. Meanwhile, her mother mentioned to us how useful it would be to have some one who could cook the evening meal on days when she came home late or tired from fetching wood. To a helpful toddler, its mother might say, 'Thank you, my lady' (*Ahee Khoba ya ga*), praising her by implying that she has already reached the maturity and usefulness of a mature young woman; or she may quote the maxim, 'Bearing children is not the same as gathering

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a hole is hollowed out so as to be deep enough for her to sit in (if possible 881
the water should reach the neck) while a fire is kindled for the other girls, at whose pleasure she remains in the water, uttering her wail. If the girl has a good friend among the old women, she may free the initiate from [431]
going to the river after the first morning by a gift of snuff to the elder girls. This is called 'lifting the weight' from the girl (*ku rula*). They return home about eleven o'clock in the morning, when they have their meal. After this the elder girls return to their homes or do as they please, while the novice and her friend remain in their hut. They sleep if they can, for at night they get little chance to do so. During the initiation the girl undergoes harsh treatment at the hands of the older girls. She 'pays', by being beaten, for going to sleep, for waking up and on the slightest pretext. At night her blankets are taken away and used by the older girls, while she lies exposed with no fire to warm her. Not only is she allowed no relish with her porridge, but she may also be given filth to eat. One girl's menstrual blood was put in her porridge, which she immediately vomited up; sometimes a frog is given them to eat and one of us has seen initiates made to eat sand as relish. If she asks for water, the elder girls may clear the nose into it before it is given. All this harsh treatment is looked upon as good discipline.

Initiation at puberty includes instruction in rules connected with 881
the new stage of life the girl is entering upon. She is warned that she 864
has reached maturity and must be careful, in sex play with boys, to avoid becoming pregnant. She is advised also not to have more than one lover at a time, lest there be difficulty in establishing the paternity of her child should she have one. In the old days she was at this stage given a calabash doll which at her marriage was carried in a basket by the wedding party. If she was not virgin, the calabash was pierced. This custom has, however, fallen into disuse. The girl is taught the rules connected with menstruation: not to enter a sick-room while menstruating, not to enter [841]
a cattle kraal, not to sleep with men during her menses. If she has not enlarged her *labia minora* properly, she is severely scolded or punished by having hot, roasted sesamum put on them. In one case the elder girls inserted a mealie cob in an initiate to show her the dangers of intercourse, hurting her so badly that she was unable to walk properly. Her parents complained to the queen, who imposed a heavy fine on each of the elder girls responsible. There is no teaching connected with marriage. An initiate must be respectful to her elders: she is told that if people older than herself are in a hut she must greet (*lusha*) on entering. She is taught in a song to honour and obey her mother. Most of the teaching is in the form of songs or mummeries. The dancing that takes place every night when the women come consists largely of movements in a bent position 881
on the haunches, with arms held above the head for better balance. Some 535
of the dances are associated with the lessons of the initiation: two girls, one with a cloth passed between the legs to represent the loin covering of a man, dance facing each other; the 'man' dances with a lighted firebrand between the legs, the girl wears a cloth which makes her look pregnant. Another dance consists of movements in which legs are held close together, and sometimes crossed, symbolic of the manner in which

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CHAPTER VII

EARLY TRAINING

Nursing and growing up—herdboy gang life and the learning of veld-lore—an institutionalized play-school—'crossing' rites and the significance of ordeals and obscene language—opportunities and satisfactions of old age—the task of the modern school.

000 We have not yet dealt with all the values and arrangements of Lovedu society to which the individual must be adjusted if he is to become a co-operating member. But it will not be premature to give a short review of the moulding process, as we shall thereby be led to consider some striking institutions of the tribe. The moulding of the individual is a lifelong process; yet some of the main characteristics appear early.

853 To the Lovedu the aggressiveness of young European children of two
854 or three years old and their inability to play amicably later on with other children, characteristics natural in a competitive, non-co-operative,
•865 individualistic society like ours, are a source of surprise and often also amusement. 'European children are not like ours,' they say. 'They like very much to fight.' The Lovedu child is from early infancy treated with great lenience and kindness. 'Care for it,' they say even of an uterine child, '*for to-morrow it will care for you*' (*khi lele, ga matso khi lela wena*). There are no struggles for food, no strict rules of feeding. Whenever an infant cries, it is put to the breast. If its mother is away, its grandmother or even the young girl nursing it may put it to their breast to comfort it; but it is strictly forbidden for a suckling mother to allow any but her own child to drink of her milk. A woman who allowed a baby to cry without attending to it and trying to hush it would be severely reprimanded by the older women of the village. A baby is never left alone. Indeed, it is almost as appendix of its mother, at night sleeping against her naked breast, by day being carried on her back in its skin cradle. A woman, it is said, may forget all manner of things, but never the skin cradle of her child. When a mother wants to go out, there is never any problem as to what to do with baby. He is simply strapped to her back to accompany her, and should she choose to dance at a ceremony, even the most violent jumping movements would leave him unperturbed. So accustomed does a Lovedu baby become to his position on his mother's back that, when picked up, he quite naturally stretches out his feet at right angles to his body. While his mother stamps or hoes, the baby will be nursed by his grandmother or a nurse girl a little older than himself. This mode of life and treatment gives the child a sense of security, safety, and warmth. His wants are immediately attended to and the absence of cloth spares him even such small discomforts as wet napkins.

866 Before the long suckling period is over, the child is already walking and forms part of a group of toddlers, who give him his first lessons in independence. If he falls and hurts himself while playing with them, there is no one to fuss over him; if another child hits him, he will hit back or

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867 and to be bound up with language itself. A group of small girls were playing house in the sand with twigs and pebbles and tiny pots moulded in clay. 'What have you got in those pots?' we asked. '*Uyalwa*' (beer), came the reply, but the intonation and meaning they put into the word, the expression on their faces as they said it, implied a whole social situation. It was clear that, young as they were, the word 'beer' meant to them, not just a drink or food like porridge, but something prized and valuable, yet a source of pleasure and joy, something important in life. In short, they had a Lovedu attitude to beer, an attitude that has no parallel in European society. Certainly no European child could have conveyed what they did in that single word.

Where the standards of the society are apt to conflict to some extent with personal desires, as in the inculcation of good manners, censure and praise become important. If a child does not accept a gift with both hands he is told to do so with some remark, if he is big enough and should know better, calculated to rebuke him. Good manners in eating consists in avoiding noisy or hurried swallowing (one can smack one's lips to one's heart's content) and in sitting flat on the buttocks, not standing or squatting. Great importance is attached to the sharing of food: if any one approaches while you eat, he is automatically invited to share it by the words, 'We are eating.' His reply is either a refusal or consists in his sitting down to join you. Even small children are made to share tit-bits with their companions. If you give some sweets to good-mannered children such as you find in parts unaffected by the modern self-seeking spirit, you will still see how an elder girl calls all the children to sit down round the sweets. They eat slowly and decorously, each taking a second sweet when the first is finished with no sign of greed or hurry, in spite of the fact that they rarely see sweets. This does not mean that Lovedu children do not on occasion try to hide their sweets from others; but greater stress is laid on sharing food by them than by us and, what is more important, there are always half a dozen other children on the spot to share whatever is given. A child is taught to respect those older than himself, especially adults in whose presence there must be no swearing or bad language. When sent on errands, he must obey gracefully without grumbling. A child who observes these rules will be praised by adults to other children. They will say, 'The child of So-and-so is very polite, has good manners.'

The qualities that are most admired in adults and that therefore are most insisted upon in children are generosity and unselfishness and ability to live in peace with others. Quarrelsomeness is one of the worst faults. Thus it is that, when children fight or quarrel, there is never any inquiry into who began the trouble; both are beaten, so that next time, even when in the right, the child will be afraid to fight. There is a proverb that 'it is the child that cries who is given to eat' (*mayona ha la ye a ilako*) and in later life misplaced modesty as regards asking for the things one needs is deprecated. A man who as a guest diffidently nibbles at instead of enjoying the food lavished upon him by his host or who timidly passes by instead of begging for beer, even if it is the beer-party of the chief, suffers a loss for which only his over-sensitiveness is to blame,

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CHAPTER VII

EARLY TRAINING

Nursing and growing up—herdboy gang life and the learning of veld-lore—an institutionalized play-school—'crossing' rites and the significance of ordeals and obscene language—opportunities and satisfactions of old age—the task of the modern school.

000 We have not yet dealt with all the values and arrangements of Lovedu society to which the individual must be adjusted if he is to become a co-operating member. But it will not be premature to give a short review of the moulding process, as we shall thereby be led to consider some striking institutions of the tribe. The moulding of the individual is a lifelong process; yet some of the main characteristics appear early.

853 To the Lovedu the aggressiveness of young European children of two
854 or three years old and their inability to play amicably later on with other children, characteristics natural in a competitive, non-co-operative,
865 individualistic society like ours, are a source of surprise and often also amusement. 'European children are not like ours,' they say. 'They like very much to fight.' The Lovedu child is from early infancy treated with great lenience and kindness. 'Care for it,' they say even of an uterine child, 'for to-morrow it will care for you' (*khi lele, ga matso khi lela wena*). There are no struggles for food, no strict rules of feeding. Whenever an infant cries, it is put to the breast. If its mother is away, its grandmother or even the young girl nursing it may put it to their breast to comfort it; but it is strictly forbidden for a suckling mother to allow any but her own child to drink of her milk. A woman who allowed a baby to cry without attending to it and trying to hush it would be severely reprimanded by the older women of the village. A baby is never left alone. Indeed, it is almost an appendix of its mother, at night sleeping against her naked breast, by day being carried on her back in its skin cradle. A woman, it is said, may forget all manner of things, but never the skin cradle of her child. When a mother wants to go out, there is never any problem as to what to do with baby. He is simply strapped to her back to accompany her, and should she choose to dance at a ceremony, even the most violent jumping movements would leave him unperturbed. So accustomed does a Lovedu baby become to his position on his mother's back that, when picked up, he quite naturally stretches out his feet at right angles to his body. While his mother stamps or hoes, the baby will be nursed by his grandmother or a nurse girl a little older than himself. This mode of life and treatment gives the child a sense of security, safety, and warmth. His wants are immediately attended to and the absence of cloth spares him even such small discomforts as wet napkins.

●866 Before the long suckling period is over, the child is already walking and forms part of a group of toddlers, who give him his first lessons in independence. If he falls and hurts himself while playing with them, there is no one to fuss over him; if another child hits him, he will hit back or

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sit down and cry, but, beyond a few sympathetic words from his friends 866
and the injunction to be quiet, nothing is done which may enhance his sense of his own importance. In competition with the growing interests of the toddler, who is able also to partake of the ordinary food of adults, 862
suckling becomes of less and less importance, indulged in only at night or when he feels in need of being fondled. His companions, too, many of them a little older than himself, begin to tell him there are worms in his mother's breast and perhaps even tease him a little. If there is no younger brother or sister, a child may continue drinking at his mother's breast until about four or five years of age and it is not at all an unusual sight to see a boy of five stealing a drink at his mother's breast before running off in the morning to herd goats with the others. Most children leave off drinking quite naturally; sometimes, however, the mother puts some chili on her breast or a bitter herb to deter the child. It is said that boys generally like to drink from the breast much longer than do girls, and certainly it was little boys from three to seven years of age, not little girls, who used to nestle up to and stealthily fondle one of us.

There is no necessary connexion between weaning and the resumption of 862
sexual intercourse by the parents, which may take place at any time after 833
teething and depends largely upon the number of wives there are. It is, however, believed that normal sex relations should not be resumed till after weaning. If they are resumed before the child is able to walk, the old women who control such relations between husband and wife will warn the parents to be careful: 'For who will carry both children?' Sex intercourse on the part of its mother is believed to harm the suckling child. That is why, when husband and wife resume such relations, some of the semen of the husband must be smeared all over the child 'that it may know its father' and not take ill. Often the semen is mixed with powdered medicine as well as with the vaginal secretions of its mother. A suckling woman is seldom accused of adultery; it is thought that she would not wilfully do a thing that is harmful to her child. Christians resume intercourse after the child is a few months old; such external intercourse is said by them to 'make the child grow'. The sending of children to the mother's mother for a few years is likewise not definitely associated with the weaning, though naturally it cannot take place before.

Grown-ups try to teach children to greet (*lɔsha*) at an early age or they 868
clap their hands to make the toddlers dance, however unsteadily. When a 863
child is able to go on an errand to the next courtyard, this is considered a great advance. It is then said, 'The child is able to hear.' Bodily control is not expected of small children; but by the time a child is about three years old its mother will take it outside the village near the ash heap and smack it if it messes in the hut or courtyard. At five or six a child will go out into the bush.

There are few restrictions in the life of a small child: no elders run after 861
him with injunctions not to touch this or that; if he chooses to roll in the [863]
ash heap, he may do so without getting into any greater trouble than a mild rebuke from his mother, who will tell him she objects to suckling so dirty a boy. One may see a child playing with a sharp knife without a word of admonition from his parents. There are no regular hours. A

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Even if blood flows, no case can be brought against a herdboy, for he is still uncircumcised, irresponsible.

Training for both boys and girls in home-making is embodied in the institution known as *mandwane*, which, while being little more than a game, is nevertheless accorded adult recognition. Utilization by the children of the harvest gleanings after reaping, which may be regarded as its practical economic aspect, is to-day not much in evidence, but while it lasts women whose sons are taking part are saved the trouble of cooking the evening meal. After the reaping, when the cattle graze in the mealie lands near home, *mandwane* is begun by the girls calling the boys to come and be chosen. They stand in a row while each girl chooses a 'husband' by kneeling before and greeting the boy of her choice. He signifies his consent by answering the greeting. After the parents have been told of their intention to hold *mandwane*, the boys begin to build rough huts in the fields, while the girls smear the floors and courtyards. Each couple may have its own establishment with very often also a small child chosen as their 'child', or one large house for all may be made. With pots, baskets, spoons, and other utensils borrowed from home, the girls stamp mealie meal and cook dishes of porridge, nuts, and pumpkin, while the boys, if they can, bring home birds as relish. The game begins about eleven o'clock in the morning and ends in dancing and singing after dark; this lasts for about ten days or more till, at the end, the miniature village is burnt. Each 'wife', in addition to serving food to her 'husband' in the proper manner, must also take food every evening to her 'mother-in-law' in the boy's home. This is eaten, not by the mother-in-law herself, but by children of the household who are not taking part in the game. Occasionally the elders walk over to watch activities in the play-village and give a word of advice. That the institution is taken seriously by adults is shown by the fact that, though *mandwane* partners never marry, the mother of the girl will very often after the *mandwane* take a gift of beer (usually five calabashes or so) to the parents of her small daughter's 'husband', who will slaughter a goat in recognition of the gift just as though the relationship were real. There is nothing to prevent relatives from being *mandwane* partners. To-day the 'husband' is usually much younger than the 'wife' and the game is confined to children under the age of puberty. Not more than a few years ago, however, boys and girls of marriageable age used to take part, the institution being considered as primarily for them. One of the reasons for the change is the absence of many of the older boys at work in town, while the failure of young men to keep the rules against impregnation in the play sexual intercourse that often forms part of the game makes mothers loath to allow elder girls to join in.

General behaviour, attitudes, and values are not taught by any formal training. These are inextricably bound up with life in the society and become unconsciously adopted by any one fully partaking in social life. Even a European, when speaking the language and trying to enter into their social activities, finds himself unconsciously taking for granted values that he never had before and which are certainly not to be found in European life. They seem to follow naturally from the social situation

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867 and to be bound up with language itself. A group of small girls were playing house in the sand with twigs and pebbles and tiny pots moulded in clay. 'What have you got in those pots?' we asked. '*Vyalwa*' (beer), came the reply, but the intonation and meaning they put into the word, the expression on their faces as they said it, implied a whole social situation. It was clear that, young as they were, the word 'beer' meant to them, not just a drink or food like porridge, but something prized and valuable, yet a source of pleasure and joy, something important in life. In short, they had a Lovedu attitude to beer, an attitude that has no parallel in European society. Certainly no European child could have conveyed what they did in that single word.

Where the standards of the society are apt to conflict to some extent with personal desires, as in the inculcation of good manners, censure and praise become important. If a child does not accept a gift with both hands he is told to do so with some remark, if he is big enough and should know better, calculated to rebuke him. Good manners in eating consists in avoiding noisy or hurried swallowing (one can smack one's lips to one's heart's content) and in sitting flat on the buttocks, not standing or squatting. Great importance is attached to the sharing of food: if any one approaches while you eat, he is automatically invited to share it by the words, 'We are eating.' His reply is either a refusal or consists in his sitting down to join you. Even small children are made to share tit-bits with their companions. If you give some sweets to good-mannered children such as you find in parts unaffected by the modern self-seeking spirit, you will still see how an elder girl calls all the children to sit down round the sweets. They eat slowly and decorously, each taking a second sweet when the first is finished with no sign of greed or hurry, in spite of the fact that they rarely see sweets. This does not mean that Lovedu children do not on occasion try to hide their sweets from others; but greater stress is laid on sharing food by them than by us and, what is more important, there are always half a dozen other children on the spot to share whatever is given. A child is taught to respect those older than himself, especially adults in whose presence there must be no swearing or bad language. When sent on errands, he must obey gracefully without grumbling. A child who observes these rules will be praised by adults to other children. They will say, 'The child of So-and-so is very polite, has good manners.'

The qualities that are most admired in adults and that therefore are most insisted upon in children are generosity and unselfishness and ability to live in peace with others. Quarrelsomeness is one of the worst
[865] faults. Thus it is that, when children fight or quarrel, there is never any inquiry into who began the trouble; both are beaten, so that next time, even when in the right, the child will be afraid to fight. There is a proverb that 'it is the child that cries who is given to eat' (*muyana hu la ye a ilaho*) and in later life misplaced modesty as regards asking for the things one needs is deprecated. A man who as a guest diffidently nibbles at instead of enjoying the food lavished upon him by his host or who timidly passes by instead of begging for beer, even if it is the beer-party of the chief, suffers a loss for which only his over-sensitiveness is to blame,

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for as they phrase it, 'If you are ashamed of gnawing a bone, you will presently throw it away, meat and all.' Closely associated with that irritating characteristic of the Lovedu, especially Lovedu women, which the European terms shameless, unblushing beggary, is the aversion to theft. A child is told a thousand times, 'Always just ask (*hobɛla*) for anything you may want; never steal.' And whenever there has been a theft it is said, 'People should beg (*hobɛla*), not steal.' It is only when you get great differences in wealth, as when a European comes among Natives, that this custom becomes irritating. In this begging from Europeans, Natives do exceed the canons of politeness even of their own society, but many consider it of little consequence in dealings with the European, who, after all, is notoriously ill-mannered in his dealings with Natives. 867

Correct use of terms of relationship or address is not expected till after puberty and the young child, only gradually learning not to call people older than itself by their everyday names, makes many mistakes. One would think that the formal behaviour required in such complicated ceremonial as that of marriage visits would require some form of special instruction. This is, however, not the case. A young man learns these things simply by hearing others talk, while a girl, by forming part of bridal parties when others in her village are married, comes to learn what is required of her. These facts bear out what experience shows, viz. that formalities are not so rigid as one is apt to imagine. Proper respect, politeness, and correct behaviour, involving use of the right terms of address to those older than yourself, are not insisted upon till after the puberty initiation in the case of a girl and circumcision in the case of a boy. Before this you are regarded as irresponsible, without proper knowledge of how to behave, lacking judgement and that wisdom in personal relationships associated with adults. You are a *leshovoro*.

It is significant, however, that, especially in the case of girls, a single ceremony is not considered sufficient to effect this great transformation to responsibility and adult status. In addition to her own puberty ceremony (*khɔba*), every girl has to attend and take part in a number of subsequent puberty ceremonies in the area—six in the royal area, four of five in other areas. At the first ceremony after her own she is a *thɔvɔyana*, who sits in seclusion with the *khɔba*, eats of the same food and, like her, is allowed no relish, is beaten hard and takes no part in the dancing at night. Instead, however, of having to go early each morning to the river with the initiate, she fetches water and helps with the cooking. The other *dithɔvɔyana* are responsible for all the work: they fetch wood and water, stamp, and cook; they run errands for the elder girls who have finished their course of initiation and wait on them; they carry the drums to the river and may be made to sit in the water with the initiate. 881

In control of the ceremony are the elder girls who have been fully initiated (*dishɔlwe*). They walk about with a great sense of their own importance and have to be royally entertained. It is essential that there be plenty of good food at an initiation ceremony. Mealie meal is cooked twice a day, much light beer is made, and monkey nuts and other delicacies are abundantly supplied. At one ceremony, lasting six days, a whole bag of mealie meal was consumed by the girls—that is, more than

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with women is not to be used within the lodge at all. There is a rounded 881
ball of porridge set upon a stick which is stuck into the food brought to 831
the boys and it is called *khigɔgɔnɔ* (clitoris); when the boys sit down by the tables or fire they are ordered to 'close the anus' and have to press one heel into the anus as they sit; and undoubtedly many of the formulae appear to have obscene references. But it would be a very great surprise to a Lovedu boy to learn that the *vudiga* teaches anything about sex or that there is anything obscene in it. Indeed, they know but disapprove of the delight in obscenity at the Shangana-Ṭonga lodges.

There is little direct teaching. One of the trials, that of hopping along 881
with a stick, sharpened at both ends and pressed between the knees, is 867
said to remind the boys that they must not defecate on the road, but should go into the bush. But note that little Mulati was too young to undergo it, Khiebe escaped it because his uncle 'stood for him', and Mudiva was sleeping in the hedge on the night it was undergone. The boys are all told they should avoid women since for a long time the wound will be liable to reopen and become bad. They are also warned not to divulge the secrets of the lodge. But that is practically the sum total of the direct admonitions. The laws and songs and formulae do not contain any precepts that the initiates understand or can bring into relation with virtues. And the same may be said of the punishments and ordeals. These things have nothing to do with moral standards or the inculcation of knowledge of facts. But they contribute to the general atmosphere, and their effect, in the context of the whole, is tremendous. The initiation is something different from ordinary life. Its genius lies, not in direct teaching, but in the manner in which the values of the society are emphasized. The final effect is to transform the boys into men; and certainly the situation is manipulated with consummate skill to attain this end. To us everything may appear meaningless. But we hardly realize how small is the life-adjustment value of mere verbal knowledge of facts and how important is the inculcation of a new set of standards. We know of these things from such religious experiences as conversion. The *vudiga* performs the same function; it is a turning away from the things of childhood and a turning towards the things of adulthood. Our pedagogical techniques might be tenfold more effective if they relied more upon the methods of the soap-box orator, of commercial advertising, and even of the yellow Press. Symbols and slogans, skilful manipulation of psychological situations, the play upon sentiments rooted in the cultural background—these are the methods of the *vudiga* as they are also the methods of our most skilful propaganda and our most effective advertisements. Who can deny that they contribute more to the moulding of our values and of our behaviour than do the science and history and mathematics in our schools? Perhaps it is fortunate that our pedagogical techniques are impotent, for the somewhat unrealistic world of our schools would otherwise wholly unfit us for life. But the technique of the lodge, though it teaches no verbal knowledge of facts, is effective and there is nothing in the *vudiga* which is out of harmony with the realities of life.

Consider for a moment the situation as the boys 'stab the elephant'.

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881 Consider for a moment the situation as the boys stab the elephant
533 As they do so, the old men, mature in their wisdom, kindly guardians of
●867 the initiates, slowly and solemnly 'sing with signs' (*va rema zwega*). These *zwega* are often also an accompaniment of the songs of the boys, in themselves most exquisite poetry. Many of the 'signs' are unintelligible, e.g. 'You may bring me a skin cradle. I am carrying an infant, my little children'; or 'The guinea fowls are crying; they are scratching for food, my children.' The old men always greet the novices, *vana va ga* (my little ones), though to one another and to the shepherds they are *vaɔi* (witches). The old men also chant proverbs and sayings, warnings and advice, all manner of admonitions and encouragement, some stereotyped, some extempore. To enumerate them would be to enumerate the virtues that are esteemed and the vices that are condemned in the society. 'I told you, O novice, but you plugged your ears with plugs of wood' is a general admonition, reminding the boys that, when they were young, they often were disobedient and now their errors are being expiated. Young boys are often told that, when they go to the *vudiga*, their impudence and disobedience will make their trials harder. 'Beware', a man might say to a youngster who is unwilling to help him or an elder. 'The *vudiga* is not far off; you will find no one to lift the weight from your head.' The virtues that are inculcated in this way are merely those the boys have heard of a thousand times in their ordinary lives. Again, one must not imagine that the boys take more note of the words of the old men in the lodge than we do when we sing a hymn in church, but they know that those *zwega* and admonitions express the fundamental values and ideals in the society: generosity, respectfulness and obedience to the elders, helpfulness, and so on. 'Give your seat up to an old man, carry his bundle for him on the road, go with him further than he asks you, do not mock at the blind or cripple'—these are some of the things one old man may say, whereas another will condemn theft and adultery and extol mutuality and modesty, almost impersonally, it is true, but always beautifully, solemnly, and effectively. These things sink into the minds of the novices, not as so many individual precepts, but as part of the ritual of the lodge, all indivisibly united into one whole concretion of values and sentiments. A man will say that the *vudiga* is a wonderful thing, but he will be at a loss to tell you anything concrete that it teaches. For you cannot dissect out a precept here and an example there—it is all one, like life itself.

881 We may now, before proceeding to adult education, touch upon a few
831 aspects of the *vudiga* and the *khɔba*. Besides breaking the girl's attachment to the things of her childhood, the *khɔba* stresses the importance and dangers of sexual maturity. But it can hardly be said that the *vudiga* is much concerned with the sudden emergence of a capacity for true sexual experience. Both institutions help us to understand the meaning and methods of attaining social adulthood; but they belong to different cultural backgrounds and are derived from different cultural sources. They are not counterparts of one another. The *khɔba* is indigenous, the *vudiga* is foreign. We cannot here study the manner in which these two institutions, as well as the *vyali* and *vuhwera* (two further initiations for boys and girls), have merged with the different cultures in neighbouring tribes though the varying acceptance or rejection or

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sit down and cry, but, beyond a few sympathetic words from his friends 866
and the injunction to be quiet, nothing is done which may enhance his sense of his own importance. In competition with the growing interests of the toddler, who is able also to partake of the ordinary food of adults, 862
suckling becomes of less and less importance, indulged in only at night or when he feels in need of being fondled. His companions, too, many of them a little older than himself, begin to tell him there are worms in his mother's breast and perhaps even tease him a little. If there is no younger brother or sister, a child may continue drinking at his mother's breast until about four or five years of age and it is not at all an unusual sight to see a boy of five stealing a drink at his mother's breast before running off in the morning to herd goats with the others. Most children leave off drinking quite naturally; sometimes, however, the mother puts some chili on her breast or a bitter herb to deter the child. It is said that boys generally like to drink from the breast much longer than do girls, and certainly it was little boys from three to seven years of age, not little girls, who used to nestle up to and stealthily fondle one of us.

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as are also any rights of ownership he may have. A child, who has been given a piece of land of his own to cultivate, will dispose of its produce as he pleases, and he may sell it for clothes or allow it to be used by the household. If he has been given fowls and the father wishes to kill one, he will mention it to the child and promise him another. Among parents one does not find the competitive jealousies that are apt to arise between European mothers about the relative size, weight, or health of their children, and there is little or no comparison of babies or boasting of their ability or cleverness. But a very precocious child is not liked; people may suspect that he is being taught to be a witch; and 'he outwits you obliquely [by way of witchcraft]'. Frightening of children by adults is of common occurrence. Not only are children told when naughty that a Shangana-Tonga or European will come and catch them or that a big elephant stalks about the village at night killing small children who will not go to bed, but mothers take pleasure in frightening them even when they are not naughty. Often a mother would try to force her child to come near us when she saw it was afraid or would tell it that we were about to carry it away in our suitcase. When it ran away crying, she would laugh with great merriment. If a small child refuses to greet a relative in the correct manner, his mother might take a knife and threaten to cut him or take hold of a pot and threaten to cook him unless he obeys. But fear of bogies is not excessive and fear is certainly not the only or most effective means of control.

Children learn the tasks required of adults simply by doing them. They are anxious to imitate their elders, and there is never any compulsory element in the teaching of these skills. Moreover, in their education they have this advantage, that it is not carried on in an institution divorced from everyday adult activities. The child feels that he is an essential part of society; all he does is a direct contribution to the domestic economy. If a small girl of five accompanies her mother to the fountain and returns solemnly carrying a diminutive calabash of water on her head, she feels she is doing important work, for her contribution will be used with that of her mother. 'The stick even of a child helps the adult across' and, in fact, a girl of six is able to fill quite a large pot of water for a busy mother by going to and fro with small quantities at a time from the fountain. One night, while sitting in a hut, we watched a girl of seven learning to cook. Fermented porridge was needed for the baby and this the girl set out to make in a small pot in the presence of her mother and several other girls somewhat older than herself who happened to be there. When the water boiled, she put in some ground grain, twirling the porridge twirler between the palms as she had seen her mother do. She took the comments and criticisms of the company with good grace, even when they smiled at her awkwardness. Meanwhile, her mother mentioned to us how useful it would be to have some one who could cook the evening meal on days when she came home late or tired from fetching wood. To a helpful toddler, its mother might say, 'Thank you, my lady' (*Ahee Khoba ya ga*), praising her by implying that she has already reached the maturity and usefulness of a mature young woman; or she may quote the maxim, 'Bearing children is not the same as gathering

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868 greens' (*hu bɛ ba hasi hu ka murɔho*), meaning that children are always of value, unlike relish, which can be used once only.

It is not so much technical skill as usefulness and willingness to help that are the great virtues. There is great tolerance of mediocre achievement and no one is made to suffer humiliation on account of it. Whenever she gets the chance, a small girl will, when her mother is stamping, try to follow suit, often with a play stamper specially made for her, and it is surprising how quickly a child will learn to winnow. Girls of from eight to ten are able to do almost every kind of housework, including the preparation of a meal. Beer-making, which requires considerable skill, is, however, not learnt till after puberty, and heavy work, such as carrying wood, is not done by young children. At the age of ten or eleven, a girl may be given a small portion of her grandmother's field to cultivate for herself. She will plant the crops she likes—lots of sugar-cane and also mealies and groundnuts—and in the disposal of these she acts as she pleases. Girls also learn the art of collecting leaves for relish: which plants can be used, which leaves are the most tasty and at what time of the year they should be picked.

857 Most children are pleased to help a little in the household tasks, for there are not very many outside diversions. They have, however, plenty of time also for play and are gloriously free to romp on moonlight nights long after their parents have retired to bed. As with us, play among the Lovedu is largely directed to the learning of skills useful in later life. A popular pastime of children is dancing, usually among small girls, to the accompaniment of drumming on paraffin tins. At adult dances young girls seize every opportunity in between dances to practise on the drums and, when the dance is in full swing and the men in a ring round the drums are bursting their cheeks as they blow their reed pipes, it is not unusual to see five or six small boys of from three to six years old going round on the outside, reed in mouth, imitating every movement of the adults. In the games of girls (those of boys will be discussed later), imitation of adult activities, such as a game resembling initiation mummeries and play-cooking, loom large. Sometimes they build miniature villages, mould small clay pots, and pretend to cook, but often their play takes a more real form. We have seen a group of small girls collect ripe morula fruits to make their own cider in pots borrowed from home. Next day, when it was ready, they all sat down solemnly to drink it, passing round the clay dish with great dignity, as they had seen grown-ups do. A group of small boys hung around in the hope of being invited to join in and they were not disappointed. The cider was perhaps a little dirty (small girls are not particular about washing hands before pressing out the juice), but the boys found it wonderfully good.

868 262 The education of a boy is received largely through the institution of herding. His first introduction to herding is pleasant enough. At the age of four or five he sets out with one of the bigger boys, who carries food for him, since he is as yet too young to remain long without a meal. Now he has his first taste of goat's milk, the food of herdboys, who do not notice the smell that nauseates adults. The goats are milked into hollows scooped out in rocks, into which juice of various kinds of acid

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fruits, such as *ditshidi*, may be squeezed to cause curds, eaten by means of a certain kinds of grass or leaves. At this stage the boy goes out with his protector to herd or stays at home with his nurse just as he pleases. Soon, however, he must begin seriously to herd goats and donkeys near home with other boys of his age. He finds this irksome at first and whenever he can he tries to remain at home with the girls. But his father will tell him that always being in women's company will make him grow up to be a coward; visitors coming to the village will ask, 'Are you herding yet?' and boys older than himself may begin to beat him if he does not accompany them, so that in the end he finds himself going out day after day to herd, whether his own father has goats and cattle or not. In the old days, when cattle raids were feared, full-grown men herded cattle; to-day this is not seen, except sometimes when on a rainy day an adult will go out with the cattle to prevent his children from getting coughs and colds. On wet days rough shelters are made, in which the herdboys sit round a fire. Just as the work of girls in the home as nursemaids and helpers forms an integral part of the whole economic structure of society, so herding is an important and essential activity. This the herdboy knows and feels.

Herding is a form of gang life in which a boy and his age-mates are very strictly controlled by those just older than themselves. It is the only discipline to which he is subjected outside the circumcision lodge, and it is characteristic of the society, that boys and girls both in and out of the formal initiation 'schools' are disciplined, not by adults, but by the group just older than themselves. It is the adults, more especially old people, who sometimes intervene on their behalf, lightening their burden. Much of what they are taught in the 'schools' likewise comes from the next age-set. As an educational principle, this is of considerable value: children learn more easily and more willingly from other children than from adults, and every boy knows that soon he too will enjoy the privilege of authority over those younger than he is. In herding, the smaller boys are made to do most of the unpleasant work. They are left to herd on hot afternoons while those older than themselves indulge in games and amusements; they have to fetch and carry for older boys and are often bullied into fighting one another. Constant fear of being made to fight decided a boy of eight to run away to his mother's brother's place. But there he had also to herd and, instead of escaping the fights he found so distasteful, he was again pitted against and worsted by boys stronger than himself. Every group of herdboys has its leader (*sholwe*), usually the strongest of the group. He and the other elder boys have many privileges. The younger boys have to do the fagging and, if they find a tree with ripe fruit, they may neither climb it nor pick fruit till they have called the older boys, who, after eating their fill, will allow them to have their turn. One branch must, however, be left untouched for the leader of the group. When cattle have strayed, the men beat only the bigger boys, knowing that the smaller ones will already have been punished by their seniors. Herdboys have their own standards, not always in accord with that of the rest of society. They steal sugar-cane, nuts, mealies from other people's fields; sometimes they collect honey from hives in the bush

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868 surrounding graves, a practice that is strictly taboo; they may even steal
854 fowls to kill and eat, but in this they are invariably discovered and severely
857 beaten. Among girls the emphasis upon the rights of seniority is in abeyance until initiation at puberty.

Herding and its concomitant activities afford an excellent education to the growing boy, one designed to fit him for the sort of life led by adults in the old days and which, even in the changed circumstances of to-day, gives him much of value that it would be impossible to get in any school. A good deal of time is spent in hunting and trapping birds, cane-rats, squirrels, rabbits, and, near the forests, domestic cats that have become wild. Boys become experts in the use of the bow and bulb-headed arrow and in hunting learn much that is useful about the habits of animals. But this is of small importance beside other aspects of their training while herding. Everything a boy uses in hunting or in play he has to make himself. He fashions his own bow and arrows, his own traps. If boys wish to play a game of *khorokho*, which somewhat resembles hockey, they must cut out and shape their own clubs. They have no toys but those they have made themselves, and toy-making gives them a wonderful training in handicrafts. Herdboys mould clay oxen and manufacture toy wagons, motor cars, guns, sleds in a number of different mediums—wood, clay, mealie pith, prickly pear leaves. One day the herdboys near us would all make watches (one boy even had a locust inside his to move the hands!); on another they all came home wearing spectacles made of mealie pith, exact replicas, cleverly constructed, of those they had seen us wear. In February and March, when the grass is long, they weave grass arm bands and hats and caps of various shapes and sizes. They make a humming top of a hard-shelled fruit, *mufuri* (*Oncoba spinosa*) and ropes to put through the nostrils of riding oxen for reins; they make their own musical instruments and cut reed pipes for their own play-dances. In this manner herdboys learn to know a vast number of useful things about their environment—the uses and quality of the wood of various trees, which are hard and strong and which soft or pliable, those useful for carving platters, and those used in basketry, the kinds of trees that yield bird-lime, the kinds of bark that can be used for making string. In their constant quest for food, they learn to know every edible fruit, berry, and root in the veld. A herdboy walking along with you will give you the name and uses of almost every tree or shrub you pass in that rich bushveld environment, and once a boy of fifteen astonished us by being able to name over 200 specimens of plants from that area.

854 Besides riding oxen and donkeys, boys play games, some of which
857 resemble European games, such as hide-and-seek, cat-and-mouse, twos-and-threes. One game, that of hurling at a rolling tuber a stick furnished with a circle of points at one end, is recognized as a training in hunting and exactness of aim. Bands of herdboys from neighbouring districts are keen rivals, but sometimes the rivalry is between pagans and Christians. Frequently fights take place. The winners will then milk the goats and ride the oxen of the vanquished, who may be made to undergo the disgrace of driving home the cattle of their conquerors.

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Even if blood flows, no case can be brought against a herdboy, for he is still uncircumcised, irresponsible. 854 857

Training for both boys and girls in home-making is embodied in the institution known as *mangwane*, which, while being little more than a game, is nevertheless accorded adult recognition. Utilization by the children of the harvest gleanings after reaping, which may be regarded as its practical economic aspect, is to-day not much in evidence, but while it lasts women whose sons are taking part are saved the trouble of cooking the evening meal. After the reaping, when the cattle graze in the mealie lands near home, *mangwane* is begun by the girls calling the boys to come and be chosen. They stand in a row while each girl chooses a 'husband' by kneeling before and greeting the boy of her choice. He signifies his consent by answering the greeting. After the parents have been told of their intention to hold *mangwane*, the boys begin to build rough huts in the fields, while the girls smear the floors and courtyards. Each couple may have its own establishment with very often also a small child chosen as their 'child', or one large house for all may be made. With pots, baskets, spoons, and other utensils borrowed from home, the girls stamp mealie meal and cook dishes of porridge, nuts, and pumpkin, while the boys, if they can, bring home birds as relish. The game begins about eleven o'clock in the morning and ends in dancing and singing after dark; this lasts for about ten days or more till, at the end, the miniature village is burnt. Each 'wife', in addition to serving food to her 'husband' in the proper manner, must also take food every evening to her 'mother-in-law' in the boy's home. This is eaten, not by the mother-in-law herself, but by children of the household who are not taking part in the game. Occasionally the elders walk over to watch activities in the play-village and give a word of advice. That the institution is taken seriously by adults is shown by the fact that, though *mangwane* [431] partners never marry, the mother of the girl will very often after the *mangwane* take a gift of beer (usually five calabashes or so) to the parents of her small daughter's 'husband', who will slaughter a goat in recognition of the gift just as though the relationship were real. There is nothing to prevent relatives from being *mangwane* partners. To-day the 'husband' is usually much younger than the 'wife' and the game is confined to children under the age of puberty. Not more than a few years ago, how- [883 ever, boys and girls of marriageable age used to take part, the institution being considered as primarily for them. One of the reasons for the 836] change is the absence of many of the older boys at work in town, while the failure of young men to keep the rules against impregnation in the play sexual intercourse that often forms part of the game makes mothers loath to allow elder girls to join in. 854 868

General behaviour, attitudes, and values are not taught by any formal training. These are inextricably bound up with life in the society and become unconsciously adopted by any one fully partaking in social life. Even a European, when speaking the language and trying to enter into their social activities, finds himself unconsciously taking for granted values that he never had before and which are certainly not to be found in European life. They seem to follow naturally from the social situation 867

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has begun making. Her small daughter under puberty has, however, to 512
fetch the dung, as their cattle kraal has not been doctored to make it safe [784]
for women to enter without harming the cattle. The old mother of the village head sits basking in the sun in the courtyard, guarding the drying nuts and mealies from the fowls that wander freely about the huts now that the people are away. She wields a long stick and every time a fowl approaches whacks at it to chase it off.

The only sound that can now be heard in the village is the thud of 252
three stampers. A woman and two girls are finishing off their stamping begun two hours before. They pound with long, wooden stampers into large, hour-glass-shaped blocks of wood with brisk up-and-down movements from the waist. It is hard work requiring a fair amount of skill. The first stage in stamping is the *hu thovola* process; hard mealie grains are placed in the stamping block, a little water added, and stamping begins. When the outer husks are loose the grains are placed in a flat winnowing basket, where, with an up-and-down movement, the husks are separated out and allowed to fall on the ground. These will later on be used for [231]
feeding pigs. The de-husked grains are put back into the block to be further pounded. After a time this is winnowed again in the basket, the lighter husks being made to fall on top of the rough husks of the first winnowing. The husks of the second winnowing are used for making light beer (*mabudu*) and could in time of scarcity be used for porridge. After being stamped a third time, the maize is generally winnowed into a basket, for the third winnowings are used to make *vuthithi*, a coarsish porridge darker in colour than *vusva*. What is now left of the mealie grains looks like rather rounded grains of very white rice. This ends the first stage in stamping. Boiling water is poured over these grains, which are soaked for about two hours, then taken out and placed on a roughly made or old winnowing basket to allow the water to drain off. At dawn next morning the second main process (*hu sefa*)—stamping into fine meal—takes place. The result is a very fine, snowy white flour very much like maizena, the pride of the Lovedu housewife. To supply the needs of an ordinary household, it is necessary to stamp two or three times a week, a process involving from four and a half to six hours of work each time. Kaffir corn and millet is subjected to one stamping in the wooden block to get rid of the husks, then ground fine on a flat grindstone. But porridge [273]
of kaffir corn or millet is very seldom eaten, most of it being used for beer.

Two boys come home from school and forage in the kitchen hut for 871 ●
their food, as their mothers have gone to the fields; of the twenty-five children in the village, they are the only ones who go to school. The midday heat is intense; the quiet air quivers under the sun's fierce rays. Some small girls sitting under a nearby tree outside the village seize hold 857
of an empty paraffin tin and begin to sing and dance. Two of them are looking after babies, which they have strapped to their backs, but this in [854]
no way disturbs their enjoyment. Later on they will set out with old empty jam tins of various sizes to collect grasshoppers, which they catch by beating them with branches. In winter they are sent to collect wild relish for their mothers or to catch *mahoru* (*Macrotermes bellicositermes Smeathm*), which they entice out of their holes by means of a long piece

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561 are not at all anxious that their children should be taught craftsmanship in the mission schools.

887 In contrast to our customs, education never ends. As the physiological capacities vary, so new activities are undertaken. The culture always provides a place for the aptitudes of every stage of life, and neither men nor women become redundant in their old age, unless, indeed, they are utterly decrepit. With their physical decline, the culture provides new avenues and interests, to which they are continuously adjusting themselves. They suffer no sense of frustration, because their adjustments are dynamic. With us old age may be tragic: among women, the menopause may precipitate a crisis; among men, retiring from work often causes loss of interest in life and mental decay. But old Lovedu men and women always have something more to learn and to do. Women are not perturbed about external signs of age and complacently accept the end of their childbearing years, for these years bring increased influence, a fuller life, and greater rewards. If physical disability excludes old men from active political life, they receive ample compensation in reduced responsibilities and added prestige. There is no sense of impotence that upsets their balance. Instead, the changing sphere of their roles and their interests both keeps them stable and makes them precious to the society. The distress of old age among us is seldom seen, for rewards always stimulate the new adjustments that have to be made. Utter decrepitude is, however, a tragedy, fortunately ended by the neglect that we may regard as pitiless, but which realistically eliminates those who cannot attain even the mediocre level of achievement that the society calls for. He who cannot attain this level cannot make simple adjustments. But he who can still use his faculties in his old age may become a doctor of note, or a recognised authority on tribal legends or history. Finally, the psychological effect of beliefs attaching to the very old is to provide them with new incentives and renewed opportunities. The widespread suspicion that they have personal contacts with the world of darkness enhances their power, while their elevation, in anticipation, to godhead, for they are already so near death that they may be referred to as gods (modimo), invests their dignity and their wishes with a supernatural halo.

●871 797 177 Beside this all-pervasive system of tribal education, the modern school, with its three R's, is as yet of small importance. It reaches, and only in an attenuated form, no more than 3 to 5 per cent. of the children. Its methods are foreign, divorced from life; its teachers are immature, handicapped by inadequate equipment and by being uprooted from the soil of tribal culture. Yet the modern school is the force of the future. Education is passionately desired by the young, and the old would welcome it if they did not feel that it was subversive. There is no compulsion upon a scholar to become a Christian; but the belief persists that education and Christianity are inseparable. It is a belief that raises an awkward dilemma: must the school, which at the same time is the gateway to Christianity, give up its task of breaking down, or can it compromise with superstition? Can it work from within, integrated into the culture, without defeating its purpose? The answer cannot be given here. The task of the school and the Church is no less prodigious and delicate than

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the difficulties of the young boy or girl are great and the conflicts within 881
him irreconcilable. He is ragged by other scholars unless he also attends 797
church; he is discouraged from playing with his friends, the pagans 177
who do not attend school; he is deprived of the joys of dancing and drumming. The *kholo* and play-housekeeping are taboo to him. Tensions and maladjustments arise: Christian girls disgrace themselves and outrage Christian sentiment by having more illegitimate children than pagans; people laugh when they see Christian men attending beer-drinks and scornfully remark upon the bad manners of pretentious school-children.

The school, nevertheless, has made a notable contribution. Its 871
teachings have some immediate life-adjustment value. Reading and 177
writing, a training for a profession, a knowledge of English or Afrikaans are valuable aids in the economic struggle. But more important in the modern world is the long-run adjustment value of the outlook engendered in the schools. In the culture-contact situation, with the scales weighted in favour of a capacity to accommodate oneself to European thought and methods, the training of the school prepares the way to some measure of co-operation with agricultural demonstrators, European health officers, and those who are concerned with the reclamation of the reserves. The idea of progress takes root and, though it is a perverted idea, it provides new incentives and counteracts the sense of frustration before the march of an overwhelming force, the force of Western culture.

Unfortunately, the gains are counterbalanced by the losses. It may be that the losses are temporary, because, on the one hand, they are losses from the point of view of the old culture and, on the other, in a period of transition there must inevitably be tensions and conflicts. Men are guided by vast systems of values and sentiments, built up laboriously by centuries of tradition; these cannot be replaced by a new set of standards inculcated by a single institution, such as the modern school, especially when that institution uses ineffective techniques and is external to the main trends of the culture. Some of the losses are not inevitable: it is not the school as such which disables educated young men from accepting manual labour and housework. It might even be possible to avoid the loss of that valuable body of veldlore which the herdboys learn during the years of herding. Boys and girls need the three R's; they need to understand and trust the ways of the white man; but they also need the knowledge and the standards that make life worth while in the society of which they are part. It is the task of the school to take account, not of one, but of all these needs.

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561 a whole group of age-mates may be punished for the delinquency of one of the group, but it is not strictly the same group as played together; it might be young mothers only, because one of them had insulted an old woman.

[351] Besides the *thaga* there is the *murole*, the age-set brought into existence by the great national initiations, the *vudiga* for boys and the *vyali* for girls. (The word *murole* is also applied to cattle born in the same year.) But these age-sets have much less significance than in other tribes. Their chief function is to grade men and women into groups to which a distinctive name is given and by which they can readily reckon their relative ages. In the very old days the age-sets had some military function, but the queens relied less and less upon their fighting unit and to-day nothing is left of the old basis, if it was such, of the age-set. There is hardly a bond of mutual help and fellowship within the group. It does not constitute the unit that is usually called to perform communal duties for chief or tribe. This work is done by districts rather than by regiments, though it is said that in the old days there was some sort of division of labour as between the different sets, and to-day occasionally in the district of the capital the youngest age-set is called upon to weed the field of the queen. Certainly there is still the conception that each regiment is entitled to some particular portion of a beast that is slaughtered, but in practice there is no evidence of the observance of this rule. It is as if, with the breakdown of their military functions, their other specific functions also fell into disuse. What remains are the privileges attached to seniority and to age. The enclosure of the queen's *khovo* is built by men of all ages, called up by districts; this applies equally to labour on the roads, brick-making, and building. If young men are sometimes given a specific piece of work, it is primarily because they are young men or the young men of such and such a district, and never in our experience as the whole age-set in the tribe.

But the function of marking relative ages, seniority in respect of important activities in the tribe, is of very great importance. A young man who has gone through one initiation may have advanced one important stage towards adulthood, but he is still very far from being a complete man or from being initiated into the inner secrets of the 'school'. In the second initiation he becomes a shepherd (*mudabi*), in the third he may be one stage higher up (one of the *madidi*), and, if he is lucky, he may reach the fourth stage, that of the old men or of one of the officials of the initiation. Girls have to go through even more stages before full initiation in the puberty ceremonial. And in the *vyali*, as we saw in 1939, only men who were initiated as far back as 1894 were allowed in the enclosure for men. The beer and the food and delicacies which were brought by the girl initiates were for these old men, though occasionally they relented and passed on a pot of beer to their juniors watching the proceedings from outside the enclosure. And there is a similar hierarchy in the *gomono* cult. Only gradually are men introduced to the innermost secrets; only the old men play the part of the weird whistling spirits (*vusiqiqiwa*), until they become too old to play the part and are replaced by younger men.

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for as they phrase it, 'If you are ashamed of gnawing a bone, you will 867
presently throw it away, meat and all.' Closely associated with that irritating characteristic of the Lovedu, especially Lovedu women, which the European terms shameless, unblushing beggary, is the aversion to theft. A child is told a thousand times, 'Always just ask (*hobela*) for anything you may want; never steal.' And whenever there has been a theft it is said, 'People should beg (*hobela*), not steal.' It is only when you get great differences in wealth, as when a European comes among Natives, that this custom becomes irritating. In this begging from Europeans, Natives do exceed the canons of politeness even of their own society, but many consider it of little consequence in dealings with the European, who, after all, is notoriously ill-mannered in his dealings with Natives.

Correct use of terms of relationship or address is not expected till after puberty and the young child, only gradually learning not to call people older than itself by their everyday names, makes many mistakes. One would think that the formal behaviour required in such complicated ceremonial as that of marriage visits would require some form of special instruction. This is, however, not the case. A young man learns these things simply by hearing others talk, while a girl, by forming part of bridal parties when others in her village are married, comes to learn what is required of her. These facts bear out what experience shows, viz. that formalities are not so rigid as one is apt to imagine. Proper respect, politeness, and correct behaviour, involving use of the right terms of address to those older than yourself, are not insisted upon till after the puberty initiation in the case of a girl and circumcision in the case of a boy. Before this you are regarded as irresponsible, without proper knowledge of how to behave, lacking judgement and that wisdom in personal relationships associated with adults. You are a *leshworo*.

It is significant, however, that, especially in the case of girls, a single 881
ceremony is not considered sufficient to effect this great transformation to responsibility and adult status. In addition to her own puberty ceremony (*kkobo*), every girl has to attend and take part in a number of subsequent puberty ceremonies in the area—six in the royal area, four of five in other areas. At the first ceremony after her own she is a *thowyana*, who sits in seclusion with the *kkobo*, eats of the same food and, like her, is allowed no relish, is beaten hard and takes no part in the dancing at night. Instead, however, of having to go early each morning to the river with the initiate, she fetches water and helps with the cooking. The other *dikhwyana* are responsible for all the work: they fetch wood and water, stamp, and cook; they run errands for the elder girls who have finished their course of initiation and wait on them; they carry the drums to the river and may be made to sit in the water with the initiate.

In control of the ceremony are the elder girls who have been fully initiated (*dikolor*). They walk about with a great sense of their own importance and have to be royally entertained. It is essential that there be plenty of good food at an initiation ceremony. Mealie meal is cooked twice a day, much light beer is made, and monkey nuts and other delicacies are abundantly supplied. At one ceremony, lasting six days, a whole bag of mealie meal was consumed by the girls—that is, more than

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881 twice as much as would normally be consumed by the same number of people; and in addition they had large quantities of nuts, only exceptionally provided in ordinary life. For purposes of economy, the mother of the initiate usually makes porridge for her household of the bran of the stampings of the girls. Sometimes, in times of scarcity, a girl's puberty ceremony will be postponed, and it is noticeable that in the ploughing season, when the people are busy all day in the fields, there are few or no initiation ceremonies. Though in charge of the ceremony, the elder girls are subject to an old woman, 'mother of the *khoba*', who has been chosen by the initiate herself and who, ever after, will be called 'mother' by her. For her own mother may have nothing to do with the ceremony and, even though it is held in her courtyard, may not enter the hut of seclusion. The girl's mother feels very sympathetic towards her daughter and often grumbles that the girls are 'killing' her daughter when she hears them beating her. But she has no say. If a girl is unpopular, her parents sometimes arrange for the ceremony to be held at a relative's village in another area, lest she be too badly treated.

881 The Lovedu girl does not approach her own mother about such an
841 intimate and personal matter as her first menstruation, but confides in a friend, who will inform the mother by means of the metaphorical phrase, 'So-and-so has scolded the women.' The other girls of the area are thereupon called to come and the ceremonial opens with their carrying the novice on their backs from a spot outside the village, where they have forgathered, into the hut of seclusion, usually the cooking hut of the mother. Some girls keep the fact of their menstruation hidden for months before divulging the secret. Mabula waited for three months. It will not be possible here to do more than indicate the main incidents of a girl's puberty ceremony. It must, however, be borne in mind that there is considerable variation in detail between one ceremony and another and that no mere analysis can give the atmosphere prevailing in such ceremonies. On the arrival in her hut of seclusion the girl is 'strengthened' (*ku thusa*) by the old women. Ground herbs mixed with ochre and some of the girl's own menstrual blood are smeared on various parts of the body—in a circle round the wrist, on the head, nose, mouth, neck, arms, etc. The medicine is *ya ku rrima bidzi mawala* (to give the zebra its stripes) and is said to prevent the girl from becoming ill (*ku khuma*) when entering the villages of other people. That night towards sunset the women of the area forgather at the village of the initiate, trilling and shouting, '*E a luma*' (it bites), on the way; they come to drum and dance, as they do almost every evening of the six days' seclusion.

881 While in seclusion the initiate and her companion sit to one side of the doorway of the hut without any covering except the loincloth. They talk in whispers only. When a stranger approaches the hut, she wails in a thin voice to warn him off (for she can see through the crevices of the doorway), and when the elder girls enter she must wail loudly lest she be beaten. When she wishes to relieve herself, she walks out completely covered in a blanket. Early each morning the initiate is taken to the river. She walks in a stooping attitude, covered in a blanket and surrounded by girls uttering a high-pitched wail as she goes. In the stream

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a hole is hollowed out so as to be deep enough for her to sit in (if possible 881
the water should reach the neck) while a fire is kindled for the other girls, at whose pleasure she remains in the water, uttering her wail. If the girl has a good friend among the old women, she may free the initiate from [431] going to the river after the first morning by a gift of snuff to the elder girls. This is called 'lifting the weight' from the girl (*hu rula*). They return home about eleven o'clock in the morning, when they have their meal. After this the elder girls return to their homes or do as they please, while the novice and her friend remain in their hut. They sleep if they can, for at night they get little chance to do so. During the initiation the girl undergoes harsh treatment at the hands of the older girls. She 'pays', by being beaten, for going to sleep, for waking up and on the slightest pretext. At night her blankets are taken away and used by the older girls, while she lies exposed with no fire to warm her. Not only is she allowed no relish with her porridge, but she may also be given filth to eat. One girl's menstrual blood was put in her porridge, which she immediately vomited up; sometimes a frog is given them to eat and one of us has seen initiates made to eat sand as relish. If she asks for water, the elder girls may clear the nose into it before it is given. All this harsh treatment is looked upon as good discipline.

Initiation at puberty includes instruction in rules connected with 881
the new stage of life the girl is entering upon. She is warned that she 864
has reached maturity and must be careful, in sex play with boys, to avoid becoming pregnant. She is advised also not to have more than one lover at a time, lest there be difficulty in establishing the paternity of her child should she have one. In the old days she was at this stage given a calabash doll which at her marriage was carried in a basket by the wedding party. If she was not virgin, the calabash was pierced. This custom has, however, fallen into disuse. The girl is taught the rules connected with menstruation: not to enter a sick-room while menstruating, not to enter [841] a cattle kraal, not to sleep with men during her menses. If she has not enlarged her *labia minora* properly, she is severely scolded or punished by having hot, roasted sesamum put on them. In one case the elder girls inserted a mealie cob in an initiate to show her the dangers of intercourse, hurting her so badly that she was unable to walk properly. Her parents complained to the queen, who imposed a heavy fine on each of the elder girls responsible. There is no teaching connected with marriage. An initiate must be respectful to her elders: she is told that if people older than herself are in a hut she must greet (*bsha*) on entering. She is taught in a song to honour and obey her mother. Most of the teaching is in the form of songs or mummeries. The dancing that takes place every night when the women come consists largely of movements in a bent position 881
on the haunches, with arms held above the head for better balance. Some 535
of the dances are associated with the lessons of the initiation: two girls, one with a cloth passed between the legs to represent the loin covering of a man, dance facing each other; the 'man' dances with a lighted firebrand between the legs, the girl wears a cloth which makes her look pregnant. Another dance consists of movements in which legs are held close together, and sometimes crossed, symbolic of the manner in which

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535 male advances can be prevented from becoming dangerous. These are *digɔma*, secret things or mummeries.

The last night of the ceremony is devoted to dancing and the showing of many *digɔma*. It is *khilalawemi*, the night when one sleeps standing—that is, does not sleep at all, though, since people just take a nap any time they feel tired, the name is somewhat exaggerated. All the women of the area who wish to attend gather either in the village, from which men will be debarred, or at a secluded spot somewhere near, bringing with them mealies and nuts to roast and eat while there. There is a great deal of dancing and singing. The greatest *digɔma* are shown at about 3 a.m., after a period of comparative quiet that sets in towards midnight, when most of the people begin to doze around the fires, and these continue until dawn, when disguised figures come dancing in. Each mummery has its own meaning, but this is not clear to the initiate, who does not even see many of them. In the morning, while the girls are at the
[302] river, the hut of seclusion is swept and freshly smeared. On her return, after having her head shaved along the sides and back, leaving a circular top, which is a form of hairdress much liked by girls and associated with ritual occasions, the girl is anointed with fat and, except when she is of the royal family, also with ochre. She is given three skins to wear, a
[292] frontal covering, a rear covering, and a skin to wear over the shoulders like a cloak. Round her neck is a thick collarette of beads. When dressed, the girl has respectfully to salute the assembled company of women in the courtyard by lying down on one side, palms held together. Now follows a few days during which the novice speaks to no one and walks with bent head, fists clenched and held to the breast. She is taken by the
[431] elder girls to greet various relations, who must *nosa* her by means of a small gift before she can rise. A month or more after the ceremony a grand beer-party is given by the girl's parents for the women of the area,
[571] who, at a spot near which men are not allowed, have a dance of *digɔma*, specially disguised figures. When the novice has been through the requisite number of ceremonies, she is taken to the queen or the wife of the district head to be beaten with a stick as a sign of her graduation.

881 Boys' initiation (*vudiga*) is much more spectacular than the *khɔba*. Typically it is held by the whole tribe every twelve to fifteen years, but some district heads occasionally do not wait for the authority of the queen. The last *vudiga* upon a national scale was in 1919, but since then there have been local lodges, such as the one held by the district head Maunadala in 1937. The interval of more than twenty years is not considered extraordinary. Sometimes in the past there were delays, especially in the latter half of the reigns of queens, because, so it is said, they wished to postpone their ritual end, which coincided with the fourth initiation after their accession. In 1938–9 the *vyali*, or girls' initiation, was revived after thirty-five years, partly as a preliminary to the next boys' initiation; and if within a year or so there is a *vudiga*, it will be the third of a reign that has already lasted forty-three years. There are other reasons for the present delay. The *vudiga* involves an immense organization, brings all public activities, such as the courts, to a standstill, upsets the economic routine, and concentrates energies upon one supreme

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object. In modern conditions it is not easy to cope with such a situation. 881●
On the one hand, many men work in the towns and some boys attend mission schools, and on the other the mobilization of the necessary organization and incentives is difficult in the face of discouragement and opposition. Many people realize that for practical purposes the payment of tax marks the introduction to manhood. The Christian mission cannot countenance interference with its schools. Adjustments are necessary, and in some tribes they are being successfully made; for instance, among the Koni of Maṭala, we saw an experiment whereby the whole *vudiga* was crowded into the month's holiday of the school in June–July, the purpose being to avoid conflicts with the Church and the educational authorities.

We cannot in this brief and generalized account do more than refer 881
cursorily to a few aspects of the institution. It involves circumcision, but 304
has nothing to do with biological puberty. Side by side with toddlers still drinking at their mother's breast, such as Khiebe in the 1919 initiation, married men of thirty or forty go to be circumcised. They will all one day belong to the same regiment. Moreover, there used to be an attenuated puberty rite, *hu fura khirugulu* (chewing the herb *khirugulu*), which is also chewed by doctors in order to give them power and insight to interpret the bones. The puberty rite took place after the first nocturnal emission; the boy went down to the river to wash; he was made to dig up a root, chew it and rub it between his legs in order to prevent the danger of *makhuma* (illness associated with crises in life); and he advanced from being a *musinaba* (child) to being a *muṭanga* (adolescent or young man).

The *vudiga* is quite different: it is a circumcision rite which invests 881
the adolescent with the beginnings of social adulthood. But the investiture is imperfect, for manhood is not attained at a single bound; one grows into it by imperceptible stages. There is no single criterion of adulthood and the maturity that is required cannot be given merely by a ritual act. For that reason also, the *vudiga* teaches, not any single virtue, but impresses upon the boy all the values of the society and the necessity of a new outlook. From the almost outlaw play-gang, he must be conducted to the fringes of responsible society or be placed in a position from which he can gradually make his way into society. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *vudiga* is designed to cope with the turbulence of youth; for even the circumcised are still wild.

The general pattern of the *vudiga* has often been described and is not difficult to understand. After some preliminary practice of songs, which are the life-blood of the institution, the would-be novices undergo a [304]
series of rites culminating in the circumcision at the river and are taken into a lodge hidden somewhere in the bush. This cuts them off completely from the outside world. In their seclusion, emphasized by all manner of taboos and restrictions which mark the difference of their lives from that of ordinary people, they learn strange songs and unintelligible formulae. The spirit of this period is difficult to recapture and the obscure symbolism and secret rites seem unrelated to any cultural realities; yet we must think of them as having their roots deep in the past, while they have become overgrown with the meanings and

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881 purposes of the present culture. Then follows a stage, for about a month, of even stranger events, and it is heralded by a re-orientation of life within the lodge. At their singing performances the novices begin to sit facing the east, not the west, as in the previous three months. This re-orientation gradually affects more and more activities and issues in tentative contacts with the outside world. At last the lodge is burnt down and the initiates go home, where for a further week they remain on the fringes of ordinary life, to be drawn closer and closer by gradual ritual steps into the society and its everyday activities. But if these broad stages are intelligible enough, it is very different when we examine the details. They obviously have an immense background, both in a past that is lost in oblivion and in a present that owes many of its values to that past, but has at the same time added to and modified these values. Fortunately, however, as it is beyond the scope of this book to deal with those details, we may content ourselves with a few general observations.

The first stage among the Lovedu is *hu huwa*, when the heads of districts are told to arrange that the novices be taken into the veld to learn songs. The teaching is quite informal; it is a preparatory class, so that the proceedings in the lodge two weeks later may go with a swing. The teaching is done, not by the real shepherds (*medabi*), but by their juniors, those who were very young in the previous lodge. They were the large-bellied toddlers (*dimbana*, literally 'little stomachs') who ran away from their mothers to enjoy the excitement of the lodge. It could hardly be expected that they would have absorbed much and so they learn now by teaching the novices. At this preliminary and informal training, the boys may attend if they like; there are no taboos and no restrictions; the teachers may not chastise their pupils. There is as yet no seclusion. Nor are the novices given any special work to do for the chief. The fence of the *khɔrɔ* at the capital has to be rebuilt, but the novices do no more than they, as youngsters living at the capital, would do on other occasions when the *khɔrɔ* has to be repaired. When they come home they, as well as other young boys, bring light branches used to fill in the interstices between the poles. From areas beyond the capital it is only the older men who, as is customary whenever the *khɔrɔ* is built, give their assistance. At last the new moon appears, and Copernicus heralds the approach of winter. The shepherds have their hair shaved, district heads come to 'take the firebrand', the symbol that authorizes them to hold the initiation, and the *vudiga* officially opens at the capital. It is a ritual occasion: the older men beat the younger, sometimes black porridge without relish is eaten in the cattle kraal, there is an alarm, and the boys are conducted to the river to be circumcised.

881 304 For the circumcision the boys go to the valley which is appropriately called 'the place where things are forgotten'. They are being separated from ordinary life; they 'get lost'. The '*gɔma* first bites its owners', for in this as in other acts regard is had to certain precedences. It is the hierarchy of rank, as at a formal dinner among us, that is emphasized; but the precedence extends only, so to speak, to the three people sitting at the head table; the others take their place anywhere. As the operator proceeds, the old men chant, 'Sever, sever with the knife, [the foreskins]

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let the fishes take' (*tshikhi-tshikhi ga mufaga, khɔɔc jia*). It is the shepherds who are chastised as they drive the novices, called cane-rats (*magwɛlɛle*) at this stage, to the circumcision; they run the gauntlet through the ranks of singing men. It is enough that the novices should suffer the painful operation. Some bleed profusely, but it is their own fault (so it is thought); the medicine they are given can only alleviate the penalty for pre-circumcision promiscuity. Much else is enacted, but we must pass on to the next stage, the three months of intensive training in the lodge. It is the period, *par excellence*, of seclusion. The novices learn songs and formulae; they make a dancing costume and practise dances; their eating is a hurried ritual, for, as they phrase it, 'We are going to the medicines, the medicines of the veld to which there is no end.' By this they mean they have to go out to hunt, but clearly it is more than hunting that is intended; the outside world is full of wonderful things, shrubs and trees and animals which require their urgent attention; and there is so much to be done and to be learnt, that they should not spend all their time filling their bellies.

If that is the meaning of the ritual at the sacred tables, great *digɔma* which shepherds, polluted by contact with women, approach at the peril of causing the novices to vomit, the ritual of the boys when they sit by the side of the fire 'stabbing the elephant' is inscrutably obscure. In other tribes the fire is undying and is called 'the elephant'. The Lovedu call the fire *khisibe* (meaning 'unknown', but probably from Kharanga *zimbe*, a coal of fire) not *ɖou* (elephant); they do not conceive it to be undying and they know nothing of the conception of 'stabbing the elephant'. Yet some of these conceptions are clearly present in the ritual: the ritual singing is *hu fɛfa ɖou*, merely one of the special phrases of the lodge; the song is *ɖo' vetsi*, an obvious contraction of *ɖou etsela* (elephant lie down); but not even the old men could suggest the derivation of the one from the other; the boys swing their arms in imitation of a stabbing action, but it is not thought of as such and, as they sing, the old men chant, 'Stab the elephant with arrows; next moon we return to those who have stayed at home.' Even this last is interpreted to mean that the boys by their action push on the moon to accelerate their return home. At a later stage, after the 'change', the *ɖo' vetsi* song becomes '*Mamaṭo u ile ɖou sala shagoni*' (mother-of-eyes said, 'elephant remain in the country'—because the boys are going home). We give this brief reconstruction to show how, despite obvious suggestions in this central ritual of the lodge, the Lovedu have reinterpreted the whole situation. This is one of the details to which we have referred, but with which we cannot here deal. The whole *vudiga* ritual is full of them and as often as not the original words of songs or formulae have become distorted out of recognition. Indeed, the diffusion of a culture element is far from being a simple matter.

The three months' seclusion is marked by taboos and restrictions and a régime which, for the Lovedu, is exceptionally strict. But, by comparison with other tribes, the taboos are not stringent and a great deal of latitude is allowed. The large-bellied toddlers are tenderly cared for by the old men. By day they play about in the lodge enclosure and by night

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●881 they sleep by the 'mother' of the lodge (*maḑala*) near the fire. Those a little older set their traps and catch mice, which they roast by the *khisibe* fire; but relish and wild fruit is usually forbidden to them and they may not, though they often do, drink water. Sick boys, elsewhere subjected to hardships and taunts, are nursed and given soft food, not the hard *khivonclo* of the novices. The novices who go out to hunt certainly resent the malingering of the lazy ones (*magɔtha*), who are strong enough, but stay at home on this or that pretext. But the true spirit of the *vudiga* is seen, not so much in the beatings that the shepherds (*medabi*) administer, for they are beaten as much as if not more than, the novices, but in the actions and attitude of the older men. There are *medidi*, one regiment senior to the *medabi*, who are never beaten, but may be fined; and older than they are the old men (*vakhalabye*). They are kindly greybeards, some of them officials of the lodge and some who do no work (*vuraliziṭd*). Some of them constantly intercede for the young and weak boys who are threatened with punishment or trials beyond their strength or endurance, or 'stand for' those deserving novices who had been obedient or generous or respectful in their childhood. Above all, these old men, mellow with age and mature in wisdom, conditioned to a culture founded upon compromise and easy relations, not only restrain excesses, but add to the beauty of the performances by chanting their refrain of sayings and proverbs, encouragements and admonitions. It is they, not the shepherds with their whips, that give the tone to the proceedings.

The stage after this period of seclusion is called the 'change' (*hu fedulclwa*). The boys sit by the fire facing the rising, not the setting, sun, as was the case in the previous three months. Of course, we must not expect precision: the 1919 fire ran north-south, not east-west; the ideal always gives way to the practical, for the east-west disposition was rendered difficult, though not impossible, by the slope of the ground. In other respects also it was the spirit not the letter of the law that determined various arrangements. After the 'change' life is somewhat different in the lodge. The boys used to do homage (*lɔsha*) to a *morula* tree near the fire as if it were their ancestor (grandparent). But the tree [778] mysteriously withers and, after the change, is replaced by a pole (*murahadu*). No teaching is done from either tree or pole as is the case in other tribes, but it is associated with a whole series of ritual acts. After the 'change' no longer shepherds but women bring the food; boys perform within sight of women; some of the food taboos are raised, but [262] relish, though always brought, is forbidden and still thrown into the refuse heap. Apart from these and many other changes, we must also mention the visit by the novices to the village in order to 'beg for salt'. Then they sing the praises of salt, the seasoning virtues of which they now fully appreciate, having gone without it for so long. But on their return the pole has gone; their grandparent has died.

And now we press on to a day of great doings. The novices go out to [535] 'scratch [as fowls do] for food', only this means a spectacular dance before the women. That night, the last night in the lodge, it is *khilalawemi*, the night of standing, though many quietly doze off or escape to rest in the bush near by; there is none of the concentration we expect on

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occasions of importance. The boys are shown several sacred objects (*digoma*), each with its own meaning; and the proceedings end with the naming of the lodge and the new regiment that has been created. Next morning the boys remove the clay that 'disguised' them during their seclusion. They are given a loin cloth, which they wear back to front, their hair, except for a circular crown, is shaved and they are smeared with fat (not ochre among the royal Lovedu). They are 'people from the refuse heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), a name they discard only when, a week later, their heads are completely shaved. As they leave, the lodge, with all in it, is burnt down.

The *vudiga* is not at an end yet; it has merely entered a new stage in which the discipline is further relaxed. The novices leave the lodge with double-pointed sticks, covering with their hands the two ends, which are fashioned like the *glans penis*. In that manner they go about whenever they are in public; the action is said to impress upon them the necessity of concealing the object and meaning of circumcision. When they arrive at the village their mothers appear dancing with joy and choose out their sons, not always correctly, because their heads are bent down and their bodies have grown a good deal in the lodge. A goat is killed for them; it is the goat 'of vomiting the rats', for as men they must cast out the things of their childhood. Then for the next week they are in a state of semi-seclusion, but there are still many observances. They appear in public only in the bent, humble attitude, they carry their sticks, and they wear their loin cloths the wrong way round. Nevertheless, the 'gathering up' (*hu aluha*) into the society proceeds apace. They have a special enclosure made for them in the veld, the *khikhudɔ* (hiding place or secluded spot), in which they spend some time of the day. But they are scattered, as each group of villages has its own secluded spot; and their separateness and solidarity is further broken up by sleeping at home and herding for their own people. They do not speak, especially not to women, but at night at home they have contests of riddles (*nyɛbo*) with the old women who come to visit them, exactly as after a marriage ceremony. This stage ends with the 'seizing of the lion' (*hu tswara dau*). One night the shepherds go out with bullroarers, the whirling of which produces the roar of the lion. The boys give chase and he who catches the 'lion' is praised by the old men.

Finally come the last ritual acts. The boys are taken down to the river to lift the 'stomach of the cow', a log tied to a stone in a pool, and then to 'kindle a fire on the river' (done on a log in the water), for a man must be both strong and clever; he must be able even to make fire in the water. After these tests there is the final ordeal at the cave to which the boys are taken one by one, are beaten and given their last admonitions. At the cave the double-pointed stick is discarded, the fat removed from their heads and, if two brothers have attended the same lodge, the elder beats the younger on the way home to remove the presumption of belonging to the same regiment. At home the initiate's mother must *nosa* him by a gift to 'open his mouth', and next day each of the boys, accompanied by a shepherd, goes to visit some relative, who will feast him with meat and beer.

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●881 That in the briefest possible outline is the procedure followed in the *vudiga*. To recapture the whole atmosphere, to present the details of a four months' ceremonial full of incident and meaning, is not possible. All we can do is to single out one or two special features of the educational aspect. Let us first dispel the idea that the régime is a rigid one. How can it be when there are toddlers of six or seven years of age nestling up to the 'mother' of the lodge where he sleeps by the fire? The boys are beaten, it is true, and they have to undergo various kinds of punishment, but the old men are there to 'stand for them'; and when the novices are tired, one of these kindly old men or a visitor will *rula* them, take off the weight from their heads, so that they can go to bed early. The little ones do not go out to hunt, they play about in the lodge. If one of them cries, the 'mother' of the lodge will inquire the cause from the *washe* (the head of the initiates), and if the *washe* has been negligent, it is he who will be punished. The cold is never severe nor are the boys attacked by worms or ants (for the floor is covered with ash); there is no rule that they must sleep on their backs with head or feet toward the fire, so that they will suffer more from the cold. Boys do not talk as if the *vudiga* is a terrible ordeal; it is the shepherds as much as the initiates who are punished. The food is not nauseating, but what is mentioned as particularly trying is the stench issuing from the healing wounds. The stomach contents of [262] a buck killed in the hunt is sprinkled over their porridge, but they like it and it is used in ordinary life as food. They may not drink water, but the lodge is quite near the river and it is not difficult to steal a drink now and then. Meat is never wholly taboo. They can always trap mice and rats and sometimes they are given meat, though it must not be openly displayed. Sometimes, when they are out hunting, the command '*Zapi*' is given; it is a signal for the boys to make an onslaught upon a sweet sorghum field or on wild fruits. It is said that a clever boy is very seldom beaten. The silence that is enjoined upon them, for theoretically they may communicate only by whistling, is not absolute; they may whisper to one another and only loud speaking is punished. They are not driven into cold pools every day to remove the scab of their wounds. On the contrary, the old men examine the wounds every day; and the doctor who has operated badly may be disgraced, as one was during the 1919 school; he was ignominiously chased away from the lodge. In short, despite the trials and restrictions, the régime is on the whole a mild one.

881 Obscene language does not loom large; it plays its part, not as obscenity,
831 but as ritual, but it is not an imposing part. After the 'change', when women start bringing the food, it is the shepherds who may swear at them. 'Go and eat,' they say; 'your pubes are torn'; or 'The red inside of your private parts, oho'; but they add, 'Do not feel hurt, women. We are not swearing at you. We are praising you.' But wilful swearing is an offence, as we saw in the *vyali* (girls' initiation), when even one of the important officials of the school, the attendant of the Bird, swore at a girl who had made a mistake and was promptly fined a goat. When the boys sit eating by the tables, it is at the command 'Let them defecate' (*A vu-le nyo*) that they stop, but in the circumstances it means no more than 'Dismiss'. Indeed, the word *muadi* (women) and any word associated

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with women is not to be used within the lodge at all. There is a rounded ball of porridge set upon a stick which is stuck into the food brought to the boys and it is called *khigɔgɔnɔnɔ* (clitoris); when the boys sit down by the tables or fire they are ordered to 'close the anus' and have to press one heel into the anus as they sit; and undoubtedly many of the formulae appear to have obscene references. But it would be a very great surprise to a Lovedu boy to learn that the *vudiga* teaches anything about sex or that there is anything obscene in it. Indeed, they know but disapprove of the delight in obscenity at the Shangana-Tonga lodges.

There is little direct teaching. One of the trials, that of hopping along with a stick, sharpened at both ends and pressed between the knees, is said to remind the boys that they must not defecate on the road, but should go into the bush. But note that little Mulati was too young to undergo it, Khitbe escaped it because his uncle 'stood for him', and Mudiva was sleeping in the hedge on the night it was undergone. The boys are all told they should avoid women since for a long time the wound will be liable to reopen and become bad. They are also warned not to divulge the secrets of the lodge. But that is practically the sum total of the direct admonitions. The laws and songs and formulae do not contain any precepts that the initiates understand or can bring into relation with virtues. And the same may be said of the punishments and ordeals. These things have nothing to do with moral standards or the inculcation of knowledge of facts. But they contribute to the general atmosphere, and their effect, in the context of the whole, is tremendous. The initiation is something different from ordinary life. Its genius lies, not in direct teaching, but in the manner in which the values of the society are emphasized. The final effect is to transform the boys into men; and certainly the situation is manipulated with consummate skill to attain this end. To us everything may appear meaningless. But we hardly realize how small is the life-adjustment value of mere verbal knowledge of facts and how important is the inculcation of a new set of standards. We know of these things from such religious experiences as conversion. The *vudiga* performs the same function; it is a turning away from the things of childhood and a turning towards the things of adulthood. Our pedagogical techniques might be tenfold more effective if they relied more upon the methods of the soap-box orator, of commercial advertising, and even of the yellow Press. Symbols and slogans, skilful manipulation of psychological situations, the play upon sentiments rooted in the cultural background—these are the methods of the *vudiga* as they are also the methods of our most skilful propaganda and our most effective advertisements. Who can deny that they contribute more to the moulding of our values and of our behaviour than do the science and history and mathematics in our schools? Perhaps it is fortunate that our pedagogical techniques are impotent, for the somewhat unrealistic world of our schools would otherwise wholly unfit us for life. But the technique of the lodge, though it teaches no verbal knowledge of facts, is effective and there is nothing in the *vudiga* which is out of harmony with the realities of life.

Consider for a moment the situation as the boys 'stab the elephant'.

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881 Consider for a moment the silent 'as the boys stab the elephant'
523 As they do so, the old men, mature in their wisdom, kindly guardians of
867 the initiates, slowly and solemnly 'sing with signs' (*va rima zwega*). These *zwega* are often also an accompaniment of the songs of the boys, in themselves most exquisite poetry. Many of the 'signs' are unintelligible, e.g. 'You may bring me a skin cradle. I am carrying an infant, my little children'; or 'The guinea fowls are crying; they are scratching for food, my children.' The old men always greet the novices, *vana va ga* (my little ones), though to one another and to the shepherds they are *valbi* (witches). The old men also chant proverbs and sayings, warnings and advice, all manner of admonitions and encouragement, some stereotyped, some extempore. To enumerate them would be to enumerate the virtues that are esteemed and the vices that are condemned in the society. 'I told you, O novice, but you plugged your ears with plugs of wood' is a general admonition, reminding the boys that, when they were young, they often were disobedient and now their errors are being expiated. Young boys are often told that, when they go to the *vudiga*, their impudence and disobedience will make their trials harder. 'Beware', a man might say to a youngster who is unwilling to help him or an elder. 'The *vudiga* is not far off; you will find no one to lift the weight from your head.' The virtues that are inculcated in this way are merely those the boys have heard of a thousand times in their ordinary lives. Again, one must not imagine that the boys take more note of the words of the old men in the lodge than we do when we sing a hymn in church, but they know that those *zwega* and admonitions express the fundamental values and ideals in the society: generosity, respectfulness and obedience to the elders, helpfulness, and so on. 'Give your seat up to an old man, carry his bundle for him on the road, go with him further than he asks you, do not mock at the blind or cripple'—these are some of the things one old man may say, whereas another will condemn theft and adultery and extol mutuality and modesty, almost impersonally, it is true, but always beautifully, solemnly, and effectively. These things sink into the minds of the novices, not as so many individual precepts, but as part of the ritual of the lodge, all indivisibly united into one whole concretion of values and sentiments. A man will say that the *vudiga* is a wonderful thing, but he will be at a loss to tell you anything concrete that it teaches. For you cannot dissect out a precept here and an example there—it is all one, like life itself.

881 We may now, before proceeding to adult education, touch upon a few
831 aspects of the *vudiga* and the *khoba*. Besides breaking the girl's attachment to the things of her childhood, the *khoba* stresses the importance and dangers of sexual maturity. But it can hardly be said that the *vudiga* is much concerned with the sudden emergence of a capacity for true sexual experience. Both institutions help us to understand the meaning and methods of attaining social adulthood; but they belong to different cultural backgrounds and are derived from different cultural sources. They are not counterparts of one another. The *khoba* is indigenous, the *vudiga* is foreign. We cannot here study the manner in which these two institutions, as well as the *vyali* and *vahwere* (two further initiations for boys and girls), have merged with the different cultures in neighbouring tribes though the varying acceptance or rejection or

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remoulding of culture elements provides important clues to understanding the Lovedu. The *vudiga*, despite its admirable integration into Lovedu culture, still overstresses national regimentation and military virtues; it makes too much of the repudiation of association with women (a tendency rectified in the *vyali*); and the conception in it of an ordeal or revenge inflicted by adults, who have suffered circumcision, upon novices whose turn to suffer has come is too pronounced for a culture that abhors vengeance. It is curious, also, that in a society in which mates are born for one another the problem of harmonizing romantic love with the limited range of socially approved choices is not dealt with in the *khɔba* or the *vudiga*. Pre-marital sexual experiment is excluded at least as a means of avoiding individual incompatibilities; but such incompatibilities are not phrased as a difficulty in marriage, the sexual aspect of which is one of the least important in Lovedu society, and the institution of *vuḑavu* (of having lovers), with whom married much more than unmarried men or women form liaisons, gives an outlet to romanticism and supports the long suckling period. The chastity that is stressed in the *khɔba* is the pre-marital chastity that leads to no complications in the social structure, such as would be caused by the birth of a child to an unmarried girl; it does not preclude those satisfactions the desire for which is inevitably aroused by the great value that is placed upon fertility.

The rites of the *vudiga* and *khɔba* do not, as we have seen, change boys and girls from youth to full-fledged manhood. The transition is a gradual one. The *khɔba* becomes a bride; the bride after the birth of her first child is a *mudwana*; and she in turn, when her children marry, is a venerable old woman (*mukhegulu*). The bride is of small consequence even in her own home; for long she serves an apprenticeship under the control of her mother-in-law, who also takes her child out of her hands, baths it and feeds it. Only as an old woman does she reach the peak of her life. With a man the position is no different. After the *vudiga* he has a kind of legal status. After marriage he advances a further stage, but in his marital relations and as a father he is a child dependent upon advice from his elders. In public activities, such as in the courts, he still sits and listens, but the old men may entrust a case to him and his agemates to teach them a sense of responsibility. His helplessness is strikingly in evidence when a child is born to him: he does not see it at first, knows little of its progress, is ordered by the old women to seek this or that root, for what purpose he cannot tell, and, when the child is taken out of the hut, he is merely called, given medicine and told what to do with it. Finally, he must seek the advice of the old women as to when he may resume sexual intercourse with his wife. In other spheres of life also, the education of the man or the woman gradually advances. Craftsmanship, for instance, is the province of the old. Young men and women may learn from their fathers or mothers, but more usually the leisure and inclination come in their old age. A bride, fully occupied with housework and cultivation under the eye of her mother-in-law, has no time for pottery and mat-making; a young man's life is too unsettled to allow him quietly to sit down to make a basket or a stamping-block. The Lovedu

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the difficulties of the young boy or girl are great and the conflicts within him irreconcilable. He is ragged by other scholars unless he also attends church; he is discouraged from playing with his friends, the pagans who do not attend school; he is deprived of the joys of dancing and drumming. The *khoba* and play-housekeeping are taboo to him. Tensions and maladjustments arise: Christian girls disgrace themselves and outrage Christian sentiment by having more illegitimate children than pagans; people laugh when they see Christian men attending beer-drinks and scornfully remark upon the bad manners of pretentious school-children.

The school, nevertheless, has made a notable contribution. Its teachings have some immediate life-adjustment value. Reading and writing, a training for a profession, a knowledge of English or Afrikaans are valuable aids in the economic struggle. But more important in the modern world is the long-run adjustment value of the outlook engendered in the schools. In the culture-contact situation, with the scales weighted in favour of a capacity to accommodate oneself to European thought and methods, the training of the school prepares the way to some measure of co-operation with agricultural demonstrators, European health officers, and those who are concerned with the reclamation of the reserves. The idea of progress takes root and, though it is a perverted idea, it provides new incentives and counteracts the sense of frustration before the march of an overwhelming force, the force of Western culture.

Unfortunately, the gains are counterbalanced by the losses. It may be that the losses are temporary, because, on the one hand, they are losses from the point of view of the old culture and, on the other, in a period of transition there must inevitably be tensions and conflicts. Men are guided by vast systems of values and sentiments, built up laboriously by centuries of tradition; these cannot be replaced by a new set of standards inculcated by a single institution, such as the modern school, especially when that institution uses ineffective techniques and is external to the main trends of the culture. Some of the losses are not inevitable: it is not the school as such which disables educated young men from accepting manual labour and housework. It might even be possible to avoid the loss of that valuable body of veldlore which the herdboys learn during the years of herding. Boys and girls need the three R's; they need to understand and trust the ways of the white man; but they also need the knowledge and the standards that make life worth while in the society of which they are part. It is the task of the school to take account, not of one, but of all these needs.

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X. MASQUERADE OF THE UUAHWERA

(a) STRUTTING OF THE UUAHWERA DANCE

(b) DANCE OF THE DEMERS

[facing p. 129]

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784 shepherds, walked, whistling as they went and holding sticks they had cut. Soon they met a man and were ordered by the shepherds to whistle '*molao wa go*' (my law). The stranger in reply recited a *gomono* law for them. A little further on they came upon three women and a man, all of whom fled on their approach, for, should they meet any one unable to give them a law, he is beaten unmercifully. The next initiated man they met asked the initiates to give him a law after he had recited one and, when they could not, he demanded 'his leg', *i.e.* each boy was to sit down holding up the left leg to be seized and beaten. As, however, they had not yet had an opportunity of learning any formulae, their shepherds procured exemption for them by giving the man snuff instead. That night they asked for food at a village, for they had had nothing all day, but the man insisted on their sleeping there and killed a goat in their honour. They set out again long before dawn so as not to be seen by women.

At home an enclosure of branches was made for them very near the village where they had to spend their time for the next few weeks. Here their food was brought from home by the shepherds, but they slept in the village in huts set aside for this purpose, coming in late at night and leaving again before dawn when women began to stamp. There were no food regulations. By day the smallest boys went out to herd goats, but the old initiates remained in the lodge, going out every afternoon either to fetch wood, each one log only, for the evening fires, or sometimes to hunt birds. When outside the lodge, they have to whistle as a warning to the uninitiated not to approach too near. They may not talk to each other except when out of sight. During this time many formulae, most of which are quite meaningless to the initiates as well as to older people, are taught by the shepherds, who beat them when they are unable to remember them; but there are no songs. The laws are passwords which indicate that you have been initiated. On the day after their arrival home, powdered medicine was given the initiates to put in their wounds, but for the rest one day was much like another. By the fifth week, when they were all thoroughly bored and tired, the order was given that they must go and wash at a place near Maulwi called *vupulo-manoke* (where the *gomono* initiates wash). While they washed, the *mwiljajwi* were crying in the bush and the big sacred drum at Maulwi was beaten a few times. Then they went home where, on kneeling to greet, each one received 1s. from his parents (*ka nomo*). The lodge is merely broken down and the cloths taken home to be used. The *gomono* initiation is an initiation into a cult rather than a 'school', for, beside the formulae, the boys receive no instruction beyond the warning not to divulge what they have seen in the *gomono* lodge. The main purpose of their seclusion is to enable their wounds to heal before they can take part in ordinary life.

881 The *vyali*, generally looked upon as an initiation for girls, is to a great extent also the concern of old and mature men, who from a certain stage take part in it as fully as, if not more so than, the older women. Further, in many districts, though not at the royal village where they do not have *vulomo* (their boys undergoing a kind of attenuated form of this initiation for a few days only at Mamadale's), the *vulomo* for boys is held simultaneously

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with the *nyali*, but beginning rather later when the grass is sufficiently long to be used for the elaborate costumes worn. As in the case of circumcision, the *nyali*, though of national importance, is held locally by various district heads. Only those heads whose ancestors traditionally have held the *nyali* are allowed to hold it, and control is exercised by the fact that permission (literally, *Akiso Aka mulle*, or firebrand) has to be obtained from the queen by all those wishing to hold a *nyali* by payment of £1. One finds considerable variation from one district to another. In some the *nyali* only is held, their boys having to go elsewhere for initiation into *vukwere*; in others *vukwere* is held simultaneously with the *nyali*, while everywhere there are variations in detail according to the doctor responsible for the initiation or the religious habits and desires of the headman holding the initiation. Hence it is that, while at the royal village men of the last regiment (*mangwe*—Leopards) were in 1939 considered too young to be allowed to enter the enclosure of the girls or the place where the old men sit with their wonderful Bird, in many of the districts they were not debarred at all. At the great opening ceremony, when the gods of whoever holds the school are approached for their blessings, those of the royal *nyali* were merely 'cooled' by the spurting of water and a prayer, whereas those of Relela were propitiated with beer brought to the family graves in the depths of the forest. And while at the royal village the initiates were smeared with the stomach contents of a head of cattle killed by being shot, for those of Relela the tail fat of a sheep ritually killed with a medicated knife was used, the stomach contents being mixed with medicine for strengthening the enclosure. The doctor at the royal ceremony carried all the meat of the slaughtered beasts away on donkeys for his own private use, but at Relela the assembled company, including men, ate the meat with medicine. The institution is sufficiently flexible to allow for changes in keeping with modern needs and modern ideas: six European nails were allowed in the construction of the hut of the Bird, a stipulation being made that they should not be visible, loin cloths of material took the place of hide in many areas and other, more far-reaching innovations differentiated the 1939 ceremony from those in olden days. All the 'schools' do not open simultaneously: months after the queen's *nyali* had begun in 1939, district heads were sending to ask permission to hold theirs, while even in the queen's own *nyali* new initiates were joining as much as five months after the opening. In a society where time is unimportant this is not unexpected.

It is not possible here to give a detailed account of *nyali* ceremonial. Only a few of its most important aspects and main functions will be touched upon. Considerable emphasis is laid in the *nyali* on age and rank. The initiates have to be very respectful towards old men and women, greeting them in a special manner (kneeling and clapping with hollowed hands) whenever they pass them. This general pattern is exactly the same as that found in the *vudigo*, the boys' circumcision. The last initiated regiment is to some extent in authority over the novices. Yet the initiates themselves vary in age from small girls of seven or eight to married women. Indeed, in the 1939 *nyali*, held after a lapse of thirty-five years, it was found necessary to divide the initiates into two distinct

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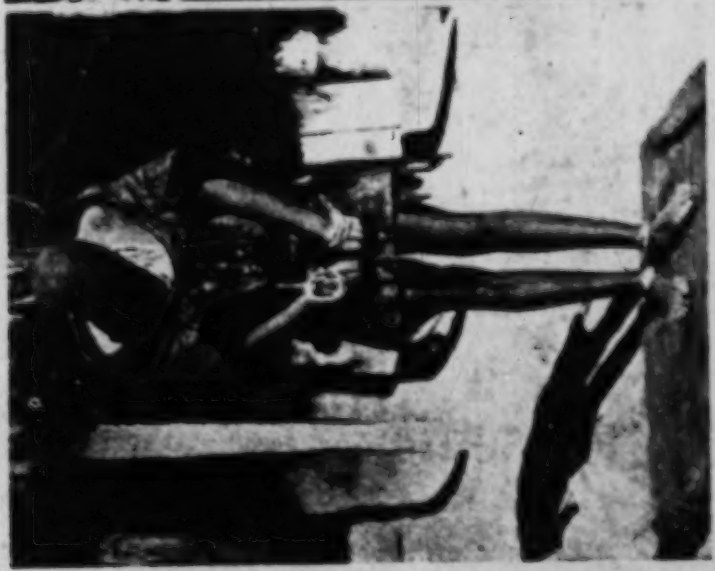

VIII. GIRLS' INITIATION INTO WOMANHOOD

(a) COMING FORTH FROM HER PUBERTY SECLUSION (b) GIRLS IN THE UYALI

[facing p.113]

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881 554 regiments. Each local *vyali* has its office-bearers, whose rank above that of the rest is emphasized in a number of ways. Chief among all initiates is the *muluvc*, the nearest relative of the chief or district head. She represents all the initiates, just as the queen represents the whole tribe, and so intimate is the bond between the *muluvc* and the others thought to be that witches wishing to harm the whole 'school' may do so through her, and in 1939, when a snake appeared in the courtyard of initiates at the royal village, the chief initiate only was 'doctored' and the snake disappeared. She is distinguished from the rest by a special kind of dress and is always given good things to eat by another office-bearer, her 'dog', whose duty it is also to run before her, barking, when the rest are given work to do or are taken to the veld. Another office-bearer is the 'shade' of the chief initiate; towards the end of the initiation, she holds a branch above the latter's head to keep off the sun. There are some half a dozen office-bearers among initiates, as well as among the women in charge; they sit at specially prepared fireplaces and their precedence is recognized in all ceremonial.

881 784 The *vyali* is of such importance that during the year that it lasts it overshadows everything else. All men's attention, all men's energies, are taken up by the *vyali*, to which everything else becomes subsidiary. Even in the *khoro*, the forum of the men, only essential cases are dealt with. All marriages are held up: any one having the temerity to take a bride to his home during the *vyali* must pay a fine of one head of cattle and a goat. To such an extent are the attention and interest of the whole country focused on the *vyali* that no rival ceremonial is tolerated. There may be no dancing other than *vyali* dancing, no singing of songs other than those sung in the *vyali*. Even the dancing of possessed people is prohibited, a taboo communicated to the various possessing spirits at a large farewell dance of all the possessed in the area just prior to the opening of the *vyali*, when they are ordered not to manifest themselves and told that none of the usual taboos of the cult will be observed for the next year. It is customary, too, before the opening of the *vyali* for each district head to bring a farewell *gosha* dance to the royal village, but this was omitted in 1938 owing to the length of time it would require. The flexibility of Lovedu rules is illustrated also in the permission which the queen gave in 1938 to people on a European farm who wanted to hold a *gosha* for Christmas, to do so, though for one day only. These rules bind even the spirits who, during the *vyali*, never come to sing and whistle when there is a harvest offering.

881 There is a period of preparation lasting about a month or six weeks in which the initiates are taught some of the songs they are to sing, the manner in which they have to greet their elders, and the way in which debarked wood will have to be collected. Only after this preparatory schooling does the official opening take place. On this occasion the doctor in control of the 'school' strengthens the girls for the initiation by means of special medical treatment and reinforces the courtyard of the chief or district head, where the initiation is held, against the entry of witches who may wish to harm the girls. The initiates are ritually beaten with medicated sticks as at the *gomane*, precedence being given to the

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office-bearers of the *nyali*. It is significant that medical treatment is not confined to initiates, but includes, not only the 'owners' or holders of the 'school', but in many instances also all the older men and women present. It is done to make the ceremony a success. After their treatment, the initiates may not wash until about ten days have elapsed, when the 'mother' of the 'school' takes them to the river. From this time the novices, except in the case of pregnant women, are allowed no covering over the shoulder or body. Their loin-coverings should consist of hard, unworked skins, but in the 1939 *nyali*, owing to the difficulty of obtaining skins, European cloth was allowed. 881 [292]

From now the *nyali*, held in the *khovi* of the district head or chief, will continue for a period of a full year. Except on a few special occasions, however, all the activities are confined to the evenings and early mornings, leaving the initiates free to carry on their ordinary work at home for the greater part of the day. Most of the initiates sleep at home and married women become pregnant and have their babies during the year of their initiation without any inconvenience.

One of the most important activities of the *nyali* is the singing and drumming every morning and evening during the whole period of the initiation. Some of the songs are related to the stage of the initiation, different stages being characterised by different songs: thus after the medical treatment marking the official opening in about September a new song that has not been practised previously is begun, and later, when summer fruits are plentiful, a song is sung in which this abundance is mentioned. There is a cluster of songs associated with bringing the singing to a close each evening, when the *khovi* has to be closed by the girls, and again in the early morning, when the gate is opened. Most of the songs consist of a simple phrase repeated over and over again, the words of which are meaningless to the singers, and frequently, even where the song is long, only a small portion of it is repeated. There are songs consisting of praises of the queen, well-known district heads, and their areas, and a very important one in praise of the chief girl of the *nyali*. One song sung by the 'shepherds' refers to girls who enter only towards the end of the initiation, pointing out how inferior this is to full initiation, while another exhorts initiates to pinch and otherwise torment such girls. *Musuvhlo* songs, which are accompanied by dancing and begun in about December, are the main feature of the singing after the Bird, the pivot of the ceremony, has arrived (April). They are very similar to *lesugu* songs sung for rain, associated with the *zwidjoni* spirits, and are believed to be identical in function. There are also *lesugu* songs in the *nyali*, and it is significant that among the Nareni there is each year a woman's counterpart of the *gomana* drumming in which *lesugu* songs are sung. If any initiate is seduced during the period of initiation, special songs of derision are sung in which she and her family are mentioned by name. Where the songs have no dancing accompaniment, they are sung to the clapping of hands until the arrival of the Bird, when two flat pieces of wood are used. 881 533

Initiation is considered to be a time of hardship for those who undergo it. The singing every evening, sometimes as late as eleven o'clock and 881

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881 every morning from about five o'clock till after sunrise, is looked upon as a burden that has each time to be 'lifted' (*ku rula*) by the order of some old woman or man until the arrival of the Bird, when it will *rula* the girls at its own pleasure. Only on rare occasions, when an important visitor comes and presents the older women with a gift of snuff or money, can initiates be excused altogether for an evening. It is a hardship, too, to go all through the winter, mild though it is in the lowveld, with no covering over the upper part of the body—so much so that one married woman in the 1939 initiation pretended she was pregnant in order that she might cover her body. When she was discovered, however, she was severely beaten. The discipline of the *vyali* is not so strict that initiates are not able occasionally to absent themselves unnoticed from the singing. If discovered, they are beaten, sometimes by the queen herself. More serious cases in which an initiate has been absent for several days are treated more drastically: a whole procession of women carrying the drums sets out to her village where they pull the thatch off the roofs of the houses and exact a fine of a goat, which is killed and eaten by women and initiates alike. Breaches of the rules in the *vyali* are punished in the 'school' itself: when a number of girls shaved their hair, an action strictly forbidden during the year of initiation, not only they but all their age-mates were beaten for the offence. As a result, the offenders were pinched and ill-treated by their fellow initiates, who had been punished on their behalf. Initiates who quarrel among themselves are beaten when they gather in the enclosure to sing. There are no hardships connected
[778] with food, but on various occasions, when the girls are taken out to be shown secret objects (*digwa*), they are beaten—and one may see the marks of the sticks on their bare backs when they return. Sometimes there is an ordeal, such as being made to crawl along a path strewn with the velvet stinging-bean which causes intense irritation and itching over the whole body.

But such hardships occur only on special occasions and are by no means the order of the day. We should also be careful not to construe the beatings in terms of our conceptions. Where we have seen them, they were half serious, half playful—for instance, when the attendant of the Bird, amid merriment from the onlookers, chastised late-comers to the evening performance, the force of the blows being spent innocuously upon the skirts of the girls as they ran past him to take their places. The hardships and beatings certainly do not depress even the smallest of the girls. During the *morala* season they had to make a large quantity of cider which was consumed by initiated women, who gave a little also to the men, and, on one occasion, when the courtyard became overgrown with grass, the initiates were made to weed it. These tasks over a period of a whole year indicate clearly that work is not a major hardship.

881 A most essential aspect of the *vyali* is the showing of *digwa*, usually
778 in some secluded spot to which the initiates are taken, but also on occasion at home in the evening, when there will be dancing all night (*Akhlolo-ene*—night of standing). The connotation of the word *gwa* is difficult to grasp. A *gwa* is something secret and wonderful, something which it is a privilege to see and which is usually shown to initiates during an initiation.

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Though made by men or women, there is something almost super- 881
natural about a *gwa*: its manufacture is called 'giving birth to' (*ku* 778
dewula digwa) and though, for example, in the case of a dancing *gwa*, every one knows that some person is playing the part, this in no way detracts from its importance. Many of the *digwa* are masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, or leaves. Some are mummeries with a meaning attached; others are simply interesting or wonderful objects. One *gwa*, *dau* (lion), consists of a sound made by passing the hand down a stick on a piece of hide held over a pot. These *digwa* are traditional in initiations, but very often new ones are invented and, since different regiments or areas come on many ceremonial occasions with their own *digwa*, there may be a mild competitive element in the showing of *digwa*, especially in *khola* and *nyali*. Laws taught in initiation ceremonial are also referred to as *digwa*. But the greatest of all *digwa* are the [534
gomoh drums, which are looked upon as gods and are associated with 776
the ancestors and religious ritual. *Digwa* vary from laws or mummeries 781]
to semi-gods. The element of awe, so conspicuously absent in Lovedu religious practices, is found in their attitude towards *digwa*—not that there is any display of awe towards them or in their presence, but that in referring to some of them people talk as though of something awesome or god-like. Even the *swiqiqwi*, ancestral spirits, who come to earth when [769]
gomana drums are played or at religious ceremonies, are thought of as *digwa*, which in this manner become part of religion itself.

The greatest *gwa* of the *nyali* is *khiuqogwi* or *khiuqogula*, referred to also as the great Bird of Muhale or of Rhodesia who, like most *digwa*, is believed to come from a pool in the river. It is a *gwa* of the men and manifests itself only when there is moonlight, returning, it is said, to its pool when the moon is dark. But it is always there, secreted in its enclosure. The girls have to sing whether it is there or not, and often, though the moon is dark, it whistles its directions and commands. It consists of a light, semicircular framework about 4 ft. high, over which are put strings of the *mugo* thorn tree (*Acacia rehmanniana*), which have been placed in water to become black. Surmounting it all is a small head crowned with an ostrich or other feather. It is seen only occasionally, when it comes dancing into the *nyali* courtyard at night, and, in spite of bright moonlight, its black colour makes it difficult to discern it clearly. It speaks and sings by whistling through an instrument similar to, but larger than, that used by *swiqiqwi*, made of the leg-bone of cattle.

This Bird is the ruling spirit of the *nyali*. It has many praises used by the girls in its honour. Coming as it does when the green foods of summer are being eaten and the grass is long, it is the embodiment of plenty and has daily to receive from each initiate summer foods and beer. All the time it is there every one in the area who makes beer has to bring one calabash to its enclosure. If this is not observed the person may be fined. The Bird regulates the whole procedure of the *nyali*, ordering which songs have to be sung, telling the girls when to dance, when to stop singing, what to do. At times it even gets angry and then, if it is dancing, it may stamp out the courtyard fires. Any infringement of the rules of the school are referred to as 'breaking the ribs' (*ku vuna lequqwi*)

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of the Bird. One man was fined a goat for beating his wife. The Bird said, 'You've beaten my *mujagwa*' (married initiate); another, an important official in the *nyali*, was fined for swearing at an initiate who made a mistake in her answers to the Bird. From the time of its arrival, the women of the village may not get up and begin stamping in the early mornings before the Bird has made itself heard, and it is even said that *Khinglogwa* does not like cocks near the village, because they crow before he has begun to whistle and so disregard his precedence.

The arrival of *Khinglogwa* is a culminating point in the *nyali* and comes after long and elaborate preparations. For months before its arrival, men have been erecting various enclosures beside the village—one enclosure and hut to house the Bird itself, leading into a large courtyard in which the singing and drumming of the initiates is to take place once the Bird has arrived. At the far end of the courtyard is a row of de-barked poles set up in a specially medicated furrow, backing a carefully prepared platform on and around which the initiates stand when singing in the mornings and evenings. It is looked upon by the initiates as a kind of refuge from the Bird should he come too near. In front of this *lwalilo* stands the *khulumi* shrine of the *nyali*, a long medicated pole of *mmoso* (*Terminalia sericea*) forking at the top end into a circlet of branches. Round this pole a circular mound has been built, containing a river stone like many religious shrines. Here it is that the initiates have to stand when conversing with the Bird. Besides the enclosure, there are other preparations for the arrival of the Bird. From February and March, when the grass is long enough, bandoliers of *lejeje* rush (*Mariscus sp.*) to be worn by the initiates once the Bird has arrived, are woven, dancing skirts of a special kind of reed strung together in pieces about 1 in. long are made, and pointed, flat pieces of wood, two for each girl, are prepared for use while singing. No significance is attached to their manufacture.

A great deal of the ceremonial of the *nyali* centres on the Bird and, in the ritual conversations that take place morning and evening between the women and the Bird, special terms peculiar to the *nyali* are employed: mealies are 'teeth of Shangana-Tonga'; beer is 'fat of the crocodile'; native potatoes are 'fingers of the baboon'; firewood is 'bones of the giraffe'. Every day some girls and women are detailed to carry the drums at about four o'clock in the afternoon to the enclosure, there to await the pleasure of the Bird. Sooner or later the Bird whistles out '*mulunc a Khidigwa*', the opening phrase of the praise of the head of the initiates, whereupon one of the girls (any one—not necessarily the chief girl herself) mounts the shrine and replies in a loud voice, 'I've been *waiting here a long while, Bird of Mulaule*', adding one of its many praises. 'Whose *nyali* (initiate) are you?' asks the Bird. 'I am the *nyali* of So-and-so' (giving the name of her father). The Bird will then, whistling metaphorical phrases, order the drums to be beaten, indicating what song is to be sung. The sounding of the drums is the signal for all the initiates to come to the enclosure, which gradually fills as they arrive in twos and threes. After much singing and drumming, the Bird may ask, 'What have you brought me?' to which the initiate, replying, answers, 'Crocodile's fat', or whatever she has brought. In the 1938–9 *nyali* there

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was at the royal village an arrangement whereby a certain number of girls brought beer every evening (six to eight calabashes), while in the mornings each initiate came with green mealies, nuts, or any appetizing dish. These are put down at a certain spot from where the *lumati* and *lumatyana*, men who act as go-betweens when the Bird is crying, interpreting if necessary what he says, carry it all into the Bird's enclosure, where it is consumed by old men. During the *vyali* these old men sleep in that enclosure if they like, and greatly enjoy the good food brought for the Bird. Sometimes, when too much for them has accumulated, they may send some to the queen or district head. Later the Bird orders the girls to eat their supper, which they have brought with them, and after a long time gives the order to stop, '*Kwanga*'. After a while the Bird asks for his wood. Each initiate has brought one piece of wood, with bark removed, lest, it is said, scorpions which are apt to be found in the bark bite the Bird, and at the order of the Bird all proceed to a spot near the entrance to the Bird's enclosure. Here at a given signal they throw down their wood with a great noise and rush back to their platform of safety. If the moon is bright, the girls will be told to don their dancing skirts and do their whirling dance and, if it likes, the Bird itself will come dancing in, keeping to the shadows, and with one or two men always near to act as guides. They are given the order to stop by the Bird at about ten or eleven o'clock at night or eight o'clock in the morning.

Towards the end of the *vyali*, when *mutsotho* songs are sung, the older men come and dance before the women, waving ox tails in their hands. They would, in the *vyali* of old, wave the tail over the head of a woman they liked and, if she acknowledged it by bowing the head and clapping with hollowed hands, she was giving her consent to be his lover during the initiation. For a remarkable feature of the *vyali* was promiscuous sexual intercourse between men and women in which initiates could take part only at the end. In the 1938–9 *vyali* there was no such intercourse: it was thought that the young married men were too 'wild' (owing to modern conditions) to tolerate a position in which the older men could have free access to their wives in the initiation, and it was said that the great preponderance of women over men might lead to great jealousies and conflicts between the women for the favours of the old men.

Towards the end of the initiation a number of important events takes place. There is, first of all, a ceremony in which the old men tie up the hair of initiates—which during the year has grown to a length of an inch or two—in tufts all over the head with strings of the bark of *mutsivir* (*Kraussia Galpinii*). After this the women belonging to the previously initiated regiment come into the enclosure one by one, dancing and shouting the praise titles of any area in the country. They are followed by the initiates, beginning with the office-bearers, and the ceremony therefore takes a full day or longer. While this is going on, one of the girl initiates, who is addressed by the praise-title of a wife (*mutsonou*) of the queen, is taken to have her hair shaved and is dressed in a leopard skin with a collarette of beads round the neck. On her return a mat is spread for her to sit on and she does obeisance in the normal manner (not the manner of initiates). Another office-bearer (*murili*) is given a standard

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●881 of feathers to shade the head girl. After much dancing, cloths are tied round the initiates in the manner common to the possessed. This ceremony foreshadows the end of the initiation and indicates to the whole country that it is drawing to a close. The last month is devoted to
881 dancing: every area that is holding a *vyali* sends its initiates to dance
535 before the queen, some coming with *vuhwera*, others without. Last of
778 all come the people of Ravothata with the *magɔgɔbya* and it is their performance that closes the 'school'. The *magɔgɔbya* have more imposing
[292] costumes even than the *vuhwera*, characterized by the stuffed baboon and duiker that surmount them. After a number of important *digɔma* have been shown, there is a grand finale one night (*khilalawemi*), when the Bird hangs its head sideways and says, 'My head aches and I know my end has come.' A *gɔma* of the women, the Butterfly (*khiruwolt*), dressed in leaves, comes dancing in at the girls' entrance to tease and chase the Bird. Before sunrise, when the Bird has returned to its hut, some of the initiates (those who have come for a short time only) may be taken to 'touch the Bird', a terrible ordeal. Then next morning they are all taken to the river, where they are shaved and given new clothes to wear. They are now 'things from the rubbish heap' (*zwigwamathukhu*), like boys after circumcision: they walk in a bent position, may not speak freely, receive gifts, and at night ask riddles (*dinytbo*) specially associated with initiations. The enclosures are burnt. After a final washing in the river the initiates return to ordinary life and activities. A small operation is performed on initiates at the river on the last day. Among some tribes
[304] it consists of defloration, but among the Lovedu it is said to consist of a cut above the clitoris which is so small that it causes no pain or inconvenience.

881 At the time when the initiates make preparations for the arrival
292 of the Bird (February–March), the boys of those areas that have the
535 *vuhwera* as well are taken out into the bush every day to learn how to weave the elaborate costumes associated with this initiation. These are of two types: a light one, said to be for hunting, and a heavy one. Both costumes have skirts of loose-hanging grass, flung out in a circle by the gyrations of the dancer, as well as comely waist, arm, and leg bands and under-skirts of woven grass. The light costume has in addition broad shoulder bands crossing over chest and back and a mask resting upon the shoulders, veiling the face and open at the top. The heavy costume is far more imposing. Besides a woven waistcoat, there is an immense covering for head and shoulders, surmounted by a crested summit, flanked by what gives the impression of scales arranged in rows or projecting wings, and fronted by a snout like that of a crocodile. The dance reminds one, now of the prancings of a male bird courting its mate, now of a lizard convulsively shaking its whole body as it rests upon a rock. The lizard-bird suggests a weird dragon-like mythical monster, but its appearance belies its functions and qualities, though perhaps not the mystical meaning of the *digɔma* of the 'school'.

[778] The enclosure for *vuhwera* boys is made beside that for the Bird. Here, after having being beaten with medicated sticks, the boys spend their time, except when out hunting or dancing, their food being brought to

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the *vyali* courtyard by their sisters. They are taught a few 'laws' or formulae associated with the *vuhwera*, but their main activities are learning to make the elaborately woven costumes and later to dance in the *vyali* courtyard. Towards the end of the initiation they spend most of their time going about to dance, accepting invitations from other district heads and paying their respects at the royal village. They do beautiful movements to the drumming of their own *vyali* girls. Only two dance at a time and, while they dance, attendants (*medabi*) stand near by supervising. The masked boys may whistle out the tune to which they wish to dance or may beg snuff by means of whistling (for this is their only means of conversation during their initiation). When they dance well, women and girls come to give them gifts of leg- or arm-rings. The *vuhwera* is a kind of finishing school, an initiation into the secret of what the Bird is and how the costumes are made. It is almost as though this is an esoteric art, the preservation of which has become the main function of the *vuhwera*. A person who enters the *vuhwera* enclosure may be required to display his skill at weaving and in 1939 a man who was unable to weave (and thus showed himself to be uninitiated) was heavily fined. The fact that there is no *vuhwera* held at the royal kraal, whose boys used in the old days to go for this initiation to Khaḍa or to the *Tzaneni*, a section of the Khaḍa, suggests that the institution is a more recent adoption than the *vyali*.

It is not easy for a European to appreciate the meaning and value of such institutions as *vyali* and *vuhwera*. Most of their features cannot be explained by the Lovedu themselves. They are the result of a long, historical development which, in the absence of all evidence, may never be unravelled. The *vyali* has many aspects. One of the most important is that of a crossing or initiation similar to circumcision. The initiates are often called *vawedi* (crossers) and initiation may be referred to as 'to cross over' (*hu wela*). It is conceived as a period of hardship, a crossing for which medical treatment and ancestral blessings are essential. Respect for those older than oneself is emphasized: the initiates must be humble; but older people, especially the old men who remain in the Bird's enclosure, live royally on the beer and delicacies brought daily by initiates. There is emphasis, too, on the importance of the rank of district heads and chief, and the learning of praises of all the areas, followed towards the end of the initiation by inter-district visits, is an important feature.

Intermingled with the overshadowing cult of the *vyali* as an initiation is the *vyali* as a fertility and rain cult, related to the *gomane* drum cult and serving the same purpose. The *vyali* lasts a year, a full agricultural cycle, and some of its stages are associated with the seasons: the typical *vyali* dress of the girls cannot be plaited till the grass has grown long; the Bird arrives only when there is plenty of food. The singing of *vyali* songs is believed to bring rain. Even before the rains of the summer of 1938–9 had fallen, it was said in Buloveḍu that the year would be one of plenty on account of the *vyali*. These expectations were more than realized, for not only was the summer rainy, but even the winter, which is normally dry, was exceptionally wet. Stress is laid in the *vyali* on grass and vegetation: the girls wear plaited bandoliers of grass which are said by

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794 some to render them fertile; the *digoma* are almost all made of grasses,
789 reeds, or leaves; the remarkable *vahwera* costumes are made of various
778 special kinds of grass; and on one of the most important excursions made by the *vyali* girls, called *maidini* (at the locusts), they are made to collect the bark of various kinds of trees. The *vyali* as a fertility rite is most clearly seen in the sexual intercourse at the order of the Bird which used to be indulged in towards the end of the initiation on the approach of spring. The true meaning of the Bird is difficult to discover, though it is significant that it is associated with moonlight, comes from a pool, and declares on its departure that it will leave mists behind it. In one praise song of the Bird it appears to be referred to as *vadaja*, the ancestral spirits: 'I have heard you, Bird of ours and Rahufa of Muhale. The father of giving has gone, O *vadaja*. There remain only things for which one must pay' (*Gi hu phulaphudt noni yenu le vuRahufa a Muhale rahufa khi ile, vadaja, hu sadt kha muthtgo ftla*). This Bird, *goma* of the old men, is related to the *gomana* cult, using the same method of whistling through an instrument.

●881 The Lovedu appear to have borrowed *vyali* and *vuhwera* and the
794 *gomana* drum cult from neighbours. Some elements, like *swidajani*,
771 have become firmly embedded in a number of institutions; others, like *vuhwera*, are looked upon more as entertaining appurtenances without any very serious meaning beyond that of giving pleasure. But the sacred drum cult clashes to some extent with the rain cult of the queen and there is little doubt that to this fact one must partly attribute the failure to beat *gomana* drums in recent years.

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significance of the fire rite at the accession of a queen can be understood only in the context of the three patterns as they have been integrated into Lovedu culture and become merged in the rite.

Firstly, fire figures in the borrowed 'transition' rites, but not in the girls' puberty rite (*khoba*). Midway in the sacred fire of the boys' circumcision (*vudiga*) is its central shrine at the place where the chief initiate (*washe*) sits. In the sanctum of the Bird of the *vyali* there is an undying fire. The end of these 'schools' is spoken of as 'a burning down' (*hu ma*): the fire destroys all the distinctive things of the 'school', the lodge, the tables, the tiniest bits of grass that fell from the dancing performers, and, as the lodge burns, the initiates, turning their backs upon it, may not look round and are irrevocably severed from their past. Again, when 'the country is not right' and has to be re-established or purified of its pollution with 'cooling' medicine (*mafugo*), a transition is implied, for it is said, 'The fires are put out to usher in a new year'. The same conception reappears when *mafugo* is used before the accession of a new queen.

Secondly, the firebrand, as the symbol of authority, figures in the warrant (*khiso*, i.e. firebrand) given by the queen which authorizes district heads to hold 'schools'. This warrant of authority is most strikingly evident in the firebrand and calabash handed to a disaffected noble or would-be usurper as an intimation that he is expelled from the country. It has merged with the *mafugo* rite enacted to render the earth receptive to the power of rain magic or to herald the accession of a queen; and here it takes the form of a 'royal tax' vicariously exacted through the women, their husbands, the boys sprinkling the medicine, and the keeper of the *mafugo* at the capital.

Thirdly, 'beating out' of fires with 'cooling' medicine belongs to a complex of rites for counteracting the harmful effects of 'heat', a conception explained in Chapter XII. 'Heat' not only arises from the contamination of death, but is the concomitant of disease, weakens the charms (*dithugula*), impedes rain, and defiles the earth. In all these cases it is combated with 'cooling' medicine, as we describe elsewhere. In addition, the *gwas* drums are prevented from losing their concentrated power by the 'cool' river stones in them, witches are thwarted by protective charms (*dithobo*) in which the medicines of the [illegible] powerful elements, and the 'heat' of the ancestors' anger is 'cooled' with *mafugo*. The death of a queen 'dries up' or 'heats' the whole country, which has to be cooled as a preparation for the new ruler.

Thus in the fire rite at a queen's accession, the culture is handling complicated and all-important conceptions. The pervasive evil corrupting the country must be neutralized; the relationship of ruler and ruled, superior and inferior, must be visibly reasserted; and there must be enacted a momentous new start marking the inception of a new destiny and preparing the universe for the reception of the next rain-maker. The fire rite on this occasion symbolizes a mighty purification and 'transition', epitomizes the allegiance of subjects and the authority of the queen, and inaugurates a cosmic order in which the magic of a new rain-maker may be auspiciously manifested. That, in the Lovedu cultural context, is the meaning of the fire rite.

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tion. There is no trace whatever in the Lowveld of the Tswana ward. 613
Lowveld tribes are totemic, but the totem is neither exogamous nor bound up with any single lineage group. People of the same totem are often not related at all and the lineage group cuts right across the tribe, relatives from the same place of origin and with the same totem often being found in several different tribes. Indeed, the tribe consists only of a small nucleus of members of the ruling family after which it is named, the greater portion being accretions from any and every neighbouring tribe. Thus the majority of members of the Narene are not Narene at all; they are Lobedu, Khaha, Phalaborwa, Kwena, Tokwa, and others who have joined the Narene at various times; and so it is with all Lowveld tribes.

FORMAL EDUCATION. The tribes of the Lowveld have five initiation 881 794
schools,[1] two, known as *khoba* and *byale*, for girls, three, *bodika*, *boxwera*, and *komana*, for boys. These schools are not peculiar to the Lowveld; all of them are found also among Sotho tribes of the Highveld of the Northern Transvaal while some, like the *bodika* or circumcision, have a very wide distribution in South Africa. But the *byale* and *boxwera* in our area have a typical form, not found elsewhere, being held at the same time, while the *komana* appears in its strongest and most characteristic form among Phalaborwa, Khaha, and Narene in the south of our area where, most probably, it had its origin for it is absent from Pediland.

Khoba is the private initiation and seclusion of a girl at or shortly after reaching puberty when she is taught the things she should know and do as a woman. The *bodika* or circumcision school is too well known to merit attention here, but the *boxwera*, for boys, which in Sekukuniland and other parts of the Northern Transvaal is [illegible] in the Lowveld is linked with and held together with the *byale* girls' school, the central feature of which is a wonderful 'bird' in a special enclosure which appears on moonlight nights and dances and speaks in a whistle.[1] The true significance of the *komana* has not yet been

[1] In late years these schools have been languishing or dying out in the northern portion of our culture area. The Lobedu have held neither *byale* nor *komana* for 30 years, while their last circumcision was in 1919. In the south of the area, on the other hand, all the schools are still in full swing, the Letswalo having held their last *bodika* in 1934 and *byale* in 1936.

[Sek. 2: Krige and Krige for further information on Lovedu cults — A]

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881 794 established. Sometimes a school in which boys receive cuts on either side of the face, it is associated also with rain ritual and with the *dajane* or ancestral spirits who come to earth and speak in a whistling, wailing manner.

794 An interesting feature of the Northern Transvaal is the tendency for private people, strangers from tribes who have certain schools, to set up schools with the permission of the chiefs in areas where they are not known. People are always willing to join them, and they are a source of great profit to the holder. Thus the Dikxale of the Highveld have no *komana*; but a Narene man who has come to live in the area has brought *komana* drums and holds schools to which many Dikxale go.

836 837 Sex Morality and Marriage. Sex morality among Lowveld tribes conforms to the general pattern found over South Africa in having pre-marital sex intercourse as an institution fully approved of by society as long as no children are born. Furthermore, adultery, which is an everyday occurrence, is not looked upon as serious in any way unless the parties are indiscreet and are discovered. Widows, especially, are recognized as easy prey to male advances even though [684] they have been inherited by the husband's brother. The fine attached to adultery is usually one head of cattle; but the general laxness is better illustrated in the attitude found among the Narene, where there is no fine attached to adultery, though a man caught in the act will [695] send something to the husband to beg pardon. In court, the bare word of a woman accusing a man of adultery is always accepted. [684] Seduction of a young girl is a much more serious offence than adultery, with the correspondingly higher fine attached to it of two head of cattle and a goat, and realization that marriage is much more than a sexual relationship between the parties concerned is shown in the fact that far from trying to promote marriage between the parties concerned, the parents of the girl will refuse any alliance with a boy whose people they do not consider suitable.

582 [171] Like all Sotho peoples, the Lowveld tribes have the institution of preferred marriage with certain relatives, in contrast to the Zulu-Xhosa with whom marriage with any related person is taboo. Fully 40 per cent. of all marriages are, in our Lowveld area, with the

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783 cooled with rain-medicine. The polluted corpse (called *pukudi*, the opposite
789 of *fuga*) is thought of as thrusting up an arm and waving it about to disperse the rain.

643 It is the duty of the queen each year to *thea* or 'establish' the season pro-
821 pitiously for her people. Certain district heads who are close relatives of the queen have rainpots which they revitalize every year with medicine from the queen and stir them up at the queen's command to ensure a propitious season. In the old days the year was 'established' also by the beating of the sacred drums (*gomana*) and a visit to the royal ancestor graves, but this has fallen into disuse.

643 If there is drought or if the rain does not come at its appropriate time,
821 people say the queen has not changed the year properly and steps are taken to approach her. Royal relatives may approach her personally or complain
789 in her hearing that she is killing her people by withholding rain; district heads may formally pay homage (*hu lova*) with gifts of £1 or a head of cattle,
731 or may bring a troupe of dancers to please her and invoke her pity at the spectacle of people dancing when they should be hoeing. The songs (*lesugu*) are associated with offerings to the ancestors and with rain. If these efforts are of no avail diviners are consulted to determine the cause of drought—the rain-charms may have been 'weakened' or evil practices of witches may
[784] have prevented rain. In 1937 the people were told at a tribal gathering to report lightning 'sent' by witches, and shortly afterwards, when lightning had struck a tree near a village, boys were sent to sprinkle every house in the area with *mufugo* to 'cool' the lightning. Witches may also disperse rain by hanging up medicated branches which sway in the air. If it is an ancestor that is 'holding the queen's hands' he or she has to be propitiated by the sacrifice of a black beast or sheep on the grave.

643 When winds frustrate the efforts of the queen to make rain, especially
784 when a gale disperses auspicious black clouds, people come to condole with her as if she had lost a relative, and it is taboo to work in the fields the next
821 day, just as it is on the day after the first rain of the season and on certain other occasions.

643 The queen is 'Transformer of the Clouds', the changer of the seasons, and
821 guarantor of their cyclic regularity, but she can exercise her powers auspiciously only in certain conditions and in 'agreement with the ancestors'.

Digoma

778 The fourth category of forces by which nature is regulated in the interests
794 of man consists of *digoma* which are associated more especially with changes in the status of man. A *goma* is primarily a drum, but as an abstract concept
881 it is particularly identified with the power concentrated in the drum cult. This cult includes the large complex of institutions connected with rites of transition, of which the year-long *vyali-rahwera* (fertility cult) is one. A *goma* is thought of as something mystical and secret, awesome and esoteric. The circumcision 'school' for boys is called a *goma* which is said to 'bite'

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the initiates. It is something mystically powerful which transforms boys into men. But if the initiation as a whole is a *gɔma*, so also are the secret formulae, objects, and mummeries that form part of the ceremony. 778 794

With the *vyali-vuhwera* fertility cult, which is at the same time also an initiation for girls (*vyali*) and for boys (*vuhwera*), are associated many *digɔma*, in the form of masked figures in costumes made of grass, reeds, and leaves, or plays and mummeries emphasizing the value of certain foods. But the greatest of all is *Khiudogane*, Bird of Muhale (the royal founder ancestor), ruling spirit of the *vyali*, which is believed to emerge from a pool on moonlight nights, leave mists behind it when it departs, and upon which much of the ritual centres. It is the link between two aspects of sacred forces, that conceived as mysterious, fearful, approached only through elaborate symbolism, and that represented by ancestors and directly approached. For the bird is both a great *gɔma* and a symbol of the royal ancestors. 881

Revived in 1938, after an interval of twenty years, the *vyali-vuhwera* with its great *digɔma* is thought to promote abundance and rain, the welfare and happiness of the people. While it lasts it is the main national interest to which all energies are bent and all activities subordinated. Marriages are held up, the normal judicial machinery is at a standstill, and anything that might compete with the ceremonial is interdicted. Since initiates spend only early mornings and evenings at the secret enclosure, they sleep at home and are able to carry on essential domestic tasks for the greater part of the day.

The sacred drums of the tribe (*digɔma*), four in number, are kept and cared for by the people of Ravothata, a lineage that came from Phalaborwa, where the drum cult is more intimately connected with the chief than among the Lovedu. These drums, which are said to contain under the resonator a human skull and, in the case of the smallest, the facial skin of a councillor, are mystically linked with the life of the queen and the welfare of the tribe. The heir-ship of the smallest drum which being taught the rain ritual and it must accompany the queen if ever she is forced to flee from her enemies. The sacred drums are spoken of as *vadimo* (gods) as well as *digɔma*, and they were beaten twice a year in the old days in a ceremony known as *gɔmana* as an appeal to the ancestors for rain and to thank them for the harvest. The latter took the form of an initiation into the secrets of the cult at which boys were given certain cuts on their faces. 778 613 643 [794 304]

Associated with the sacred drums and also classed as *digɔma* are the *vuidajani*, the weird whistling ancestor spirits of the royal lineage who come to earth in the guise, it is said, of half-men with one eye, one arm, and one leg, to take part in the rites connected with the sacred drums and in the annual harvest *thagula* ceremony in all royal and certain other lineages. They are, in fact, as is known to those initiated in the *gɔmana*, old men masquerading as spirits. They appear in the bush near the village and join in the singing of *lengu* songs which are sung, on these occasions, through specially constructed secret whistles. 778 769 613 796

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171 The *gomana* drums are no longer used by the queen to appeal to the ancestors for rain, but she permits boys from the royal village to attend 778 *gomana* initiation ceremonies held occasionally, with her permission, by an 881 outsider. The *gomana* concept, despite the support it gives to the mystical attributes of the queen, appears to represent a conceptual pattern that is autonomous and more fully developed in some neighbouring tribes, where the moments of the agricultural year were signalized by the sounding of the drums which were thought to bring rain and fertility, to bless the crops and cattle, and to safeguard the country from disease and enemies. In some tribes today the cult is a recent innovation in the form of initiation schools managed by outsiders who have their own drums and *swidajani* visitors from tribes where the cult is better known.

Evil and how to avoid it

761 It has been shown that the Lovedu conceive the order of nature as something essentially man-controlled through the power of medicine and 772 magic (*ewaga*), through the ancestors, through the divinity and powers of the queen, and through the mysterious forces associated with *digama*. The 821 seasons and the rain have to be established by the queen for the crops to prosper; the baby 'grows by medicines' which guard it from harm and sickness and imbue it with health and strength; adulthood is achieved through initiations and *digama*; and over and above all, there is the watchful care of the gods. The natural order accordingly can and must be manipulated by utilizing benevolent and nullifying malignant forces, in order to further man's good fortune or to prevent evil from befalling him.

772 The Lovedu have elaborated some interesting concepts of impersonal evil powers which are concentrations of forces brought about by certain 811 concatenations of conditions or events. These concepts are found over a much wider area, but have received special emphasis among the Lovedu. 821 To them the ultimate good is rain. Rain is regarded as not merely the material source of life and happiness and the physical basis of man's sense of security; it is also a symbol of spiritual well-being and a manifestation that the social order is operating smoothly. Hence coolness denotes a state of euphoria: man and matter to be in order and to function properly have to be kept cool; angry ancestors must be cooled by means of medicine; even witches can be cooled and so made to forget their evil purposes. On the other hand, heat as the antithesis of the main basis of man's security, the cooling, life-giving rain, is conceived as a destructive force leading to a state of dysphoria.

753 'Heat' is a concept suggested by the physical properties of heat; it may sometimes be sensed, for example, as an important factor in fever, one of 772 the most prevalent illnesses. But actually its operation is inferred from con- 811 ditions of which 'heat' is clearly the cause, such as droughts and the desic- 821 cation of the crops. Here the generation of heat is ascribed to the effect upon the earth of disturbances of the regular course of nature by the burial in it

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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On [883] moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khoro* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels [786] and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however, 241 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides 221 the seasons into three: *Ahlowo*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *lepawula*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *mavia*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

244 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February, 221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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Even if blood flows, no case can be brought against a herdboy, for he is still uncircumcised, irresponsible. 854 857

Training for both boys and girls in home-making is embodied in the institution known as *manghwane*, which, while being little more than a game, is nevertheless accorded adult recognition. Utilization by the children of the harvest gleanings after reaping, which may be regarded as its practical economic aspect, is to-day not much in evidence, but while it lasts women whose sons are taking part are saved the trouble of cooking the evening meal. After the reaping, when the cattle graze in the mealie lands near home, *manghwane* is begun by the girls calling the boys to come and be chosen. They stand in a row while each girl chooses a 'husband' by kneeling before and greeting the boy of her choice. He signifies his consent by answering the greeting. After the parents have been told of their intention to hold *manghwane*, the boys begin to build rough huts in the fields, while the girls smear the floors and courtyards. Each couple may have its own establishment with very often also a small child chosen as their 'child', or one large house for all may be made. With pots, baskets, spoons, and other utensils borrowed from home, the girls stamp mealie meal and cook dishes of porridge, nuts, and pumpkin, while the boys, if they can, bring home birds as relish. The game begins about eleven o'clock in the morning and ends in dancing and singing after dark; this lasts for about ten days or more till, at the end, the miniature village is burnt. Each 'wife', in addition to serving food to her 'husband' in the proper manner, must also take food every evening to her 'mother-in-law' in the boy's home. This is eaten, not by the mother-in-law herself, but by children of the household who are not taking part in the game. Occasionally the elders walk over to watch activities in the play-village and give a word of advice. That the institution is taken seriously by adults is shown by the fact that, though *manghwane* partners never marry, the mother of the girl will very often after the *manghwane* take a gift of beer (usually five calabashes or so) to the parents of her small daughter's 'husband', who will slaughter a goat in recognition of the gift just as though the relationship were real. There is nothing to prevent relatives from being *manghwane* partners. To-day the 'husband' is usually much younger than the 'wife' and the game is confined to children under the age of puberty. Not more than a few years ago, however, boys and girls of marriageable age used to take part, the institution being considered as primarily for them. One of the reasons for the change is the absence of many of the older boys at work in town, while the failure of young men to keep the rules against impregnation in the play sexual intercourse that often forms part of the game makes mothers loath to allow older girls to join in. 854 868 [43] [883 836]

General behaviour, attitudes, and values are not taught by any formal training. These are inextricably bound up with life in the society and become unconsciously adopted by any one fully partaking in social life. Even a European, when speaking the language and trying to enter into their social activities, finds himself unconsciously taking for granted values that he never had before and which are certainly not to be found in European life. They seem to follow naturally from the social situation 867

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are not at all anxious that their children should be taught craftsmanship in the mission schools.

In contrast to our customs, education never ends. As the physiological capacities vary, so new activities are undertaken. The culture always provides a place for the aptitudes of every stage of life, and neither men nor women become redundant in their old age, unless, indeed, they are utterly decrepit. With their physical decline, the culture provides new avenues and interests, to which they are continuously adjusting themselves. They suffer no sense of frustration, because their adjustments are dynamic. With us old age may be tragic: among women, the menopause may precipitate a crisis; among men, retiring from work often causes loss of interest in life and mental decay. But old Lovedu men and women always have something more to learn and to do. Women are not perturbed about external signs of age and complacently accept the end of their childbearing years, for these years bring increased influence, a fuller life, and greater rewards. If physical disability excludes old men from active political life, they receive ample compensation in reduced responsibilities and added prestige. There is no sense of impotence that upsets their balance. Instead, the changing sphere of their roles and their interests both keeps them stable and makes them precious to the society. The distress of old age among us is seldom seen, for rewards always stimulate the new adjustments that have to be made. Utter decrepitude is, however, a tragedy, fortunately ended by the neglect that we may regard as pitiless, but which realistically eliminates those who cannot attain even the mediocre level of achievement that the society calls for. He who cannot attain this level cannot make simple adjustments. But he who can still use his faculties in his old age may become a doctor of note, or a recognized authority on tribal legends or history. Finally, the psychological effect of beliefs attaching to the very old is to provide them with new incentives and renewed opportunities. The widespread suspicion that they have personal contacts with the world of darkness enhances their power, while their elevation, in anticipation, to godhood, for they are already so near death that they may be referred to as gods (*midimo*), invests their dignity and their wishes with a supernatural halo.

Beside this all-pervasive system of tribal education, the modern school, with its three R's, is as yet of small importance. It reaches, and only in an attenuated form, no more than 3 to 5 per cent. of the children. Its methods are foreign, divorced from life; its teachers are immature, handicapped by inadequate equipment and by being uprooted from the soil of tribal culture. Yet the modern school is the force of the future. Education is passionately desired by the young, and the old would welcome it if they did not feel that it was subversive. There is no compulsion upon a scholar to become a Christian; but the belief persists that education and Christianity are inseparable. It is a belief that raises an awkward dilemma: must the school, which at the same time is the gateway to Christianity, give up its task of breaking down, or can it compromise with superstition? Can it work from within, integrated into the culture, without defeating its purpose? The answer cannot be given here. The task of the school and the Church is no less prodigious and delicate than

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RELIGION. In common with the other Bantu tribes of South Africa, the people of the Lowveld have ancestor worship. The form which it takes here bears many resemblances to that found among the Venda and also to that of the Shangana-Tonga though it differs from both in a number of ways. Characteristic of the religion of Lowveld tribes are the predominance of the beer offering to the almost complete exclusion of the blood sacrifice, the use of shrines and dedicated goats or cattle, the powers attributed to old beads and other objects once in the possession of the ancestors, the prominent part played by women, the virtual equality of ancestors on the mother's and father's side and the cult of the *dajaw* in which old men deceive women and the uninitiated by acting the part of ancestors supposed to be returning to the village after certain ceremonies. 771

The creator-god, to whom however no worship is directed, is known as Khadzwane, use of the term *Modimo* in this sense being in the Lowveld probably a Christian innovation. Belief in a sky-god, such as that of the south-eastern tribes, is absent, while spirits such as the mountain and river spirits believed in by Venda, and Tikoloshe, Impundulu and other half-mythical creatures who play so important a role in the everyday life and beliefs of Pondo and Xhosa are quite unknown in the Lowveld. Instead, one finds the *dajaw* or *dawajaw*, ancestral spirits who come after sunset after important religious ceremonies in the royal family, during the *Asmara* drumming, and sometimes, among Lobedu, at the installation of an important headman, and call in thin, wailing voices. Often they whistle out their own names or throw stones at the village, scolding people for having broken customs, till beer is brought to them and they are appeased. They are ancestors, yet they are only half-men with one leg and one arm instead of two;[1] they dwell in the sacred woods, and when they come no one is to leave the village, women and children shutting themselves up securely in their huts. The fact that the part is acted by a few old, trusted men is not known to many. 776 [17] [887]

The sacred place at which offerings are made is not the cattle kraal 778

[1] Among Venda, *dadjawi* are thought to be mountain spirits with one leg, one arm, &c., the sight of whom brings death to the traveller. They have no connexion with ancestor worship and are said to be mostly of Sotho origin. This is clearly a borrowing.

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Generally speaking, a man's prestige increases as he grows older; but, on the one hand, as his age disables him, practical control gradually passes out of his hands, and, on the other, there is the conflict for position, mentioned elsewhere, between the old and the middle-aged in the royal family. A grand old man like Maculana is more genuinely respected than the greatest of the royal councillors, and people humble themselves more graciously before him than before even royalty itself. But he lives far from the capital, some five miles over stony places and up a difficult hill, and it is not he, but his sons, who conduct the business of the district with the queen; and of them it is not the chief, but the eldest son, who started earliest on this business and is gradually establishing himself as the next head after the death of the father. In every walk of life, in the supreme councils of the queen, in the struggles for succession to headship of districts, among the wives of a polygynous household, among siblings in a village, the same phenomenon repeats itself. The society values age and experience, sagacity and diplomacy; the claims of age and seniority are validated in kinship terminology, in the precedences accorded the elder brother or sister with regard to priority of marriage or in the initiation ceremonies; but on the whole it is the values of the society rather than its institutionalizations which emphasize the importance of seniority. The society also stresses the hierarchy of rank, such as the status and rights of the chief son, the position of the great wife, and the pre-eminence of the cattle-linked sister, though she be the younger sister. But at the very core of the society there is uncertainty: the heir to the throne is not determined by rigid rules, based upon seniority or legal precedences, and the councillors are involved in a conflict which throws into confusion, at least, the principle of seniority. The total configuration of the society cannot wholly rely upon these devices without damaging the foundations of the sacred kingship. The uncertainty of the succession is the guarantee that the queens are queens by divine decree.

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769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*mudimo wesu*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me an liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious
753 (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's
766 daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite unexpectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*ku phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of this girl, *phase* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognized as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phase*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] seize her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Ku phasa* in these circumstances recognizes psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mahwala* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not